the House floor on another NSF-supported project— the introductory anthropology course, "Man: A Course of Study" (MACOS)—at the time of the debate on the NSF authorization bill (*Science*, 25 April) was considered by many observers as having paved the way for an amendment requiring NSF to submit all research grant awards to Congress for review. The amendment, proposed by Representative Robert Bauman (R-Md.), empowers either house of Congress to veto a research project. If no action is taken within 30 days, however, the grant is automatically awarded.

The fate of the Bauman amendment is still unresolved. Although the amendment was attached to the authorization measure passed by the House, the Senate subsequently passed its own version of the bill which did not include any such proviso. Furthermore, no such amendment was discussed during the debate on the Senate bill. Kennedy had declared himself against such a review process for Congress, and his subcommittee had rejected the proposal.

The next step is a House-Senate conference to reconcile the two measures to allow final passage of the bill. The appointment of conferees by committee chairmen is ordinarily a routine matter, but when Representative Olin E. Teague, chairman of the House Science and Technology Committee, moved to name the conferees for the NSF bill under a unanimous consent motion, Bauman objected, automatically requiring that the matter be taken up more formally. Bauman is expected to propose that the House conferees be instructed to insist that the congressional review amendment be retained in the conference version.

Teague was expected to go to the House on 22 May to seek approval of the conferees without the commitment to the amendment, but he decided to defer the move until after the Memorial Day recess, which ends on 2 June. The delay seems to have been dictated solely by the press of business as the House tried to wind up its affairs before the recess.

The specific question of obtaining the peer review information seems, for the moment, to be in abeyance. The NSF point of view is that their position is supported by both practice and law. The rationale for confidentiality in the peer review system is the belief that it is difficult for a scientist to speak critically of a research idea on the record when the work of a colleague, friend, or a dominant figure in science is involved. This assumption undergirds the peer review structure throughout government.

Government lawyers trace the legal basis for confidentiality to the exemptions written into the Freedom of Information Act. While the Congress or a duly constituted subgroup of the Congress—a committee or special investigating committee —might win access to peer review material, an individual congressman making the request on his own initiative appears to be cast in the role of a private citizen. As such he would apparently not have a right to access under current interpretations of the law. At least two court decisions, including one involving a demand by the Washington Research Project for access to National Institutes of Health grant applications, have supported the confidentiality principle. The comments of experts participating in the peer review process were held to be opinion and, therefore, as part of the deliberative process which appears to come under one of the exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act.

Conlan, for the time being, appears to have opted for seeking to achieve his objectives by working through regular channels. Peer review is one of several major themes which are slated to be given special attention in oversight hearings scheduled to begin on 22 July. It is thought that Conlan will seek to make the hearings a forum for a critical examination of the peer review process. Although he is at present working within the committee structure, he does not preclude seeking judicial relief in his quest for the peer review information.

On the broader issues raised earlier about the curriculum revision program, there is action on several fronts. An NSF internal review committee appointed by Stever has been examining the agency's precollege curriculum program to determine whether agency criteria are being properly followed—from the selection of subjects to the making of business and contractural arrangements. The group has concentrated on five case histories based on representative projects. The MACOS and ISIS courses are included in the review.

The review team is headed by Robert E. Hughes, NSF assistant director for national and international programs, and is made up mainly of upper-level NSF officials who have not been involved in the curriculum projects. Also serving on the group are two members of the National Science Board, Grover E. Murray, president of Texas Tech University and Texas Tech University School of Medicine, and L. Donald Shields, president of California State University at Fullerton.

The group presented its review to the agency's advisory committee for science education in mid-May, and the committee then forwarded its own recommendations to Stever. The National Science Board has considered both sets of documents and plans to develop its own recommendations.

After the recess Hughes will present to Teague a set of recommendations which he himself prepared, along with comments by Stever. Last month Teague appointed a citizen review committee of his own to study the matter (*Science*, 23 May). The committee was asked to report at the end of June but, after holding a 2-day meeting in May, decided to request a month's extension. Teague is expected to agree.

NSF appears to have made a maximum effort with the review. There are signs that the agency will make a vigorous defense of its conduct of the curriculum development program, but will acknowledge that its procedures were not adapted rapidly enough to changing circumstances and will propose some fairly far-reaching changes.

In Congress, events in the House would appear to be crucial for NSF, and Teague the key figure. So far his actions have appeared to be deliberate and even-handed, but until the reports are in responses are unpredictable. It is safe, however, to predict a long, hot summer for NSF.

—JOHN WALSH

APPOINTMENTS

Brian J. Thompson, director, Institute of Optics, University of Rochester, to dean, College of Engineering and Applied Science at the university. . . . **John V. Bergen**, director, National Formulary, to president, Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. . . . **William L. Nastuk**, professor of physiology, Columbia University, to director, Bioengineering Institute. . . . **Elmer L. Gaden, Jr.**, former chairman, chemical engineering and applied chemistry department, Columbia University to dean, College of Engineering, Mathematics, and Business Administration, University of Vermont. . . . **William E. Lavery**, executive vice president, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, to president of the institute and university. . . . **James H. Brickley**, lieutenant governor, Michigan, to president, Eastern Michigan University. . . . **Richard V. Andrews**, assistant dean, School of Medicine, Creighton University, to dean, Graduate School at the university. . . . **John Naughton**, dean for academic affairs, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, George Washington University, to dean, School of Medicine, State University of New York, Buffalo. . . . **Irvin Omtvedt**, associate director, agricultural experiment station, Auburn University, to chairman, animal science department, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.