energy projects relate to larger national needs.

None of this, according to a disclaimer in the front of the report, represents the Administration's official position; that will await comments on the present report.

Unofficial or not, the Doub analysis is already the object of dark suspicions in Congress and the agencies that the White House is making a new grab for power over the independent regulatory agencies. No doubt some of the proposals would lend themselves to such a purpose, but there is no reason to believe that was what Doub and his staff intended. Nevertheless, in the prevailing atmosphere of intrigue and mistrust in Washington, and with the Federal Energy Office struggling to consolidate its power, even the most innocuous adjustments in the regulation of energy are bound to encounter stiff resistance. —ROBERT GILLETTE

# The Politics of Biology: Young Academicians Becoming Involved

"It is time we became politically aware and socially responsive," declares Kenneth L. Melmon, who is anxious to see young biomedical scientists learn to deal effectively with members of Congress and the Administration. He himself has been trying to learn for the last year, during which he has been president of the country's largest society of young biomedical researchers.

Melmon, chairman of clinical pharmacology at the University of California School of Medicine, San Francisco, is the first to admit that, until recently, he was a good example of the politically naive scientist who had been brought up thinking that his place was in his laboratory. But he was also frustrated by his naiveté as he witnessed the government take actions he finds threatening to the future of biomedical research. So, when he had a chance to become president of the American Federation of Clinical Research (AFCR), whose 7000-plus members are all under the age of 41, he decided to accept it with the intention of helping make the AFCR a politically effective body.

"The AFCR had generally stayed away from politically sensitive issues," he noted in a conversation with *Science*. "In a sense, it had a clean slate on that score and I found the challenge appealing—a chance to begin something fresh."

At the same time, Melmon realized he was embarking on a perilous mission because the biomedical community is far from being of one mind on the subject of scientific organizations involving themselves in politics. "In 'going political,'" Melmon says, "you have to be careful not to compromise your primary objectives, which are scientific, or jeopardize its tax status —you have to keep your priorities straight. Basically, we're an organization of young scientists who get together to exchange scientific information. We can't let an interest in politics subvert our scientific purpose. And we have to be careful not to become politically involved in issues we know nothing about. We do not want to turn into lobbyists. Just the same, we have to learn how to speak up for ourselves."

(The AFCR is particularly serious about its determination to speak only on those issues about which it has an informed opinion. During the past year, for example, it accepted invitations to testify before Congress on training programs, research appropriations, and prescription drugs. It turned down a request that it testify on Indian health on the ground that, as a society of academic scientists, it really had no special expertise on the subject.)

The AFCR's aggressiveness has made some members of the academic biomedical community nervous, particularly those in the higher ranks. Position and age seem to be the key factors here. Those who have urged the AFCR to go slow or drop its political activity altogether are often former AFCR members, now 10 years older and a couple of rungs higher on the academic ladder. They do not want trouble and refer to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) as their political voice. Let the AAMC handle Washington and leave the scientific societies alone to devote their efforts to holding scientific meetings, they say. Melmon does not agree. "We [the AFCR] are not a social club but an organization of individuals trying to begin their professional lives. The problems of the young investigator are different from those who are already secure. If we can express ourselves well on our own behalf, there is no reason we should not. If we can't, no one will listen anyway."

The AFCR decision to enter the political arena did not come out of the blue 12 months ago, but is the result of feelings that have been building since the late 1960's. In 1969, for example, the AFCR decided to include a symposium on some social issue in its annual spring meeting in Atlantic City (*Science*, 19 May 1972). So, one year, a session on drugs was added to the usual sessions on such topics as cardiology, endocrinology, metabolism, and neoplasia. Another year, the subject was the impact of national health insurance on academic medicine.

This kind of effort, while useful, is limited by the fact that it involves only scientists talking to other scientists. During the last few months, the AFCR has put in place mechanisms giving scientists channels to the outside world.

The first thing Melmon and the AFCR council did was to establish a network of members who agreed to serve as representatives of the national organization in their local scientific communities. Someone has been enlisted at every academic medical center in the country. Now, these people are being asked to get to know their congressmen on AFCR's behalf. The idea is to establish a relationship with legislators in advance of crises, if possible, and to make the concerns of the young investigator known. Melmon summarized them in a letter to the newly delegated AFCR representatives: "As you know, our prime concerns are to main-

# NAE Elects 78 New Members

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) shares the responsibility given the National Academy of Sciences under its congressional charter of 1863 to advise the federal government, when asked, upon matters of science and engineering. Election to the academy recognizes those who have made important contributions to engineering theory and practice or who have demonstrated unusual accomplishments in the pioneering of new and developing fields of technology. The election of 78 members brings the total membership to 507. The newly elected members are as follows:

Willis A. Adcock, Texas Instruments Inc.
William G. Agnew, General Motors Research Labs.
William H. Arnold, Jr., Westinghouse Electric Corp.
John L. Atwood, Rockwell International Corp.
Isaac L. Auerbach, Auerbach Corp. for Science and Technology
Howard C. Barnes, American Electric Power Service Corp.
Thomas D. Barrow, Exxon Corp.
Jordan L. Baruch, Harvard University
Richard H. Battin, Charles Stark Draper Lab. Inc.
Benjamin B. Bauer, CBS Labs.
William B. Bergen, Rockwell International Corp.
Donald L. Bitzer, University of Illinois, Urbana
Willard S. Boyle, Bell Labs.
Lewis M. Branscomb, IBM Corp.
J. Fred Bucy, Jr., Texas Instruments Inc.
Arthur M. Bueche, General Electric Co.
Roy W. Carlson, Consultant, Berkeley, Calif.
George F. Carrier, Harvard University
Leo Casagrande, Casagrande Consultants
Harold Chestnut, General Electric Co.
Stuart W. Churchill, University of Pennsylvania
Floyd L. Culler, Jr., Oak Ridge National Lab.
Robert M. Drake, Jr., Combustion Engineering, Inc.
Mildred S. Dresselhaus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Phillip Eisenberg, Hydronautics, Inc.
James C. Elms, U.S. Department of Transportation
James L. Everett, III, Philadelphia Electric Co.
James R. Fair, Jr., Monsanto Co.
Jean H. Felker, Bell Labs.
A. J. Field, Global Marine Inc.
Daniel J. Fink, General Electric Co.
Peter T. Flawn, University of Texas, San Antonio
E. Montford Fucik, Harza Engineering Co.
Elmer L. Gaden, Jr., Columbia University
Albert P. Gagnebin, International Nickel Co. of Canada and the U.S.
Joseph G. Gavin, Jr., Grumman Aerospace Corp.
James F. Gibbons, Stanford University
Vladimir Haensel, Universal Oil Products Co.
Kenneth W. Hamming, Sargent & Lundy
John C. Hancock, Purdue University
Paul D. Haney, Black and Veach Consulting Engineers
Norman B. Hannay, Bell Labs.
Thomas J. Hanratty, University of Illinois, Urbana
Donald R. F. Harleman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Richard Hazen, Hazen and Sawyer
Ira G. Hedrick, Grumman Aerospace Corp.
John P. Hirth, Ohio State University
Claude R. Hocott, Esso Production and Research Co.
Hoyt C. Hottel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Olaf A. Hougen, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Salomon Levy, General Electric Co.
Henry R. Linden, Institute of Gas Technology
Charles G. Little, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Alan M. Lovelace, Air Force Systems Command
John Lowe III, Tippett-Abbett-McCarthy-Stratton
William D. Manley, Cabot Corp.
Frank E. Marble, California Institute of Technology
Fujio Matsuda, University of Hawaii
John L. Moll, Fairchild Camera and Instrument Corp.
James H. Mulligan, Jr., NAE
Dale D. Myers, Rockwell International Corp.
David Okrent, University of California, Los Angeles
Alfred L. Parme, Consulting Engineer, Calif.
Donald O. Pederson, University of California, Berkeley
William S. Pellini, Naval Research Lab.
Dean F. Peterson, Jr., Utah State University
Robert Plunkett, University of Minnesota
Robert F. Scott, California Institue of Technology
Ascher H. Shapiro, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Sigurd A. Sjoberg, National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Carl R. Soderberg, Boston, Massachusetts
John J. Taylor, Westinghouse Electric Corp.
Michael Tenenbaum, Inland Steel Co.
John A. Tillinghast, American Electric Power Service Corp.
James W. Westwater, University of Illinois, Urbana
Walter G. Whitman, Scottsdale, Arizona
Thornton A. Wilson, The Boeing Co.
Walter H. Zinn, Dunedin, Florida

tain investigator-initiated scientific research and peer group review, and to restore the training programs, particularly in areas of high national need."

Aware of the sensitivity that any kind of political activism can cause, the AFCR is trying to be low key. One thing they would like to see happen is a visit by every member of Congress to the academic medical centers in his district. The AFCR is asking its representatives to contact their deans or presidents, asking *them* to do the inviting, on the theory that there is nothing to be gained by getting the higher-ups' noses out of joint. The AFCR member is merely to modestly ask to be included on the visit team. Don't push.

Letters urging that schools extend such congressional invitations went out only a couple of months ago, so it is hard to assess the results yet. However, Melmon says there has already been some response and it falls in two categories. Some schools have answered that they already have well-oiled machinery to handle political problems. In such cases, Melmon himself replies, asking the dean or whomever to reconsider on the grounds that the AFCR is not interested exclusively in contacting legislators for political reasons but that they also want to establish ways of making scientific information available to the community—something with which the legislator could help. Other schools have responded more favorably, Melmon reports, and in some cases, legislators have already come to visit.

The AFCR's interest in getting to know its congressmen is a long-range one and, therefore, it is asking its representatives to do more than arrange just a single visit. The point is to become a person to whom a congressman will turn for an opinion on matters of health legislation. Thus, AFCR representatives are asked to try to arrange several contacts with their legislators. "A one-shot visit may accomplish little," Melmon wrote in a memorandum listing four "possible methods of contacting members of Congress." One, for example, is:

> A personal visit. By far the best method. Call and make an appointment. Do not be disappointed if you are dealt with by a congressional aide or assistant. An aide often exerts important influence on the member, serving as a very necessary extra set of eyes and ears.

In addition to establishing long-term relationships with members of Congress, the AFCR representatives are asked to be prepared to act quickly

on certain issues if called upon. It has become apparent to AFCR officers that there are times when rapid action is called for, and for this they set up what they call a "telephone cascade," rather like an electronic chain letter. It is something other, nonscientific, groups use to raise money, for example. Melmon suggests it could be used to let members of Congress and the Administration know in short order what the AFCR thinks about particular issues.

Intended as a special, emergency-only measure, the telephone cascade, which can be activated only by the president, has been used twice. Several months ago, word got out that Melvin Laird, then an adviser to President Nixon, was trying to get Congress to tack an amendment on an appropriations bill that would make it impossible for anyone who had gone to court to challenge the President's 1973 impoundments of funds from getting support in 1974. First, Melmon verified the situation. Then, convinced it was so, he initiated the telephone cascade. Within hours, more than 100 protests had been phoned to Laird's office and to members of relevant congressional committees. The AFCR likes to think that its intervention was at least partially responsible for the fact that the Laird suggestion was dropped.

The second time the AFCR used the cascade was to try to persuade the Senate to keep a proposed amendment to establish an advisory panel for biomedical research that would report directly to the White House, as does the President's Cancer Panel (see *Science*, 5 April). Not everyone agrees that it is a workable idea because one cannot force Nixon to take advice, but the AFCR sees it as something that would be in the interests of biomedical research. (There is, as yet, no final congressional action on the amendment.)

The AFCR has also decided to try to justify its concerns, particularly about training grants, in formal position papers intended to spell out the reasons for federal support of young researchers in certain high-priority areas, which were identified in 1971 by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences. They include the epidemiology of cardiovascular disease, clinical pharmacology, lung diseases, and human genetics. These papers are being serialized as a start in the AFCR's own journal, *Clinical Research*, though AFCR officers realize they need wider circulation.

Whether they will be convincing is debatable. Each stresses the importance of the field it is about and says that we need more well-trained people to solve unsolved problems in biology, but none really tackles the question of why training grants are the best or only way to do it.

The AFCR's involvement in policy issues is probably not going to save research or training programs from the hands of budget-cutters nor solve most of the problems that exist or can be anticipated in academic medicine. On the other hand, its formal, organized efforts to get a place for itself in the decision-making process seem to be a step ahead. Just having identifiable AFCR representatives at each academic center is helpful in itself, Melmon believes. "When issues come up, our members often feel that they have valuable information to contribute to a discussion but too frequently have had no way of getting it out. Now they can do something more than just sit and stew."—BARBARA J. CULLITON

# Crib Death: Foremost Baby Killer Long Ignored by Medical Research

Crib death is the leading cause of mortality among infants more than a month old. In the United States alone it kills around 10,000 babies a year. Yet until recently crib death has suffered from a curious degree of neglect on the part of the medical research community. Researchers have found it intellectually null, doctors have been so little interested that the precise incidence of the disease is still uncertain, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has devoted typically $75,000 a year, less than 0.01 percent of its total resources, to direct research on the problem.

The disease has recently become rather more fashionable. Congress 2 weeks ago passed a bill to set up regional diagnostic centers and the NIH's National Institute of Child Health and Human Development now puts more than half a million dollars a year into crib death research. But the long neglect of so important a disease raises the question of how, and in whose interest, medical research priorities are set.

The striking feature of crib death, known otherwise as sudden infant death syndrome or SIDS, is that it attacks without warning. In the typical case the baby is put to bed, apparently in perfect health, and is found the next morning to have died in its sleep. The shock of the child's death is only the first of a chain of calamities the parents may have to bear.

They may blame themselves for the death, wondering what they could possibly have done wrong. So may the doctor, neighbors, coroner, and many others who have not learned to distinguish sudden infant death syndrome from a case of neglect or child abuse. It is not uncommon for parents to notify the authorities and receive not comfort but interrogation on the suspicion of having killed their child. In several cases parents have spent the night following their infant's death separated and in jail. In 1971 a young crib death couple from the Bronx, Roy and Evelyn Williams, were imprisoned for 6 months (the judge dismissed the charges at the conclusion of the prosecution's case).

Ignorance of crib death among doctors and coroners is so widespread that, even if an autopsy is performed, parents may not be told the true cause of death. According to a nationwide survey conducted in 1972 by Abraham B. Bergman of the Children's Orthopedic Hospital, Seattle, only half of 421 parents interviewed were correctly informed that their babies had died of crib death. Families are more likely to be told if they are white and rich.