

Lederberg Opposes Cancer Authority

The campaign to wrest cancer research from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (*Science*, 5 March) suffered a setback last week. Joshua Lederberg, a member of the commission that first called for the separate National Cancer Authority, defected to the pro-NIH forces. The Nobel laureate geneticist announced in a letter to Senator Edward M. Kennedy's (D-Mass.) Health Subcommittee that he no longer favored creation of the new federal agency.

"All health research should be knit together within a single agency, specifically an augmented and strengthened National Institutes of Health," said Lederberg echoing the sentiments of NIH officials and others who have opposed the authority. A few weeks ago, however, Lederberg endorsed the separate authority in his syndicated newspaper column.

Lederberg listed the following new developments as influential to his change of heart:

- ▶ President Nixon's new public commitment to health research in general and cancer research in particular.

- ▶ Evidence of a new balance, consistency, and efficiency in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare under Secretary Elliot Richardson's leadership.

- ▶ Statements by Edward David, Jr., President Nixon's Science Adviser, on the integrity of scientific work in the health field and the disadvantages of extracting cancer work from the NIH.

In the past few weeks Administration officials, including David, have lobbied extensively against the Kennedy-backed proposal.—R.J.B.

funds come from sources other than HEW. In the higher education sector, Defense Department outlays for academic research and other purposes are put at over \$500 million annually. Spending on research, training, and services in the health area amounts to more than \$1 billion a year, and civilian agencies, including AEC and NSF, put perhaps another \$1 billion into higher education mostly to finance research. Veterans benefits, notably the GI Bill, amount to about \$1 billion a year, and Social Security student benefits add another half-billion.

Most of the remainder is contained in the three measures that expire in June: the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) first passed in 1958, the Higher Education Facilities Act originally enacted in 1963, and the Higher Education Act, which dates from 1965. Each of these developed in different legislative settings. NDEA was passed in the aftermath of Sputnik and covered the educational spectrum from elementary school to graduate education. The facilities act was passed late in 1963 partly in memoriam to the recently assassinated John F. Kennedy and partly because of Lyndon Johnson's legislative skills, but it also reflected congressional awareness of the

demographic deluge descending on the campuses. The Higher Education Act extended the spirit of the Great Society to higher education with grant and work-study programs for students from low-income families and an array of special programs such as the big one to assist development of libraries. The history of higher education legislation from the middle 1960's on, however, was one of high expectations, high authorizations, and low appropriations.

In 1968 the three major higher education laws were lashed together with some new minor programs in the Higher Education Amendments of 1968 for reasons that included logic, convenience, and common protection, but the pattern of relatively low funding or no funding continued.

The gap between amounts authorized by Congress and actually appropriated has been greatest in the sector of aid for construction which, since the later Johnson years, has been under tight rein to help contain inflationary pressures. Some \$2 billion was authorized for construction grants in fiscal year 1971, but only \$43 million was appropriated and that sum is in a special fund designated for use only by public community colleges and technical institutes.

The strictures are fairly widely spread, however—for example, some \$70 million is authorized under the Higher Education Act for undergraduate instructional equipment, but only \$7 million appropriated. An Educational Professions Development Act was the last of the big Johnsonian education bills enacted and is the most sketchily funded—of \$450 million authorized for personnel training and development for the current year, some \$67 million was appropriated.

Student aid has not been fully funded either—of more than \$500 million authorized for grants and work-study payments about \$327.7 million was appropriated, but the President's budget calls for increases to a total of \$971 million next year.

The Administration is adhering generally to the grand design it put forward last year. Legislation providing grants and direct loans for construction of academic facilities now on the books would be repealed, and specific authorizations for a number of categorical programs would be ended. Federal expenditures for student aid would be concentrated to provide grants, work-study payments, and guaranteed loans for students from low-income families. Students in other income groups and most graduate students would find federal aid limited essentially to a guarantee on loans obtained in the regular market. Students from families with incomes of less than \$3500 a year would receive maximum assistance of \$1000 a year in grant and work-study payments plus \$400 in interest-subsidized loans. Those attending colleges with costs exceeding \$1400 a year could apply for \$1400 "cost of education" loans. A student's eligibility would be scaled down as his family's income increased, with \$10,000 annual income (adjusted for items such as number of children from the family in college) being the cutoff point for the principal kinds of aid.

The Administration proposes that the NDEA undergraduate loan program be absorbed into other programs and that NDEA fellowships be phased out. This would be done by cutting out funds for new fellowships next year and reducing financing for remaining fellowships from \$47.3 million in the current year to \$26.9 million next year. Universities would regard the demise of the fellowships as one of the unkindest cuts, since they carry cost of education allowances.

Hearings on legislative proposals are