

of a trip which Stone, traveling on an ordinary tourist visa, made to Moscow in November to investigate for the FAS the problem facing Soviet scientists with respect to the denial of human rights and freedoms supposedly recognized by the Soviet Union as a signatory of the Helsinki

agreement. Most of his time there was devoted to calling on political dissidents such as Andrei Sakharov and on refuseniks such as Benjamin Levich, who has not been allowed to emigrate to Israel and has been given the silent treatment by nearly all of his colleagues in the Soviet Academy of

Sciences. As a corresponding member of the Soviet Academy, Levich is the highest ranking of the refuseniks, and his case has become something of a *cause célèbre* among those in the West most concerned about the right of scientists to travel freely, to emigrate, and to practice their profession.

The newsletter's one mention of Handler and the NAS was set off separately in boldface type and had to do with complaints "from a variety of sources" about the academy's "posture with regard to refuseniks." One such complaint was that, during the observance of the 250th anniversary of the Soviet Academy in October, no one from the NAS—indeed, no scientist from any of the western delegations—had visited the seminars which the refuseniks hold regularly in a courageous effort to keep themselves alive professionally. George Hammond attended the anniversary observance as the NAS foreign secretary. He was reported to have mentioned the problem of Levich and other refuseniks in a conversation with his opposite, G. K. Skryabin, acting chief scientific secretary of the Soviet Academy, but without pressing the matter further after Skryabin said, "It is not up to us."

Another complaint had to do with Handler's visit to Moscow in June of 1973. Stone, referring simply to a story being "quoted in Moscow," wrote as follows: "Levich had been told to expect a call from Handler and not receiving one, had called Handler directly. Handler had 'hemmed and hawed' and said he did not feel that he could meet with Levich since he was an official representative. Later his [Handler's] wife called to smooth over the situation but without effect." (Handler says that his wife made no such call, although once in his absence, she answered a call from Mrs. Levich.)

A footnote to this newsletter item indicated that Hammond had confirmed having brought up Levich's problem during a long discussion of exchange problems with Skryabin but was not at liberty to disclose the substance of what was said. But Stone never called Handler directly to get his side of the story, and this has become a very sore point.

In his letter to Morrison, Handler said, "The reader is surely led by Mr. Stone's rhetoric to wonder about my motives in avoiding a meeting with Levich at his apartment as he requested. My decision rested entirely on my concern that I not compromise my ability to be of assistance to Dr. Levich. Publication of that story, in the form in which it appeared, could damage me personally and damage my ability to provide [leadership]. In the position that he holds, I would think that Mr. Stone—son of a famous journalist [I. F. Stone]—

No New Year's Gift for Science

The once-bright prospect that the Administration would start off the new year with a brand new White House science adviser has grown distinctly dimmer thanks to crossfire between the Administration and a handful of Senate Democratic staffers over the legislation authorizing the appointment. Ever since 6 November 1975, when the House of Representatives passed an Administration-backed bill reestablishing the White House science adviser's job which former President Richard M. Nixon abolished in 1973, swift passage of a comparable Senate measure had been expected by many people who had been following the legislation. Some Administration officials had even hoped the President could sign a final bill by Christmas.

Now, however, no final action is expected before February at the earliest. Drafts of the Senate bill have aroused Administration opposition and alarmed the usually docile Republicans who sit on the relevant Senate committees. A number of prominent scientists have also reportedly gotten into the fracas, and have been telephoning the White House, then the Senate, then the White House, trying to figure out what is holding things up, and even, on occasion, carrying messages between the two sides.

The irony behind the dispute is that all parties, including Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), who has the chief responsibility for getting a Senate bill passed, have stated that they are anxious that a new White House science adviser be appointed speedily. Both the President and the Vice President, in the meetings with congressmen and with scientists, have stated that they want this, too.

The controversy is over a series of draft Senate bills drawn up by Ellis Mottur, Kennedy's principal staffer for science matters. The drafts give the science adviser the power to make yearly recommendations on R & D priorities in the federal budget. If the President does not follow this advice, he must explain why, to Congress, in writing. They also give the science adviser other powers; for example he sits on the National Security Council and thus has an explicit role in military and strategic affairs. The Administration objects that these provisions make the science adviser so powerful that the President would be answerable to him, rather than the other way around.

In addition the drafts contain elements left over from a Christmas tree science bill passed by the Senate in 1974 largely at Kennedy's initiative. These include provisions for retraining scientists and engineers, appointing science advisers to state governments, and creating new programs in the National Science Foundation. Few people, in the Administration or the House, took the 1974 bill seriously, and the bill died.

But the new draft bill in the Senate has the Administration alarmed. An informal White House memorandum complains that the draft, "The Mottur Bill," contains "undesirable and unacceptable" features and treats "Science and Technology . . . as ends in themselves rather than means, which, along with others, are to achieve agency and national goals."

Although Senate staffers plan to negotiate away some of the bill's less desirable features in conference with the House, this plan does not allay the Administration's concern. "I still think we must take as the will of the Senate anything that passes the Senate, no matter what staffers promise," says one source.

The House bill, drawn up by Olin Teague (D-Texas) last summer in close consultation with the Administration, provides for only a White House science office and leaves most details of the new arrangement up to the President. The Administration clearly wishes the Senate would pass something equally limited in scope. Anything else, it argues, would mean more delay.

—DEBORAH SHAPLEY