

● Diethylstilbestrol (DES): In the 1950's, DES was given to pregnant women to prevent miscarriage. Now it is known that this drug caused vaginal can-

cer in the teen-aged daughters of many of those women. The lag time between the giving of the drug and the recognition of its ill effects on offspring was close to 20

years. Granting that in this particular situation some lag is inevitable—the daughters, after all, did have to grow into teen-agers—many pharmacologists be-

Briefing

Breeder, Arms Sales Are Targets of New Lobby Group

New Directions, the new world affairs lobby modeled on the citizens' lobby Common Cause, has announced a first set of priorities that should keep it busy for some time.

First, it wants to mount a campaign that will culminate in a prohibition on nuclear reprocessing in this country, a halt to the development of the breeder reactor, and pursuit of a "soft energy" economy based primarily on solar energy. Second, it wants a reduction of arms sales by this country, whose volume has grown from \$1 billion in 1970 to \$13 billion in 1976. Finally, it wants to get the world's poor better fed through various means such as increased food aid, rural development in poor countries, and more support for population programs.

Despite these grand aspirations, the press releases bearing the news sank without leaving a trace in the daily press, much to the surprise of New Directions president Russell Peterson. However, as the organization expands it may get more attention, particularly since its announced goals are not far out of line with what Jimmy Carter talked about during the presidential campaign.

Peterson, former chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, says things have moved apace since the group was launched on 1 October. It has picked up close to 1000 members so far. Plans call for a huge direct mail campaign that is expected to bring in another 99,000 members within a year. The group is looking for a lobbyist to send to Capitol Hill, and has four volunteer lawyers drafting legislation for introduction by friendly members of Congress. A giant meeting of all the New Directions task forces is planned for April in Washington. The organization also intends to establish a membership group in every one of the 435 congressional districts.

While the ideas New Directions wants promoted are hardly new, they are enjoying unprecedented support judging from the 60-member board, which is studded

with famous names associated with science, the environment, overseas development, and world peace. And among the founders of the organization is Cyrus R. Vance, the next Secretary of State.

—C.H.

Tosteson New Harvard Dean: Chicago Bitter About His Leaving

Harvard University president Derek Bok, completing a months long inventory of the nation's medical talent, has decided upon Daniel C. Tosteson of the University of Chicago as the next dean of Harvard Medical School. Tosteson will succeed Robert Ebert who is retiring from the job.

Bok's search for a new medical dean was an unusually personal one in a day when academic leaders are often selected by committees carefully put together to represent the interests of everyone who could possibly have a stake in the choice. In an address to the faculty last spring, Bok, a lawyer who has taken considerable interest in medical affairs, made it clear that there would be no search committee. Although he would seek advice, the decision would be his alone.

Tosteson, who has a reputation as a first-rate investigator in the field of pharmacology and membrane biochemistry and physiology, is also well known as an active player in the world of medical politics. He is a member of the Institute of Medicine and is a former chairman of the Association of American Medical Colleges. Although unwilling to discuss in detail his plans for Harvard Med, Tosteson told *Science*, "Medicine and medical education are going to occur in a changing environment in the years ahead. It is the responsibility of Harvard to shape that change."

Tosteson, who for many, many years was at Duke University, has been at Chicago since 1 July 1975 as dean of the Pritzker School of Medicine and vice president of the university for the medical center. His relations there have been more than successful—indeed, the facul-

ty apparently thought highly of his administrative and leadership abilities—until the day his move to Harvard was announced in Cambridge. Finding a dean these days is not easy, and the Chicago faculty has not taken kindly to the idea of losing a good one after only 18 months. It leaves them, as one of Tosteson's colleagues put it, "with a feeling of having been ditched." Said another, "The reaction to Dan's leaving Chicago has been more bitter than anything I've seen in medicine in a long, long time."

Tosteson said in an interview, "I am leaving because I could not refuse the call of my alma mater. I went to Harvard College and Harvard Medical School. In spite of the great respect I have developed for this institution during the past year and a half, my intellectual roots are in Boston. Also, I have a sense of symmetry, of going back. And I have respect for the tradition of scholarly work at Harvard." And besides, infuriating as it may be, there is a mystique about Harvard that sets it apart. If you happen to want to be a dean, it would be awfully hard to turn down an offer to be chief dean if it came your way.

A week after Tosteson's move to Harvard was announced he went on leave as dean and vice president of Chicago and will spend his time from now until July writing papers—as many as 15—on work he and his colleagues have been doing in his lab. One project of particular interest, Tosteson says, involves analysis of the transport of lithium across cell membranes. Some individuals who suffer from mania have an inherited disorder that precludes normal transport of lithium across red blood cell membrane. This disorder leads to a disequilibrium in the lithium concentration between the cell interior and the surrounding plasma. Lithium, of course, is the drug that, although controversial, has been used with some success in treating manic-depressive disease. Tosteson notes that it is too early to generalize the observations about lithium and membrane transport to clinical questions, but the findings are certainly intriguing. He intends to establish a lab of his own in Boston and is going to try to continue his research. "Otherwise," he says, "you'd go crazy."—B.J.C.