

ing the startling rise in drug usage, learning how to minimize the social cost of the drug problem whatever its origins, understanding and coping with the increasing frequency of violence and criminal action, learning how to salvage [the] central city and upgrade the quality of urban life, alleviation of our biological and physical environmental problems, and development of an adequate system for the delivery of health care.

Even recognizing the limitations of the best of current health care, and the need for far greater understanding and for new therapeutic approaches to the major killers of mankind, one can only conclude that science—fundamental biological and physical science—can make only relatively small contributions to these other major problems. And for that reason, in the competition for national resources, science is likely to be placed on the back burner by the nation for some years. I do not mean that the national apparatus for the conduct of science will be dismantled. I am aware of no such intent and will fight such wherever it may appear. But the possibility of renewed growth of the scientific enterprise is minimal and, for a few years, we will be fortunate simply to maintain existing capabilities, because our counter-arguments are less than persuasive.

The Handler speech was a wide-ranging one; it included an unusually candid recital of sins of commission and omission by scientists, which he sees as having contributed to the present problems of science. He was critical of his profession and did not spare himself for having, for example, acquiesced to the back-door financing of graduate education and for other activities. He chided some scientists for their "entrepreneurial tastes." And he directed a barb at the news department of *Science* for "news stories written by a small group of non-scientists as rather personalized editorials, and which occasionally recount scandal large or small, seemingly without compunction and seemingly almost enjoying the embarrassment or discomfiture of some element of the house of science."

#### Alarm over Mansfield Amendment

Like many of his colleagues, Handler finds particular cause for alarm in the so-called Mansfield amendment (*Science*, 20 March), section 203 of last year's Defense procurement authorization act which forbade Defense Department funding of "any research which does not bear a clear and apparent relation to a specific military function or operation." This provision and its potential effect on mission-agency funding of basic research on campus perhaps as much as any single factor has spurred academic scientists to reevaluate the research support system.

## Carnegie Institution Names Abelson

Philip Hauge Abelson, editor of *Science*, has been named the next president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Dr. Abelson will succeed Caryl P. Haskins, who will retire at the end of June 1971. Dr. Haskins has held the presidency since 1956; he will remain as a trustee of the institution.

Dr. Abelson became editor of *Science* in August 1962. Since that time he has expanded the News and Comment section, increased the number of articles in each issue, reduced the interval between receipt and publication of technical reports, and started the Research Topics section. When asked about his future role as editor of *Science*, Dr. Abelson said, "It is likely that I will continue in that position."

In 1953 he became head of the Carnegie Institution's Geophysical Laboratory, a post he will give up on becoming president.—N.G.

The Handler speech was less a report on the pathology of the present situation of science than a plea for a revision and revitalization of federal science policy.

For his own part, he said, "I would advocate a federal agency for Research and Higher Education with a cabinet level Secretary." In a number of respects, the agency Handler suggested resembles the National Institute of Research and Advanced Studies (NIRAS) proposed in the report issued by the House Subcommittee on Science, Research, and Development chaired by Representative Emilio Q. Darradio (D-Conn.). The report is the product of a staff study based on hearings on "Centralization of Federal Science Activities" held last year. Witnesses at the hearings constituted a virtual Who's Who of science policy in government and the universities. Significantly, some influential people, including Presidential Science Advisor Lee A. DuBridge who last year expressed opposition to the idea of concentrating authority over research and graduate education in a single agency, are said to be now somewhat more receptive to the idea.

The NIRAS proposal calls for creation of an agency founded on a reconstituted NSF and the extramural and education programs of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), together with the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities, relevant sections of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and a newly created National Institute of Social Sciences and National Institute of Ecology.

A major cause of opposition to concentration of power over research funding in a single agency has been the fear that poor judgment or bias in that

agency could foreclose the chances of support for some investigators. To meet these objections and to preserve the options of multiple sources of funding, the NIRAS proposal advocates leaving perhaps 50 percent of funds for academic research in control of mission-oriented agencies.

#### Seek Political Independence

One continuing aim of the architects of federal science establishment has been to ensure its "nonpolitical" character. In line with this tradition, the NIRAS proposal plumps for raising a science agency to cabinet level but giving it independent agency status rather than making it a full department with a cabinet secretary heading it. The political point of this distinction is that a cabinet secretary serves at the pleasure of the President and is expected to support and advance the views of the President and his party, whereas the head of an independent agency could, for example, serve for a fixed term not coterminous with the President's and could in other ways avoid the political limelight.

Another factor that may well be contributing to the livelier interest in a science agency is the rather remarkable decline in interest and advocacy with respect to science and technology in Congress in recent years. The death of Representative John Fogarty and retirement of Senator Lister Hill, peerless champions of biomedical research funding, occurred at a time when the trajectory of funding was flattening. In the 1960's Congress made several attempts to institutionalize its interest (which had strong elements of self interest) in science and technology. But the tide of concern has ebbed as the Senate Sub-