

## Science and Technology at State: Recognizing the Problem

Every Secretary of State since the 1950's has espoused the proposition that science and technology are increasingly important factors in foreign relations and that U.S. diplomacy, therefore, must have a sound technical base. The State Department, however, has been notably resistant to putting into practice what its secretaries preached.

The subject of science and technology in foreign affairs currently seems to be

finding a place in the spotlight, as it periodically does. Problems with a high technical content—nuclear proliferation, the energy crisis, technology transfer to less developed countries—have assumed major proportions in foreign relations. In the final year of the Ford Administration, a report by T. Keith Glennan entitled "Technology and Foreign Affairs" apparently captured the interest of officials in the upper echelons of the department.

And the Carter Administration's appointments of nonscientists to the main State Department policy level posts dealing with science and technology, which were not greeted with enthusiasm in the scientific community, have attracted attention to the matter.

The appointments were those of Patsy T. Mink to be Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) and Lucy Wilson Benson to be Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology. OES is the latest incarnation of a scientific affairs office in State; OES fits into Benson's area of responsibility on the department's organization chart.

Mink is a former Democratic congresswoman from Hawaii who lost in the Senate primary in her state last year. In Congress she was a member of the Edu-

### Christopher Fordham Named Assistant Secretary for Health

After what looked at times like a futile search, Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) Secretary Joseph A. Califano, Jr., has found someone who is willing to be the assistant secretary for health. He is Christopher C. Fordham III, dean of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill. Fordham, 50, is a graduate of the Harvard Medical School. He first joined the UNC medical school in 1954 and remained there until 1969, when he went to the Medical College of Georgia as vice president. Two years later, he returned to North Carolina as dean. Fordham has been active for years in the Association of American Medical Colleges where he is regarded as a man of "impeccable personal and professional standards." He comes to Washington with experience in medical politics and in dealing with the state legislature but the ins and outs of the HEW bureaucracy and congressional health subcommittees will be new to him.

From all apparent indications, the assistant secretaryship under Califano will be a different, and possibly lesser, position than it was during the past couple of years when the post was occupied by Theodore Cooper, who was dismissed despite his wide popularity with his constituents. Throughout the Nixon and Ford years, efforts to make the assistant secretary for health the principal authority in that area in HEW were relatively successful, so that by the time Cooper came to the job, the heads of major agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), were responsible directly to him. Right from the start Califano has indicated that is not the way he intends to do business. Although the assistant secretary will still be in charge of HEW's health agencies, Califano has made it clear to NIH director Donald S. Fredrickson and FDA commissioner Donald Kennedy that, in theory at least, he will be personally accessible to them on a regular basis. If that is the case, the assistant secretary's power over all health programs certainly will be diluted.

Furthermore, Califano himself went ahead with decisions to keep Fredrickson and appoint Kennedy (*Science*, 18 February and 25 March). Some see this as a downgrading of the

assistant secretary's job, inasmuch as it is usual to name the top man first so that he can have an influential voice in choosing people who will work under him. On the other hand, in view of the difficulty Califano had in getting anyone to be assistant secretary, there is much to be said for his getting on with those appointments he was able to make without tying up the bureaucracy in an unnecessary waiting game.

At least two persons, Charles Sanders, director of the Massachusetts General Hospital and former Kansas congressman William Roy, who practices medicine in Topeka, have rejected offers from HEW, and several others who were under serious consideration said they were not interested in being assistant secretary before things were far enough along for them to receive explicit job offers.

It is anticipated that the assistant secretary for health will assume reasonable responsibility for issues related to health care delivery and health manpower, while contributing to the development of national health insurance policy. In these areas, Fordham would seem to be well suited for the task. The University of North Carolina Medical School is said to have one of the country's leading programs for training physicians in primary care and family medicine. In addition, the school looks favorably on the training of nurse practitioners and physicians' assistants. Fordham's acquaintances say that he deserves a major share of the credit for this. There is no doubt that, in this regard, Fordham and Califano are on the same wavelength. In several of his public statements in his first weeks in office, the Secretary has made it plain that he would like to further the cause of primary care and the development of a cadre of health professionals who can deliver care of certain types in areas where there is no physician or in circumstances in which an M.D. is not necessarily needed.

There has as yet been no official announcement of his appointment and Fordham declines to comment on his views of the job or the role of the assistant secretary in setting national health policy.—B.J.C.