anyone other than a relative; the identity of the source and brief description of any other kinds of gifts adding up to $100 in value. Liabilities that must be made public include: one's home mortgage; loans for a car, furniture, or appliances; and debts on revolving charge accounts if you rack up bills of more than $10,000. About the only thing you don't have to report is alimony.

Wruble says he expects some trouble once people actually have to make disclosure. And there are rumblings that some scientists may file suit, charging the government with invasion of privacy. Whether anyone will actually do so is anybody's guess.

—BARBARA J. CULLITON

Peer Review Comes to ADAMHA

The program staff will be isolated from decisions on extramural funding

Gerald Klerman, director of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), this spring installed a new peer review system that will be used to screen applicants from outside who seek ADAMHA funding for their projects. It eliminates conflicts between the in-house staff and extramural researchers that have plagued the agency for several years. All the system lacks now is the approval of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) Secretary Joseph Califano. An aide to Califano said the new scheme is sitting in the Secretary's office, held up by a problem with a "minor procurement matter" contained in the same decision package. He predicted it would be signed within weeks.

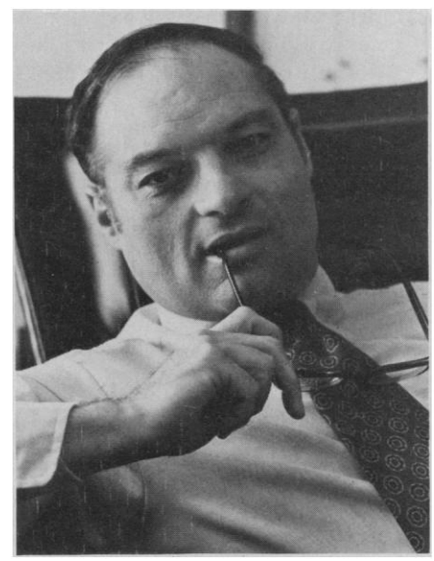
A year ago this proposal stirred up a storm among ADAMHA's constituents and their friends in Congress (*Science*, 9 June 1978), a furor that culminated in Klerman's firing the director of the institute within ADAMHA most resistant to the change. Klerman, Califano, and several interested congressmen worked out the compromise that was put into effect on a tentative basis on 1 March 1979. The opposition seems to have died out.

In brief, the new system attempts to insulate the research funding offices within ADAMHA from the staff scientists and program managers. This is meant to prevent staff from manipulating the course of extramural research and protect the agency against charges that it engages in favoritism. Klerman's reforms seek to emulate the model of grant review used at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where experts from outside are asked to rank proposals according to merit.

The impetus to move in this direction came from several sources. Klerman himself, after his appointment in 1976, announced that he believed that one of his most important tasks would be to improve the reputation of ADAMHA's work by installing a rigorous review process quite independent of the bureaucracy. Until recently, employees of the National Institute of ental Health (NIMH), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism—which constitute ADAMHA—were allowed to sit on the committees that approved extramural projects. A second push for reform came from the President's Biomedical Research Panel, which recommended in 1976 that ADAMHA's grant review and program staff be separated. The report of the President's mental health commission reiterated the suggestion in 1978. Third, a number of stories appeared in the popular press about this time, reporting conflicts of interest in ADAMHA and charging that spouses and friends of people in headquarters won some large research contracts. There were a couple of egregious cases of cronyism at NIDA.

Klerman at first intended to take the review authority away from the institutes and place it in his own office under his direct control. That idea did not sit well with the institutes or their grantees; the resulting compromise created an independent review staff within each agency responsible to each agency head. All the agency heads were then replaced with new ones more to Klerman's liking. Although he has been criticized from the outset for his brashness and insensitivity to government etiquette, Klerman now seems to have established himself and his scheme quite firmly at ADAMHA.

An amusing footnote to all this is the way that ADAMHA's committee reorganization became ensnarled in President Carter's drive to reduce the number of federal agencies, and the way it disentangled itself. During his campaign, Carter told audiences that he stood for efficient government, and that he would satisfy this compulsion by hacking down superfluous federal agencies, if given a chance. Once established in the White House, the new executive staff discovered it would be impossible to abolish as many agencies as had been promised, partly because there weren't enough of them to fill the quota. Someone made the astute decision to label advisory committees "agencies." It did not matter that they served to bring outside opinion to the bureaucracy; it did matter that there were lots of them to spare. ADAMHA, like other branches of HEW, offered up its share of victims. A senior aide at ADAMHA said that while the agency really needed about seven more committees to handle the 5000 grant applications it receives each year, it agreed under duress to cut back from 32 to 28 committees. NIMH made the largest sacrifice. The change will be largely cosmetic, however, for the new



Gerald Klerman

0036-8075/79/0511-0601$00.50/0

committees will empower subcommittees and ad hoc groups to do the work they cannot handle. The actual number of outside advisers will increase.

Another reform project that touched ADAMHA, but only slightly, was the campaign to increase the number of minority and female members on advisory committees. Secretary Califano sent out the initial command to raise the percentages in 1977. He let the message sink in, and then renewed the campaign late in 1978. Sheila Pyres, HEW's committee management officer, began collecting data from all branches of HEW on a quarterly basis last year, tabulating committee membership in the following categories: American Indian or Alaskan, Asian or Pacific islander, black, Hispanic, female, and white. Because of Califano's special interest in this, every agency has made adjustments. The heads of NIH and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) were specifically instructed to do more recruiting of the disadvantaged than they had done in the past. As a result, NIH now requires that every slate of proposed committee members include the name of "at least one highly qualified ethnic minority candidate and at least one highly qualified female." Failing this, the nominator must file a detailed description of the ethnic and sexual composition of the committee and the field of expertise in question, justifying the decision not to nominate a person from one of the underrepresented categories. The FDA was found to be so behind schedule in this business that Califano for a time suspended its authority to appoint new committee members. An FDA official said that this caused a long hiatus in the nominating process, which ended only after FDA Commissioner Donald Kennedy and his staff agreed that, at a minimum, they would strive to have committees composed of 10 percent minorities and 20 percent women. FDA reports that the goal has been achieved.

ADAMHA, a staff person said, had to do some juggling to achieve balance on its committees, but found the task relatively easy. On the average, its committees last year were composed of 26 percent minority and 30 percent female members. The new emphasis on sex and ethnicity has had one effect, however. Geographic balance, once an important issue in committee makeup, is now decidedly a frill.

A few members of defunct ADAMHA committees, contacted at random, expressed concern about the disruptions caused by the general overhaul of the review process. One fretted about the "agonies of change" and wondered aloud whether the trauma would be justified by any future improvement in the quality of research. One staffer grumbled about the rigidity of the ethnic and sex guidelines. Another retiring committee member feared that the reviewers, in being segregated from the agency staff, might become preoccupied with their own parochial interests, or might neglect innovative ideas in mental health research. The response from Klerman's office is that program staff will continue to be asked to express their views on occasion and, when they are invited to do so, will be allowed to give their appraisal of individual projects. Questions like these, dealing with the relationship between the review and the program staffs, will not be answered until after the new scheme has been tried for a while.

—ELIOT MARSHALL

Court Reluctantly Upholds EPA on 2,4,5-T Suspension

The emergency suspension of the herbicide 2,4,5-T by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has passed its first test in court—but just barely. A request by a coalition of timber companies, chemical firms, and herbicide applicators that the suspension be lifted was denied on 12 April by federal district judge James Harvey who concluded that EPA had not acted without foundation or made a clear error. But, he said, "The court will frankly concede that it arrives at this decision with great reluctance and would not in its judgment have ordered the emergency suspension." Only because the court is in large part proscribed from substituting its judgment for that of the EPA was the suspension upheld, he said.

Although the EPA has clearly won the initial round, the decision raises questions about whether EPA will be able to convert its suspension of 2,4,5-T into a ban, given the strength of the case it has presented so far. The key to the case is an epidemiological study of women in Oregon, which the industry has bitterly criticized and which the judge also found questionable. The study suggests a link between exposure to a contaminant of 2,4,5-T, TCDD dioxin, and an increased risk of miscarriages (*Science*, 16 March). The judge acknowledged that such a link is indeed suggested, but called the overall evidence inconclusive, and said that various industry criticisms raise serious doubts about it.

As an example, Dow Chemical Company, the principal manufacturer of 2,4,5-T, claims that in EPA's rush to prevent the spring spraying season it overlooked data that tend to minimize the increased risk of miscarriages. The judge characterized most of Dow's objections as "speculative opinion," but clearly left the door ajar for a more systematic factually based challenge. The EPA, in a rearguard action, is revising part of the study in order to compute more carefully the ratio of miscarriages to live births in both the study and control areas.

Meanwhile, another opponent of the ban, the American Farm Bureau Federation, has announced its intention to finance a scientific conference on 2,4,5-T to coincide with hearings in Washington later this summer. The conference chairmen, whose participation was solicited by the federation and by Dow, are Fred Tschirley, a botanist at Michigan State who formerly worked on pesticides at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and T. C. Byerly, who also worked at USDA. They are billing the conference as a science court that will remove partisanship and emotion from the 2,4,5-T debate. Although many of the participants are from USDA—long a bastion of pesticide and herbicide support—Tschirley has also secured the participation of Ken Kamlip, a scientist at the National Wildlife Federation. Kamlip says that Tschirley has bent over backward to obtain a balanced attendance, and that he "has no quarrel with the way it's being set up so far."

Officials of the Environmental Defense Fund, which is bringing suit to support an EPA ban of 2,4,5-T, have a different view of the conference, and are urging environmentalists not to touch it with 10-foot leafy trees.

—R. JEFFREY SMITH

0036-8075/79/0511-0602$00.50/0