the evaluation of the hardware is still going on. Therefore, in addition to entering the information in the computer, the operator uses a LEMRAS card and duplicates the information.

If the call is an emergency, she hand-carries the card to the dispatcher.

Otherwise, she enters the call . . . : name of calling party, street and apartment number, patrol district, the dispatcher position and additional information not to exceed 142 characters. Anything beyond 142 characters cannot be retrieved.

. . . Once a call is completed it cannot be retrieved. An officer in the field cannot call in for information about a completed call. Feedback between operator and dispatcher is difficult. The seating arrangement limits any visual communication, and the technology does not allow for two-way communication between operator and dispatcher. "If a robbery is in progress," said the supervisor, "we throw away the machines and go to verbal."

The Keystone Kops and the computer scenes that Zannes described and the proliferation of police technology around the country generally both raise the question of how a local police chief distinguishes fish from fowl in the marketplace. "I feel sorry for the rural or small town police departments," said one police officer from a large city. "They're very vulnerable to the vendors, and they get most of the money from LEAA. . . . Once you give the slightest hint that you're looking for something, they'll knock your door down to sell you something."

Accordingly, the conference devoted a session to government standards setting in the field of law enforcement. Representatives of the Law Enforcement Standards Laboratory (LESL) of the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) reported on the work they are doing to develop voluntary equipment standards which will be promulgated by LEAA. The LESL is now developing 105 official statements regarding performance and safety features of

Briefing

Drug Abuse Man to Head ADAMHA

Announcement is expected shortly of the appointment of Robert L. DuPont, the Administration's top drug abuse official, as the first permanent director of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, or ADAMHA. DuPont will take over from Roger O. Egeberg, who has been holding the fort while the Administration made up its mind.

President Nixon is expected to make the announcement when he signs the authorization bill for the National Institute for Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA). The bill also formally establishes ADAMHA.

The Administration originally was seeking a psychiatrist with broad administrative experience to head the new agency, but finally, in keeping with its preoccupation with drug abuse, selected DuPont, whose experience is more limited. The 38-year-old psychiatrist is currently head of the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Special Action Office for Drug Abuse Prevention. He previously headed the Narcotics Treatment Administration in Washington, D.C., and is known as a strong advocate of methadone treatment for heroin addicts.

ADAMHA is a tripartite organization made up of NIAAA, NIDA, and the National Institute for Mental Health. It was formed partially in response to a desire on the part of the alcohol people to get on an equal footing with and separate from NIMH.

DuPont intends to continue as head of the special action office until its scheduled dissolution in June 1975. A lot of mental health professionals are concerned that this dual role will result in unbalanced attention to drug problems at the expense of mental health problems, and DuPont probably will encounter some hard questioning on this matter before his nomination is confirmed by the Senate.

NIMH director Bertram Brown very much wanted the ADAMHA job, but he is being a good sport about it all. He gets along well with DuPont and plans to stay on, at least for a while, to see how mental health fares in the new setup.—C.H.

American Tentative Society Has Money, Needs Ideas

"There is a hazard when we learn anything," a letter we received recently began. ". . . We may become prisoners of our own dogma, stuck with our yesterdays. We may become arrogant in defense of some outmoded 'truth.' Scientists, among others, can be guilty of sins against reason."

The letter was from the American Tentative Society (ATS),* an organization committed to the idea that knowledge is, indeed, tentative. The society, which has been accused of being frivolous, now has some $300,000 to back its contention that it is in earnest. "Our name, American Tentative Society, is not a jest," the letter says. "We think the principle of regarding most knowledge as tentative, subject to growth, is essential to all science and most aspects of living as well. ATS can help nourish mankind's unique possession—his flexible but fallible mind." With that philosophy as a guide, the ATS wants to promote knowledge about science "for the benefit of writers, educators, students, and the general public." "We don't want money. We have that," says ATS President Alton Blakeslee, who is science editor of the Associated Press (AP). The society is simply soliciting ideas.

During the 8 years since its formation the tentative society has been little more than what Blakeslee calls a "lively concept." But now it is ready to become more than that, because one of its founders, AP reporter Rennie Taylor, made it possible. "He lived modestly, invested prudently, and, when he died last August, willed most of his estate to the Society," Blakeslee says. It has not yet decided whether to invest Taylor's legacy in a few big projects or to support many modest proposals.

The ATS is willing to back projects in writing, film, or tape recording. It is interested in science and medicine, social science, government, and economics. It is willing to be interested in almost anything anyone cares to propose. In getting started, what we need, says Blakeslee, is "counsel from imaginative minds." Anyone have a bright idea?

—B.J.C.

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