D.C.-based lobbying group, adds: "Culturally, it's a different way of doing business and that alone is very threatening. The institute directors now have ultimate authority and understandably they resist the notion that they have to give up some."

Faced with the prospect of upsetting Kennedy and the AIDS activists, Shalala threw her support behind the bill in a letter to Vice President Al Gore. "[T]he Clinton Administration supports strengthening AIDS research programs," wrote Shalala. "We believe the bill provides a framework for directing AIDS research in an effective manner." The letter did not raise any of the objections made by the NIH institute directors. Shalala declined to comment on the bill to *Science*.

NIH Director Healy also was uneasy about discussing the bill, but she conceded that when the institute directors met with her on 22 January, they were not four-square behind it. "There was a strong sense at our meeting...that we must show strong support for the president, Secretary Shalala, and the AIDS community," said Healy. "Though some aspects of the legislation were unappealing to many and odious to some, it was inappropriate for NIH to take a do-or- die position at this time."

Sometime during the first week in February, the Senate is expected to pass the bill with little opposition. The House has yet to introduce a similar AIDS reform provision—though it probably will take up the issue with Shalala when she appears on 3 February for a hearing on the bill—and may simply approve the Senate addition in a conference committee. If the bill is approved, Fauci likely will have to give up either the OAR post or his position as NIAID director, leaving the field open for the Clinton Administration to find itself a new AIDS top dog.

–Jon Cohen

SCIENCE AGENCIES

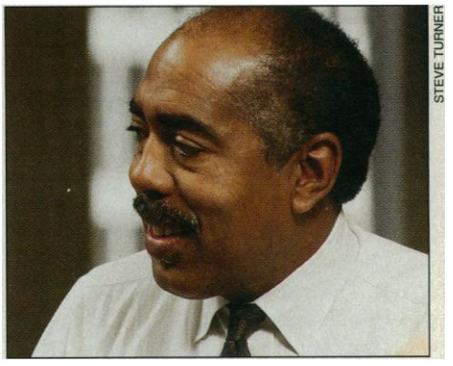
Massey Leaving NSF for Top UC Job

Washington scuttlebutt had long predicted that National Science Foundation (NSF) director Walter Massey would quit in mid-term and trade in his federal experience for a prime university job. Last week, the rumors proved correct: The University of California (UC) announced that it has picked Massey to be senior vice president for academic affairs and provost of the 10-campus UC system, its second highest post. By the time he leaves NSF to take the job in March, Massey will have served just 2 years of his 6-year term, making his tenure one of the shortest in NSF history.

The California appointment—which must still be formally approved by the university's regents—may put Massey in line to succeed UC president Jack Peltason in the top UC position. Peltason, 69, was appointed last year after David Gardner resigned. Peltason's selection, made after a UC search committee deadlocked over two other candidates for the job, is considered by some to be an interim appointment, and the 54-year-old Massey is now widely seen as the heir apparent.

At NSF, the announcement of Massey's impending departure, while no surprise, has left some confusion. Normally, Massey's deputy, Frederick Bernthal, would take over as acting director until President Bill Clinton named a replacement. But Bernthal is himself a presidential appointee from the Bush Administration and is not expected to be around for long. "Fred may beat Walter out the door," says one NSF official. The chain of command from Bernthal down is murky enough to need some White House guidance before an acting director can be identified.

It may take the White House some time to find a permanent replacement for Massey. A Clinton aide says that NSF is "not a top priority" at the moment, and that no candidate list, short or otherwise, exists for Massey's post. Jack Gibbons, the new White House science adviser (see p. 751), is expected to play a large role in the selection process, but with dozens of other empty science and technology posts throughout the government, he is expected to have his hands full for the next few months.



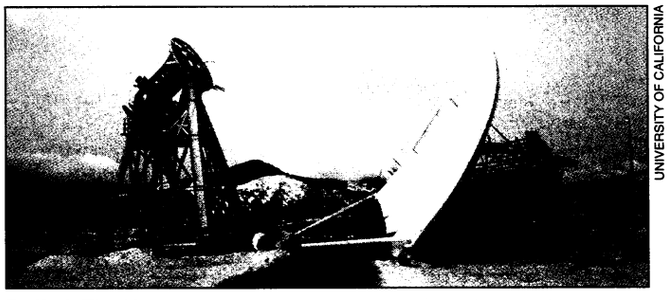
STEVE TURNER

Next stop UC president? Walter Massey.

–Christopher Anderson

OBSERVATORIES

Radio Astronomers Go Hatless



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Doffed. The Hat Creek telescope was ripped from its mount.

Hats and strong winds don't go together. On the night of Thursday, 21 January, a freak gust of wind blew over the 30-year-old Hat Creek radio telescope near Mount Lassen in Northern California. Carl Heiles, a radio astronomer from the University of California, Berkeley, who was at the observatory when the accident happened, says that the fully steerable telescope was "ripped from its bearings," leaving the 26-meter dish on the ground and the mounting mechanism perched precariously on the pedestal.

The destruction of the telescope will crimp several ongoing studies, says Heiles. In recent years, the telescope has measured benchmarks for studies of crustal motions along the West Coast and taken part in NASA's search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI). Its loss also ends an illustrious career. The telescope began operating in 1962, and in the 30 years since then has made a ground-breaking survey of the 21-centimeter emission from atomic hydrogen in the galaxy, followed by galactic maps of hydroxyl and formaldehyde. It had also served as one leg in an early international network of radio telescopes performing very long baseline interferometry.

It is not yet clear whether or how the telescope will be replaced. Heiles says the University of California, which operated the telescope, may be able to pay the $5 million replacement cost through its self-insurance program. But he adds that it would not make much sense to build a direct replica. In the past few years the main effort at Hat Creek has been to build a high-resolution array of movable 6-meter dishes working at millimeter rather than centimeter wavelengths. The new array, with six telescopes now in place, has applications ranging from planetary astronomy to the detection of cold gas in distant galaxies, and Heiles and his radio astronomy colleagues think expanding the array might be the best way to reincarnate the Hat Creek telescope.

–David Lindley