

\$260 million of the \$384 million in cuts. Major elements of the package were a 2 percent increase in the corporation business tax, counted on to raise \$95 million, and a boost in motor vehicle registration fees, expected to bring in \$25 million.

The governor did win the legislature's agreement to return after the election to take up the problem of additional funds for the schools. But if Byrne hopes to see an income tax enacted then, skeptics think he will be disappointed. They expect many of those who supported Byrne on the income tax to return as lame ducks, which will further isolate the governor.

Byrne, who was elected in 1974, has neither dominated the legislature nor appealed successfully over the legislators' heads to the public in behalf of his tax pro-

gram. He was a prosecutor and judge and had never held elective office before winning the governorship by a record margin. He rejected the old politics, which involved wheeling and dealing and, for some, even stealing, but his critics say he has failed to evolve an effective new style of his own. Nobody questions Byrne's integrity, and many of his opponents will concede the logic of the case he makes for tax reform, but even some of his admirers are now questioning his capacity, even his inclination, to govern.

It is reasonable to ask whether too much has been made of the effect of the political impasse on higher education in New Jersey. Some knowledgeable people deny that there is a crisis—they say that New Jersey is a wealthy state, that higher education is

popular, and that the wrangle in Trenton is only a temporary perturbation. After all, most of the dollar cuts were restored, no hefty tuition increase was imposed, and there have been no mass firings.

It is possible, in fact, to find people who think that the alarm has had a healthy effect on the complacency and lethargy of many tenured academics. Some legislators thought that a good scare wouldn't hurt the profs.

It is hard to estimate the damage. Most people inside the system seem mainly relieved that the worst did not happen, and many have gone off on the annual August vacation to recuperate. But it is difficult to take the view that no harm was done if you are a college or university administrator who was ordered to fire a lot of people, or a

## Nuclear Critics Escalate the War of Numbers

The American research community is showing new signs of polarization over nuclear power and its pace of development. Last January, Nobel physicist Hans Bethe served the White House with a statement of unequivocal advocacy of nuclear power signed by 34 prominent scientists. Now, the small but effective Union of Concerned Scientists in Cambridge has gotten up a declaration urging a "drastic reduction" in new starts on construction of nuclear plants and an end to their exportation. Signed by some 2300 scientists, engineers, and physicians, the UCS statement was delivered to the White House on 6 August, by no coincidence the 30th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima.

The UCS declaration is part of a propaganda war of growing intensity and sophistication between nuclear critics and proponents. The target of this particular salvo of names was the oft-stated contention of proponents that few reputable scientists seriously subscribed to UCS's dark view of nuclear technology. In countering that claim, MIT physicist Henry Kendall and his associate Daniel Ford, the leading lights of the UCS, say they succeeded beyond their expectations. The 2300 signers of the UCS statement are widely distributed by geography and profession and include some prominent names not usually identified as nuclear critics—among them James B. Conant, president emeritus of Harvard; George B. Kistiakowsky, a science adviser to President Eisenhower; Victor Weisskopf, former chairman of physics at MIT; Julian Schwinger, a Nobel physicist at UCLA; and Richard F. Post, a deputy associate director of fusion research at the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory.

The declaration is clear enough about its philosophy but is vague in its prescription. A preamble notes that "many thoughtful members" of the technical community, as well as some government agencies, hold a variety of reservations about assurances of nuclear safety—chiefly concerning the quality of reactor design and manufacture, the hazards of radioactive waste, and the potential connection between civilian nuclear programs and the proliferation of atomic weapons.

Declaring that the problems currently besetting nuclear technology are "grave but not irremediable," the statement calls for a drastic but undefined reduction in construction

starts until stepped-up research efforts can resolve some of the safety questions.

In a Washington news conference, Kendall said he wouldn't presume to define the word "drastic" for all 2300 signers. The basic message, he said, was merely that a considerable number of scientists and engineers believed the all-out construction of nuclear plants being advocated by the Ford Administration was imprudent. On the other hand, Kendall said, abruptly shutting down the 55 operable plants and stopping construction of some 170 others now under way would be impractical. "What we're calling for instead is a change of policy, a pause so that the nuclear industry can get its house in order."

The UCS has unquestionably tapped a body of critical opinion, but its petition is by no means a representative sample of the entire community. Names were recruited by a mass mailing effort to some 12,000 members of the Federation of American Scientists and readers of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, who make up perhaps the most liberal and socially active segment of the research community. Kendall, however, said no attempt was made to preselect recipients of the statement and that only a dozen or so had sent back negative replies. Consumer advocate Ralph Nader, who watched the news conference from the back of the room, told *Science* that he thought peer pressure had kept many researchers from voicing concern about the unresolved problems of nuclear technology but that the UCS petition had now "broken the ice."

It may also stimulate still more energetic efforts by nuclear advocates. Still to be heard from are two new lobbying groups supported predominantly by the nuclear industry. In Washington, the industry has set up a lobbying unit called the American Nuclear Energy Council with a budget of \$500,000 and former California congressman Craig Hosmer as its head. Across the Potomac in Arlington, Virginia, retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt has taken command of Americans for Energy Independence, whose contributors range from the Westinghouse corporation to a passel of major utilities. Chairman of the 23-member board is Hans Bethe, and its most recent recruit is former Atomic Energy Commission chairman Dixy Lee Ray.—R.G.