

effort to ensure that the Congress does not include this damaging provision in the final version of the NSF authorization." Nonetheless, even if the Senate does not pass a similar amendment, the Bauman provision could become law by surviving the subsequent conference reconciling the two bills. In short, no one can predict at this time whether the Bauman amendment will stick.

But the reaction to the amendment in some quarters has been strong. The Senate's best known critic of NSF, Senator William Proxmire (D-Wis.) told *Science* that he was opposed to the amendment. Proxmire castigated NSF for a number of management failures, but added, "I don't believe that the answer is to make 535 members of Congress a part of the grant approval process. The answer is to reduce NSF funding, forcing the agency to sharpen priorities."

NSF's director, H. Guyford Stever, admits that the Bauman proposal took NSF by "complete surprise." But he says that, even if the amendment itself goes away, the motivation behind it will not. He told *Science*: "I am strongly opposed to the Bauman amendment. . . . I don't think it is a practical amendment or a good one. But it is a signal which all scientists should heed."

If implemented, Stever says, the amendment would distort NSF's research support and therefore American science. Most congressional critics, he explained, have focused on projects with odd-sounding [to them] titles in the biological and social sciences. Hence, he says, Congress would tend to veto projects in those areas. Untargeted basic research would also suffer, since many members are under pressure from constituents not to fund seemingly irrelevant projects with seemingly incomprehensible titles.

The fundamental issue behind the Bauman amendment, Stever says, is "whether the science foundation should be sponsoring research in certain fields," in biological and social sciences, and this, he says, is a legitimate question. Congress and the public are not anti-science, but they are asking what they are getting for their money. "Times are changing; I think the scientific community should be realistic about that." Hence, the Bauman amendment is something of a watershed, like the Mansfield amendment of 1970, which, although it lasted only a year, has had a long-term effect on the Department of Defense's justification for its basic research program. "I think this is a

bigger turning point than the Mansfield amendment," Stever says.

Whether the congressmen who voted for the amendment wind up reviewing NSF grant awards, or, whether their message survives only as a "signal" to the scientific community, their opinions about NSF and science generally are suddenly very important. Their complaints, as expressed by Bauman and other conservatives who supported the amendment and by critics outside the Congress, seem to add up to frustration with the way NSF manages its research money and the way in which Congress oversees—or fails to oversee—it. Finally, because Proxmire and others have ridiculed the esoteric titles of many NSF research grants, there

seems to be a strongly held view among the critics that NSF is wasting money in a cavalier manner. As syndicated columnist James J. Kilpatrick wrote recently, some of the grants

amount to a reckless and irresponsible rip-off of the taxpayers. They reflect the extravagance and elegance of an agency with too much money to spend, and not enough supervision over the spending of it.

In homelier language during the debate, Representative Robert J. Lagomarsino (R-Calif.) nicknamed the proposed measure the "Polish frog bill," and he delivered a harangue against the federal research establishment:

Mr. Chairman. . . . This is the Polish frog bill, or as it is otherwise known, the comic book bill. It is being brought to you by

Nuclear Industry Girds for Battle

With an expansive flourish, the Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF) is picking up the gauntlet thrown down by nuclear critics advocating a moratorium on new reactor construction. For 22 years the AIF has been a low-key, somewhat passive spokesman for the nuclear industry. Now, in the face of rising opposition to nuclear power, the forum is surrendering its status with the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-deductible, educational organization and is adopting the aggressive image of a full-fledged trade association.

In a stepped-up public relations program, the AIF plans to double its operating budget to \$1.4 million and move its 90-member staff from New York to Washington. Although AIF officials say the forum itself plans no federal lobbying activities and will not register as such, the organization is considering setting up a lobbying unit. One proposal, advanced by John W. Simpson, a senior Westinghouse official, calls for setting up a Nuclear Energy Association that would spend up to \$500,000 a year lobbying the federal government. The money would come from dues assessed on participating utilities, equipment manufacturers, and engineering firms. Former Congressman Craig Hosmer (R-Calif.), long a passionate advocate of nuclear energy, has been mentioned as a possible head of the new organization. Its format—and its relationship to the AIF—have not been decided yet, however.

According to the April issue of *Nuclear Industry*, an AIF publication, an early sign of the forum's new activism will be its sponsorship, with three electric power trade associations, of a "Nuclear Power Assembly" in Washington on 13 and 14 May. The meeting is intended to bring utility and industry executives to town for a "briefing and a round of visits to congressmen to carry the nuclear message to Capitol Hill."

The planned assembly bears a superficial resemblance to a widely publicized gathering sponsored last November by consumer advocate Ralph Nader and given the catchy name "Critical Mass." Nader's ability to rally some 800 grass-roots critics from more than 30 states convinced the industry that the "anti-nuclear" movement was fast becoming a potent political force. This conviction, plus the demise of the Atomic Energy Commission, and the fact that efforts to enact various forms of nuclear moratoriums in several states were gaining strength, helped impel the transformation of the AIF and the rapid escalation of its budget.

By comparison, the critics' main national organizations probably spend a total of around \$100,000 a year in their lobbying and public relations efforts.—R.G.