while I was happy to speak out on things that really concern me, I didn't want to lay my head on this particular block at this stage in my career," Goodenough recalls. "A lot of people dropped out about the same time I did, probably for the same reasons. All of us were feeling very pressured, but it was very subtle stuff. Those of us who aren't tenured and who know how difficult it will be to keep our jobs get anxious when there are bad feelings between us and our tenured colleagues. It is unwritten things like a hostile reaction in the hallway," she says.

According to Ruth Hubbard, another member of the Harvard Biological Laboratories, it is no accident that most of the present critics of the gene-splicing research are tenured. The junior faculty members who spoke up when discussion first opened have now receded into the background; even for tenured people, Hubbard says, "it is still simply not comfortable to speak out against your colleagues and feel the animus."

Hubbard, who together with George Wald has advised Mayor Vellucci of the possible dangers of the technique, attributes the hostility to the fact that the critics have offended academic mores by going outside. "The whole business of projecting the discussion into a public forum—that is the sin for which there is no forgiveness, not that we disagree on a scientific issue," Hubbard declares.

Another critic who has felt his colleague's hostility is Jonathan King of MIT. King, a member of Science for the People, is no stranger to controversy, but finds that the gene-splicing issue has aroused unusual bitterness. One of his colleagues, he says, stopped speaking to him for a time, while others have taken it as a personal attack that he gave evidence on the hazards of the technique before the Cambridge City Council.

King also pays tribute to Richard Goldstein of the Harvard Medical School, a member of the Boston Area Recombinant DNA Group, which prepared a scholarly critique of the NIH guidelines. "Goldstein was very brave because there was a time when it looked as if he was jeopardizing his professional career by being so outspoken," King remarks.

Goldstein, who does not have tenure, says that he did spend a lot of time in preparing the document, though he has not been prevented from speaking out on the issue.

Pressure can be applied in subtle ways, yet, on the other hand, much can depend on the eye of the beholder. One critic, cited by several observers as having been put under considerable pressure after giving testimony before Mayor Vellucci, says flatly that he has experienced "no intimation of improper pressure." Another similar case widely cited as an example of retaliation by a Harvard supervisor on a graduate student does not fit that interpretation as well as it appears to do.

Even if the critics are exaggerating the pressure upon them, it appears real enough not only to them but to outsiders. The Cambridge citizens review board in its recent report (*Science*, 21 January) expressed its gratitude to "those scientists who continue to call for more stringent control over this technology, in many instances against the majority view of their colleagues and amidst very strained personal relations."

Asked to elucidate this statement, review board chairman Daniel Hayes said that the critics who testified before the board imperiled their career by stating their views. "If you have criticized those who might be in a position to affect your advancement in an academic field, you are putting yourself on the line. I think it was courageous for them to come forward. They put themselves open to future harassment from their fellow scientists," is Hayes' observation.

Another critic who has come under personal attack is Robert Sinsheimer, chairman of the division of biology at Caltech. No one has impugned Sinsheimer openly, but a rumor casting doubt on the sincerity of his position is circulating so widely that he has felt it necessary to issue a statement of denial.

The rumor has it that, while advocating restraints on the gene-splicing technique in public, Sinsheimer has been using it himself privately. In his statement Sinsheimer explains that although his colleagues are using the technique—Caltech has a P2 containment lab and a P3 lab is under construction—he, as division chairman, does not have or want the right to deter them. He states that he is not using the gene-splicing technique himself (though like any other microbiologist he is studying recombinant genes in the old-fashioned sense of the word, that is, gene combinations obtained through the natural processes of exchange between microorganisms).

Sinsheimer believes it makes sense to advocate his position (which is to restrict use of the technique to a few sites, not to

Briefing

Carter Going Slow on National Health Insurance

National health insurance was something President Carter talked about a lot during his campaign, so it should have come as no surprise that, in an interview published in the 19 January issue of the *Medical Tribune*, Carter adviser Peter G. Bourne, the psychiatrist who is among the new President's advisers on health—his assignment is in mental health—declared that health insurance was a "very high priority" item that would get immediate attention.

However, somewhere between campaign rhetoric and postelection transition planning, Carter apparently decided to go slow on health insurance, presumably out of recognition of the great complexity of the issue. Therefore, when Joseph A. Califano, Jr., went before the Senate on 13 January for confirmation hearings on his nomination as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), he stated in no uncertain terms that Carter had decided to postpone any formal action on national health insurance for at least a year, while he and HEW officials concentrated on welfare reform first. Nevertheless, Califano reassured the senators, work would begin forthwith so that, when Carter was ready to present an insurance proposal early in 1978, it would not mean starting from the beginning.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D–Mass.), who has been committed to the notion of an all-inclusive plan for the past couple of years, was not exactly elated by Califano's news, in particular his allusions to HEW's conducting a study of the issues involved. "With all due respect to you and Mr. Carter, the issues have been studied to death," Kennedy observed. But, inevitably, the Carter people will "study" it again.

Just how expansive a Carter proposal for national health insurance will be is hard to judge, but the betting is that it will be more modest than Kennedy's version, which calls for "cradle-to-grave" coverage of all medical costs for all citizens right from the start. With the benefit of hindsight, it is possible to point out that, even before the presidential campaign was over, Carter began to modify his original, unreservedly pro–health insurance stand by saying he would push for adoption of national coverage "as revenues permit."—B.J.C.