

Creationism Survives in Louisiana Legislature

A bill that would have repealed Louisiana's creationist law was crushed by a 41 to 26 vote in the state's House of Representatives on 26 June, effectively removing the last obstacle to a full-scale court battle over the constitutionality of the "equal time" statute. The trial, which in many ways will be a repeat performance of the Arkansas trial of 1980, is now likely to begin in the fall.

Opponents of the creationist law, which requires equal treatment of evolution and creationism in secondary schools, have scored several successes in trying to prevent its implementation, only to see proponents repeatedly recover the initiative. The latest maneuver was to try to have the law repealed in the legislature. The state Senate passed the repeal bill by an unexpected margin of 21 to 16 on 24 May. The House, under tremendous pressure from creationists, declined to follow suit.—**ROGER LEWIN**

Senate Authorizes Peace Academy

After withstanding decades of attempts to promote the creation of a national peace academy, the Senate on 21 June consented to an amendment in the defense authorization bill that would set up a United States Academy of Peace.

The measure is in accord with recommendations of a commission created in 1979 that was headed by Senator Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii). Matsunaga has been introducing peace academy bills for the past 20 years.

The bill authorizes \$23.5 million over the first 2 years for an institute—to be located in the Washington, D.C., area—that would serve as a research, training and resource center in "peace learning" and conflict management.

Although the Administration opposes a peace academy for budgetary reasons, the idea has attracted the support of many private organizations, particularly religious groups. The conceptual support comes largely

from the work of Harvard Law School professor Roger Fisher, Elise Boulding of Dartmouth College, and James Laue of the Center for Metropolitan studies at the University of Missouri.

According to the Peace Academy Campaign, programs that such an institution might support include a course on immigration and cultural conflicts for immigration officials and social workers; a conference on cartel decision-making for energy, agriculture and trade experts; and a seminar for diplomats on creating conditions for negotiations in Cyprus.

The measure now faces its final hurdle in House-Senate conference, where, according to a campaign spokeswoman, 20 sympathetic congressmen will be sitting in.

—**CONSTANCE HOLDEN**

NIH Turns Down Illmensee Proposal

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has declined to renew the grant of University of Geneva biologist Karl Illmensee following a January report by an international commission, which found serious "errors and discrepancies" in his work. He had a 3-year grant for \$217,000 from NIH and was seeking to renew it for another 3 years.

Illmensee is renowned for successfully transplanting cell nuclei between mouse embryos, thereby casting light on how genetic mechanisms work in early stages of development. Last year, the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine, investigated reports that Illmensee was tinkering improperly with protocols in a joint experiment he was conducting there with Peter Hoppe. But no evidence of fraud was found.

The commission, appointed in June 1983 by the University of Geneva, was unable to find "compelling evidence" that experiments were fabricated but found enough problems to "throw grave doubts on the scientific validity of the conclusions." It urged Illmensee and Hoppe to replicate the experiments (*Science*, 2 March 1984, p. 913). But it is not clear where Illmensee, his reputation now severely damaged, will obtain further funding.—**CONSTANCE HOLDEN**

NIH Bill Moving in Congress

House and Senate legislators have finally agreed to go to conference on major legislation concerning the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which has been held up for several months.

The impetus behind the decision is the desire of Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) to establish a new arthritis institute and the desire of Representative Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) to pass a bill assigning various new programs at NIH.

The Senate version has been stalled because some legislators feared that unnecessary restrictions on fetal research would be adopted during floor debate. But as a result of recent legislative maneuvering, Hatch and Waxman now have bills in hand to go to conference. House and Senate members will undoubtedly agree to establish an arthritis institute, but there are several other provisions to be hammered out.

- **Fetal research.** Hatch may possibly try to restore language in the House bill that restricts fetal research more stringently than current federal regulations. Waxman, on the other hand, is strongly opposed to further restrictions.

- **Nursing institute.** The House bill would create a new nursing institute, but Hatch disapproves of the idea. In an attempt to satisfy the nursing lobby, Hatch recently introduced a bill to authorize a new Center for Nursing Research within the Health Resource and Services Administration.

- **A bioethics panel.** Ever since the President's bioethics commission was disbanded last year, various legislators have sought to restore it in some form. The House bill includes a measure that would create a presidential commission to monitor genetic engineering and its application to humans. The Senate bill would establish a bioethics panel within the Office of Technology Assessment. House and Senate staff aides say neither side likes the other's proposal.

Waxman also wants to establish a new commission on orphan diseases, and create centers for disease prevention and research.

A conference may take place at the end of July.—**MARJORIE SUN**