

Sex Discrimination: Campuses Face Contract Loss over HEW Demands

The women's liberation movement has a new ally: the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. HEW is demanding that colleges and universities, under threat of losing all federal contracts, stop discriminating against women students and employees. Furthermore, HEW is demanding that female employees be compensated for financial loss suffered because of discrimination over the last 2 years. The government is currently withholding new contracts from the University of Michigan and at least three other campuses, pending compliance with HEW demands.

The HEW action, begun last spring (*Science*, 1 May 1970), is authorized by Executive Order 11246, which prohibits discrimination by federal con-

tractors. The Order, amended by President Johnson in 1968 to include sex discrimination, requires contractors to survey their own labor practices and submit an affirmative action plan for correcting deficiencies. HEW is charged with regulating all federal contracts to educational institutions.

The sex discrimination provisions of the order have been largely ignored and still would be, but for the efforts of Bernice Sandler, a staff member for the House Education Committee, who founded Women's Equity Action League (WEAL). WEAL, a Washington-based group with a membership that includes several congresswomen, sent letters to women's groups at campuses across the country advising them of the potential power of Execu-

tive Order 11246. WEAL offered to assist the groups in filing complaints against their respective campus administrations. So far WEAL has presented HEW with over 200 complaints, including, according to Dr. Sandler, charges against the entire college and university systems of New York City, New York state, and California. Because of a shortage of staff, HEW is investigating the complaints a few at a time, but HEW officials insist that all the complaints will be thoroughly investigated. HEW's eagerness to clamp down on sex discrimination is partially explained by the political pressure that WEAL presented along with the demands; feminism is currently a popular cause with several members of Congress.

Ann Arbor FOCUS on Equal Employment for Women, a group of students and university employees, filed the specific complaint against the University of Michigan, charging, among other things, that the university has only a small percentage of women faculty members (5.3 percent excluding the School of Nursing), few female administrators, and quotas on the admission of female students. The complaint also charged that women employees with degrees were assigned as clerk-typists but were expected to perform administrative duties for which men are paid higher salaries.

HEW's demands of each institution differ, depending on the types of complaints and HEW's subsequent investigation; but the demands for Michigan (see box) illustrate the nature of the requirements for an affirmative action program. HEW officials expect some negotiation of the exact terms of the demands, and certain campuses, notably the University of Illinois, are quietly working toward an acceptable affirmative action plan, although none are yet complete. But, Michigan and certain other institutions not identified by HEW officials have chosen to resist. Calling the demands "totally unreasonable," Michigan officials circulated copies to several other university administrations in an attempt to gain support.

Officials at Michigan and other campuses argue that the bookwork involved in determining who had suffered discrimination would be monumental. Roy McKinney, deputy director of HEW's Contract Compliance Division, points out, however, that the requirement for supplying such information is clearly spelled out in each federal contract signed by the universities. He says

HEW's Demands for Michigan

The following are excerpts from HEW's nine requirements for an affirmative action plan for ending sex discrimination at the University of Michigan.

The university must:

- 1) Achieve salary equity in every job category in the university.
- 2) Compensate, through the payment of back wages, each female employee who has lost wages due to discriminatory treatment by the university. Payment must be retroactive to 13 October 1968 (the date President Johnson amended Executive Order 11246 to include sex discrimination).
- 3) Achieve a ratio of female employment in academic positions at least equivalent to availability as determined by the number of qualified female applicants.
- 4) Increase ratios of female admissions to all Ph.D. graduate programs.
- 5) Increase the participation of women in committees involving the selection and treatment of employees.
- 6) Develop a written policy on nepotism which will insure correct treatment of tandem teams.
- 7) Analyze past effects of nepotism and retroactively compensate (to 13 October 1968) any person who has suffered discrimination.
- 8) Assure that female applicants for nonacademic employment receive consideration commensurate with their qualifications. The university must also ensure that the concept of male and female job classifications is eliminated through changes in recruitment procedures.
- 9) Assure that all present female employees occupying clerical or other nonacademic positions and who possess qualifications equal to or exceeding those of male employees occupying higher level positions be given primary consideration for promotion to higher level positions.

—R.J.B.

that HEW will allow the universities extra time for bookkeeping work, but will not grant a reprieve from the regulations.

Other arguments heard from university officials are reminiscent of responses offered by employers during the early part of the civil rights movement. Many claim that compensatory hiring to achieve higher ratios of

women employees will lower the quality of their staffs or that they simply do not have the money to correct inequities. Some women have complained to HEW officials of harassment by their academic employers because of participation in feminist activities.

In spite of these similarities with civil rights enforcement, HEW is pushing for women's rights with a zeal

unequaled in many of its efforts on behalf of racial minorities. Dr. Sandler sees the preferred treatment of women's grievances over racial inequities as a serious problem and says that she will not be satisfied until her efforts benefit women of all races. "Too often," she says, "discrimination is thought to affect only black men and white women."—ROBERT J. BAZELL

Taiwan: U.S. Tries One-Man Experiment in "Postaid" Assistance

In recent years American foreign aid planners have had to face up to the question of what to do when a country that has been receiving American aid "graduates" from the program but can still profit from special access to American expertise, particularly in science and technology.

One possible answer to the question has been provided by the activities on Taiwan of an American physicist, Bruce Billings, who for the past 2 years or so has played the role of consultant, confidant, and honest broker to officials of the Republic of China in a way that seems to have delighted both them and Billings' Washington sponsors.

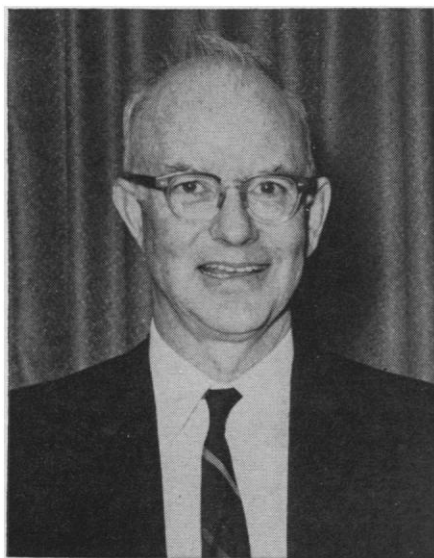
Billings was back in Washington recently on one of the periodic visits by which he maintains contacts in industry, government, and the universities which are a key to his effectiveness. This article is based on interviews here with Billings and with State Department and Agency for International Development (AID) officials who have watched Billings in action and dealt with Chinese officialdom on Taiwan.

In the 15 years after 1949, when Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government retreated to the island of Taiwan 90 miles off the Chinese mainland, the United States has given economic aid and technical assistance worth about \$1.5 billion to Taiwan. This aid contributed significantly to Taiwan's own "economic miracle," which has given the island an economic growth rate of 6 to 10 percent a year for the past decade and a per capita income well above the standards of the region.

By 1965 the indices showed that Taiwan could be considered a "semi-

developed" country, the economy was judged to be at the "takeoff" point, and a decision was made to phase out the formal American foreign aid program, although American military assistance to Taiwan was not ended. Some aid programs were "prefunded" to cushion the impact of the phaseout, and one hydroelectric project is still being completed under the auspices of the AID—but the American aid effort was regarded as successfully concluded.

The choice of Billings to be successor to the Taiwan aid program was, on the face of it, improbable, especially since, by his own account, his connection with China had been "minimal." His career as a scientist and science administrator in this country had been a success story on familiar post-World War II lines. And his interest in China



Bruce Billings

had been a very minor thread. One of Billings' roommates at Harvard was an American whose family lived in Canton and whose enthusiasm for China was sufficiently contagious to persuade Billings and two or three other friends to study Chinese for a semester. After Harvard, Billings went to Beirut from 1937 to 1940 to teach at the American School. He returned to begin doctoral studies at Johns Hopkins in 1940, and in 1941 joined Polaroid in Cambridge. The years from 1947 to 1963 he spent mainly in a variety of research and executive tasks with Baird-Atomic in Cambridge, and then in 1963 he joined Aerospace Corporation as vice president and general manager of laboratory operations. At the end of the 1950's he spent 2 years in Washington as deputy director in the Directorate of Defense Research and Engineering. Since 1962 he has served on the Air Force Science Advisory Board. He has remained active in research and in the affairs of the American Optical Society—currently he is president-elect of the society.

Billings' appointment to Taipei can be seen, in part, as a product of former Presidential science adviser Donald F. Hornig's diligence as a scientific missionary. After the aid program for Taiwan was terminated in 1965, Chinese officials expressed concern about the state of science and technology in their country. The cadre of scientists, engineers, and administrators that had come from the mainland with the Nationalists was aging, and a younger generation of professionals, educated in the United States and Europe, saw limited opportunities on Taiwan and tended not to return. At the same time, funds for science were being given summary treatment in the budget.

In 1967 Premier C. K. Yen was in the United States and expressed his misgivings to President Johnson. As a result, an American mission, with Hornig heading it, was dispatched to