Stanford Says Yes to Modified Weapons Proposal

After months of agonizing, officials at Stanford University have given a green light to a proposal to conduct weapons-related research at the university's synchrotron radiation laboratory. The proposal, which had prompted protests from Stanford faculty and staff, has been approved only on condition that the part of the work most closely tied to military applications be carried out off campus, however. That condition seems to have quelled most, but not all, of the opposition.

The proposal was put together by researchers from three weapons labs (Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and Sandia) and the University of California. In essence, they proposed putting up some $6.4 million to build facilities at the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory (SSRL) to do basic research with x-rays and ultraviolet radiation. Although the bulk of the funds would come from the Department of Energy's (DOE's) military program, only a small fraction of the research would be directly applicable to weapons.

The part of the proposal that drew opposition at Stanford involves the development of advanced x-ray detectors. Scientists from Livermore were interested in developing and calibrating such devices for use in nuclear testing and in laboratory simulation of nuclear explosions. The proposal has now been modified, however, to permit development of advanced detectors at SSRL, but their calibration for weapons testing would be carried out at Livermore.

SSRL director Arthur Bienenstock argues that because many experiments are now limited by the state of the art of detectors, the work done at Stanford will have broad uses in basic research, while the overtly weapons-related work will be done at Livermore. Largely on that basis, Bienenstock gave the go-ahead on 27 September for construction of the facilities. The first is scheduled for installment in mid-1984.

The weapons labs have applied to DOE for $5.4 million for the facilities, and the University of California has approved another $1 million for its share. In addition, Livermore has requested $1 million to upgrade its own hardware to calibrate the x-ray detectors. Scientists from the weapons labs and the University of California will use two-thirds of the experimental time at the new facilities and the remainder will be available to SSRL researchers.

Most of the opposition to the proposed weapons work came initially from faculty and staff at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC). Because SLAC provides the basic energy for SSRL, they argued that they would be direct participants in military research if the proposal were approved (*Science*, 25 February, p. 936). Acting SLAC director Sidney Drell has welcomed the changes in the proposal, but there is still said to be some unease at SLAC.

—**COLIN NORMAN**

USDA Relents on Landsat

The Department of Agriculture has decided to continue its purchase of Landsat data after all. Instead of cutting back to $400,000 in fiscal year 1984, as proposed last August (*Science*, 30 September, p. 1357), the department agreed on 25 September to maintain its acquisitions at the full $7.5 million planned originally. Officials at the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which operates Landsat, are not sure what caused the change of heart. The guessing is that Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige, or perhaps the White House Office of Management and Budget, pointedly told Agriculture Secretary John R. Block that with the administration embroiled in a controversial effort to sell its land and weather satellites, now was not the time for the largest single Landsat user to pull out.—**M. MITCHELL WALDROP**

Hinckley Starting Mental Illness Fund

John Hinckley, Sr., the father of the young man who shot President Reagan 2 years ago, is currently setting up a new organization for research and public education on mental illness—particularly schizophrenia, the affliction of John Hinckley, Jr. The American Mental Fund will be located in Washington, D.C. Hinckley hopes it will follow the lead of the American Cancer Society in reducing the ignorance and attendant stigma on a disease that can be as devastating to families as to its victims.

Hinckley says the area he is stepping into is, "a vacuum . . . a void. It was hard for me to believe it when we first started looking around." He notes that almost all other major diseases have active lobbies and annual fundraising drives. Hinckley is currently making the round of foundations looking for money. A research grant program is planned eventually. Meanwhile, the fund's first project is the preparation of a pamphlet describing the warning signs of mental illness.

The Hinckley case has brought to light many of the problems and incongruities surrounding research and treatment of mental illness and schizophrenia in particular. About 1 percent of the population suffers from the disease; for about one-third of the sufferers it is chronic and disabling. The research budget is about $26 million.

Yet schizophrenics occupy half of all mental hospital beds, and the disease probably causes more social disruption than any other in proportion to the number of sufferers. For example, in 1976 it was estimated by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) that total costs, direct and indirect, of schizophrenia to the nation equaled those incurred by cancer: $20 billion. For every $1000 in treatment costs for cancer, $66 is spent on research. But the parallel figure for research on alcoholism, drug abuse and mental health combined is $7. "Schizophrenia is the most important example of the effect of stigma on research budgets," says Frederick Goodwin of the NIMH.

Research on schizophrenia is showing new promise with the development of technology permitting examination of brain structures in live patients. But the most heartening advance, says Samuel Keith, director of schizophrenia research at NIMH, has been the mobilization of families of the mentally ill. Although self-help groups have been multiplying since the 1950's, it is only in the last few years that groups of families of the mentally

ill have been organizing to offer each other emotional support, advice and referrals. This culminated in the creation, in 1979, of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, which now has about 300 member groups around the country.

The mentally ill—compared to the mentally retarded, for example, who have had a vigorous lobby since the 1950's—have been left out in the cold when it comes to public education and hence, political influence. But as the population ages, their numbers will increase and the nation may discover it can no longer afford ignorance.

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

NSF Reorganization Boosts Education Programs

National Science Foundation (NSF) director Edward A. Knapp instituted several sweeping internal organizational changes at the beginning of October. The main effect of Knapp's actions is to put his stamp on the way NSF conducts its everyday affairs. Knapp also has moved to restore a science education directorate that was dissolved when the Reagan administration drastically cut back science education funding at NSF.

The reorganization consolidates more power in the director's office with the creation of a new position, staff director. Knapp has appointed Richard Nicholson, who has been the acting deputy director and executive assistant to the director, to fill it. This move extends Nicholson's considerable influence at NSF, officially making him the second in command. Knapp has given the staff director the responsibility for "all operations of the Office of the Director" and declared that all NSF operations will report to him through Nicholson. This raises a question of what the deputy director will do when one is appointed.

In response to what has become a nationwide outcry, Knapp is establishing a directorate for science and engineering education. This action reinstates to prominence an activity that had become relegated, figuratively, to NSF's back corridors. During recent months, however, several widely publicized studies, Congress, and President Reagan, have been voicing the same opinion on this subject: Science education needs improvement. Thus Knapp's move to set up a directorate is at once politically wise and bureaucratically sensible. He has appointed Laura Bautz, previously in the astronomy division, as acting assistant director and Walter Gillespie, who has been active in science and engineering education matters, deputy assistant director of the new directorate. The people needed to staff this new directorate are being shifted from other NSF operations, some of which are being curtailed and others trimmed.

Knapp has abolished NSF's office of planning and resources management, a group that had assumed considerable influence over the years. Besides having responsibility for much of NSF's budgeting activity, that office had become what some have called a "shadow administration" for the foundation, in effect developing long-range policy thanks to its hold on the purse strings. Kent Wilson, who was director of this office, now is moved to become deputy assistant director of mathematical and physical sciences.—JEFFREY L. FOX

Mosher Loses Another Appeal

Steven W. Mosher has lost a second appeal regarding his expulsion earlier this year from Stanford University's anthropology department. On 20 September, vice provost Gerald Lieberman wrote Mosher upholding the dismissal.

Mosher, whose alleged misconduct while doing fieldwork in China prompted the controversy, can now appeal directly to university president Donald Kennedy. As yet, he has not submitted a request for a hearing, according to a spokeswoman for Kennedy's office. Eventually, he could take his case to court.

The exact reasons for Mosher's expulsion from the department still remain a mystery. Lieberman's letter to Mosher and the report of a hearing officer he appointed, associate dean Albert Gelpi, did not reveal any new substantive information about the reasons for Mosher's dismissal. Lieberman, like others at Stanford, contends that the release of the original report of the investigation of charges against Mosher might endanger others. Mosher also has declined to make public the report.

Stanford officials have contended that Mosher was dismissed for engaging in a pattern of behavior in China that "involved a deliberate disregard for the law . . . a manipulative approach toward [research subjects], and a lack of candor" with the university and others. Mosher has contended that he was ousted for political reasons and for his disclosure of abortion practices in China. Stanford has denied the charge. (*Science*, 22 July, p. 348; 24 June, p. 1334; 13 May, p. 692).—MARJORIE SUN

Social Scientists Cry Politics

A social science group has complained to the Reagan Administration that it has established overtly political criteria to evaluate proposals for a major research project.

At issue is a request for proposals sent out by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for research comparing the effectiveness of publicly versus privately funded social services. The technical evaluation criteria state that the contractor must demonstrate an "understanding of the arguments on behalf of the movement away from governmental solutions to social problems" and an understanding of the Administration's "Private Sector and Voluntarism Initiative."

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) has written to HHS Secretary Margaret M. Heckler charging that the statement is "strongly political in tone," and "written so as to suggest that the political orientation of the proposal will influence the decision as to who receives the contract." COSSA director Roberta Balstad Miller also objected to the requirement that a responder must discuss his "perspective" on the social and policy context of the proposal.

The social scientists' complaint is the latest in a periodic series of protests by outsiders who believe research review procedures in this Administration have been unduly influenced by political considerations.

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN