

Rights Act) is too limited—it applies only to issues involving race or sex discrimination—to justify the expense, which, in the absence of a third party, falls entirely to the university.

There have been several attempts to unionize UM clerical and technical employees—a development that would automatically result in cost-sharing for grievances in this group—but they have fizzled. Jeanne Tashian, a graduate student in education who has been in the middle of the women's movement, says the resistance has come primarily from the clerical and technical employees themselves, whose loyalty to their bosses and unwillingness to identify with the working man, as it were, are stronger than any sense that they are being victimized or underpaid. But, she says, there has been resistance from the top too, notably in the case of supervisors in the hospital, who told hospital employees that they faced possible dismissal if they got too interested in unionizing.

The setbacks may come and go, but there is always consciousness-raising to be done. When Michigan women get bogged down in one track, they try something else, and their efforts are often marked by creativity and humor.

For example, when HEW Secretary Elliot Richardson came to town for a luncheon, he was presented with a garland, fashioned in the shape of the female biological symbol and made up of 93 dandelions and 7 roses. The roses symbolized the percentage of women in tenured faculty positions at UM. Richardson was said to be highly pleased with his bouquet.

Another creative effort, which has already made folk history at UM, is the "Fleming Follow." This grew out of a meeting between Fleming and the women's commission, where, at an inspired moment, a law student is said to have told the president: "You go to coffee with men, you go to meetings with men . . . but you never spend any time with women. You don't know anything about women! And that's the problem!" Fleming is said to have blushed for the first time in recorded history.

Thereupon was created the Ad Hoc Committee Concerned That President Fleming Does Not Meet With Women (AHCCTPFDNMWW). Every day for a week, with Fleming's permission, a woman was stationed outside his office to record vital statistics (sex, age, length of stay, and so on) of every visitor

to Fleming's office. Following this exercise, the committee worked up an elaborate report, complete with tables and graphs, which, on the whole, supported the initial premise. It found that of 124 visitors, only 21 were women. All of the women were seen

in groups, with the exception of commission chairman Nordin, who has a weekly meeting with Fleming. A composite visitor was described: "Male, white, 50–60 years of age . . . somewhat out of condition, balding . . . dressed in a blue suit . . . previously

Briefing

Institute of Aging Gets Surprise Veto

Much to the astonishment of health policy officials in Washington, President Nixon has vetoed a bill that would have created a National Institute of Aging within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The vetoed legislation, which would have given new prominence to research in aging, was guided through the Senate by Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.) and through the House by health activist Paul Rogers (D-Fla.).

Even though government officials opposed the creation of a new institute because they are against a proliferation of institutes within the NIH, they fully anticipated its approval. In fact, NIH leaders were beginning to think about who might be named to head the institute of aging, so sure were they that it would come into being. (In spite of this mild opposition to a new institute, NIH leaders concede that research on aging is not well funded.)

The President's veto was met with approval in some circles, especially because, as one official put it, "Nixon not only vetoed the aging bill, he did it for the right reasons."

By that he meant that the thrust of the explanation the President offered in his veto message would seem to put his rejection of the bill on somewhat philosophical rather than strictly financial grounds, although he did cite certain costly provisions in the bill among his objections. He said that the establishment of a separate institute would duplicate existing activity and "create additional administrative costs without enhancing the conduct of biomedical research for the aging. In fact, it could even fragment existing research efforts."

The question in everyone's mind

now is just why the President took the action he did. Both HEW and NIH officials say that, although they went on record as being against the establishment of a new institute, they did not lobby actively against the bill. Indeed, particularly because this was an election year, they felt that it was inevitable that the President would approve the bill for political reasons. "Somebody came in with negative advice that was a lot more effective than ours," one NIH policy-maker said, "and we'd like to know who."

Speculation is that advice for a veto came from the Office of Science and Technology, but no one can say for sure, and officials in that office are silent on the subject. Of course, the possibility that opposition came from the Office of Management and Budget cannot be ignored.

Understandably, individuals who have lobbied long and hard for a separate institute of aging are unhappy with the President's action. Convinced that the current level of research on aging is grossly inadequate and that it should not be conducted as it is under the aegis of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, they will reintroduce legislation in the next Congress. Meanwhile, NIH leaders say they will try to capitalize on the time they've won by stepping up current efforts on research in aging.—B.J.C.

Alumni Note

Philip M. Boffey, a former member of the Science news staff, has joined Daniel S. Greenberg's Washington newsletter, *Science and Government Report*. Boffey is completing a study of the National Academy of Sciences under the auspices of Ralph Nader.