

Handler Nominated for National Academy Presidency

Philip Handler, chairman of the biochemistry department at the Duke University School of Medicine, has been recommended by a special nominating committee to be the next president of the National Academy of Sciences. If elected, Handler will assume office on 1 July 1969, when NAS president Frederick Seitz begins full-time duties as president of Rockefeller University.

Although nomination by the committee (headed by Harry Eagle of Yeshiva University) usually assures the nominee of election, any 50 Academy members may nominate their own candidate for president. Such nominations must be received by 1 December. On 15 December the names of the nominees (or nominee) will be sent by mail ballot to the 800 National Academy members. The results of the election will be made public on 15 January.

For years Handler has been a leading figure in national science policy circles. For months he has been considered one of the most likely possibilities to receive the official nomination for the NAS presidency (*Science*, 14 June). Among other assignments, Handler has served as chairman of the National Science Board since 1966, as a Board member since 1962, and as a member of the President's Science Advisory Committee from 1964 to 1967. He served as chairman of the biochemistry study section of the National Institutes of Health from 1956 to 1959. Born in New York City in 1917, Handler received a B.S. degree from City College of New York in 1936 and a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois in 1939. He has taught at Duke University since 1939.

grants and contracts has long been debated, a debate which university scientists hoped had been concluded with the issuance of Circular A-74.)

The congressional worry about indirect costs of research obviously affects a broader area than research sponsored by the Defense Department. On 20 September, Mansfield announced his intention of sponsoring an amendment to limit indirect expenses to 25 percent of direct costs on all government research grants and contracts. He was, reportedly, dissuaded from making this wider proposal by senators worried about the effect of his amendment on research in areas which interested them. A significant point about the support enjoyed by the amendment was the fact that, immediately after Mansfield's presentation, Senate powerhouse Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.), chairman of the Armed Services Committee and ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Committee, took the floor to endorse the amendment.

In proposing the limitation on indirect costs, Mansfield and his supporters seem to have been moved by a variety of concerns. One slightly surprising motivation seemed to be resentment over inadequate geographical dis-

tribution. Mansfield argued that "it is the private institutions, some of which are subsidized almost entirely by the Government, that get the gravy under these programs and it is the land-grant colleges that get the droppings." Russell complained that the smaller educational institutions received insignificant amounts compared to the Ivy League colleges and institutions on the West Coast; the smaller institutions, he complained, "do not get the crumbs that poor Lazarus got from Dives' table." Gordon Allott (R-Colo.) argued that Congress, by tightening up on research, could avoid having "the great bulk" of research money spent in "a small area on the eastern coast and two or three big institutions on the west coast," and make more money available for land-grant universities in the West and Midwest.

Another thing that seemed to disturb Mansfield was the fact that the universities were meeting some of their educational and training costs by charging indirect research costs to the Defense Department and other research-sponsoring agencies. Mansfield said he favored direct subsidy to universities "through the agency of the Federal Government that has as its primary

purpose the improvement and furtherance of higher education," which would result in "a greater educational freedom."

Mansfield also seemed to be disturbed about information revealed in Foreign Relations Committee hearings on Defense Department research (*Science*, 24 May, 2 August). Mansfield said he was dismayed to learn that Federal Contract Research Centers—"creatures of the Federal government"—were paying salaries "that ranged from \$50,000 to \$90,000 a year."

Of course, a principal factor that troubled Mansfield, Russell, and their supporters was the size of the indirect costs. During the debate, information, based on Defense Department figures, on the overhead costs of various universities was discussed. These costs reportedly ranged from 28.6 percent for Johns Hopkins, 29.7 percent for the University of Pennsylvania, and 30.5 percent for Columbia University to the much higher figures ascribed to Princeton University (80 percent), Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn (83.4 percent), and Worcester Polytechnic Institute (86.82 percent). The accounting systems of universities, which allocate these costs in different ways, were not discussed by the Senate.

Mansfield said facts had been unearthed which indicated that, for some colleges, R&D overhead moneys "have been used to clean off the college football field, to pay for janitorial services, and the like." The Majority Leader said he had been unable to obtain documentation on overhead costs at other research centers, but that "it has been suggested that the indirect cost figure is far above that of the universities." Mansfield said it was his understanding "that the General Electric program on Apollo receives in excess—perhaps well in excess—of 100 percent for overhead, maintenance, indirect costs, or whatever we want to call it."

Some senators, such as John O. Pastore (D-R.I.) and Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.), complained about the precipitate introduction of the Mansfield amendment. Several university presidents and several defense contractors, including members of the Apollo System Department of General Electric, made known their objections to the amendment. Before Mansfield introduced it, he wrote Philip Handler of Duke University, chairman of the National Science Board, to ask him, among other things, if it would "be possible to continue the current pace