

NEWS & NOTES

● **PERIPATETIC PITFALLS:** The case of traveling NIH scientists and their extramural expense allowances (*Science*, 8 October) has gained some prominence with the personal intervention of Elliot L. Richardson, secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, who last week issued an uncharacteristically strong statement decrying the "real or apparent financial windfalls" that current practices allow. Referring to the recent disclosure that Edward F. MacNichol, Jr., director of the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke, has been collecting a daily allowance of \$25 while summering at Woods Hole, Massachusetts, Richardson said, "I am totally unable to condone this practice from the viewpoint of the standards of propriety and sensitivity to the public interest which all federal employees are bound to observe." He directed all HEW undersecretaries to review the travel policies and procedures in their departments, and has indicated he expects a new set of regulations to emerge. Meanwhile, the House Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, headed by L. H. Fountain (D-N.C.), has asked the General Accounting Office to check out the activities of all NIH scientists who have been absent from Washington for periods of 2 weeks or more at government expense since January 1970. The list of these scientists, furnished to Fountain by NIH, contains the names of around 100 researchers, including that of DeWitt Stetten, Jr., director of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences. Stetten acknowledged that he, too, spent 2 months of nonvacation time this year on Cape Cod, but said he was not paid a per diem.

● **NEW SCIENCE INTERNSHIPS:** The White House has announced a new program of presidential internships in science and engineering, part of its effort to keep the nation's current overload of scientists and engineers afloat until better days return. The Labor Department has made available \$3 million, to be distributed on a 50-50 matching basis to federally funded laboratories across the country, for the support of over 400 1-year internships. Presidential science adviser Edward E. David says the new jobs, which will be related to problems of pressing social concern, will be particularly appropriate for scientists under 30.

ing to come in at lower grade levels than men.' Another one told me: 'Frankly, I am less comfortable working with professional women than men.' But I noticed he has a lot of women lab technicians working for him."

Although Richardson seems more sympathetic to feminist concerns than many men under him, several HEW women noted that his sensitivity is recently acquired. Only last year he publicly made a remark about women (facetious, he later claimed) that he probably wouldn't have dared make about blacks. During a meeting with young management interns, Richardson said he would hire a woman for an upper-grade position if one applied; but it was his impression that women did not want his responsibility. He cited as evidence that he hardly ever saw women on commuter flights.

As for the White House, one way to measure the attitude toward women is by looking at the President's record on women's appointments. The number of HEW women in grades 16 to 18 increased from 12 as of 1 May 1971 to 15 as of 1 August 1971; during the same period the number of HEW men in the same grade range increased from 358 to 372. Many employees in GS-16 to 18 slots are presidential appointees, and all in that range require political clearance. Elsewhere, Nixon's record for appointing women is equally undistinguished. For example, although he claims to have named 200 women to advisory groups, he fails to add that 61 of these are on a single committee—the Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The President did issue a memo on 21 April 1971 directing all heads of executive departments and agencies to develop and enact by year's end plans to increase the number of women in positions classified GS-13 and above and the number of women on public advisory committees. But, noting the President's new economic policies and the fact that his memo is moot on any action beyond December, several veteran HEW women interviewed said they interpret it as an empty, last-minute gesture to camouflage his abysmal record on women's appointments until election day 1972.

Women's attitudes about themselves also hinder them from asserting themselves as men's intellectual and professional equals, because society does not consider aggressive behavior "feminine." Most women in the department have remained silent on the women's

issue so far, but that does not mean they don't have problems. Many women misunderstand the discriminatory oral practices operating against them. "It also depends on how they define discrimination," Ramsey observed. "If you see yourself as a researcher in a lab under a great male scientist, and he treats you well, then you don't think you're discriminated against; but, if you think you should have the same options as men with similar talents and experience, then you realize you are. Equality in job situations will come when female mediocrity moves along at the same rate as male mediocrity—not when a female Einstein makes it." Some women who have fought their way up through the thicket, and, in some cases, come out with jobs comparable to men's, feel that, if they could overcome the hardships, younger women should be able to also. These women sometimes have a negative image of their sex and refuse to be associated with other women in women's groups. Increasingly, however, well-respected and highly qualified women are becoming involved. For example, membership in the National Institutes of Health Organization for Women, an independent advocacy group composed mostly of professional women employees, has grown from a handful to 300 during its first year.

This month, WAP is recommending formally to Richardson that the program be continued as essentially an advisory group, according to Kayden. "We don't want to be women doing things for women, but a catalyst to change the system, so that women can have an equal opportunity to participate within it," she explained. The advisory approach she outlined is similar to that tried by blacks in the early days of EEO, Hoston commented, "and we found it didn't work. You have to get involved in the making of program and policy decisions."

Perhaps the most potent force undermining the HEW women's movement is fear of reprisal. Not only the silent women, but also movement leaders throughout the department, share the fear that they will be labeled "troublemakers." The vocal women have been emboldened by the Secretary's official endorsement of WAP, which makes it respectable to organize and express one's concerns. But it is doubtful that, at this time, the momentum of the HEW women's movement could sustain itself independently. That could change.

—JUDY CHASE