

it in their Sunday editions. Most reported some criticism of the Meadows' work, but not all did. Later in the week for instance, syndicated columnist Claire Sterling wrote from Rome that the study, soon to be available to the eyes of Everyman, contained "shatter-

ing insights" to catastrophe waiting in the wings, no question about it.

A flood of phone calls Monday morning made it plain to the Woodrow Wilson people that their sedate invitation-only affair was now an Event of major proportions. After all, who could turn

away ambassadors, industrialists, high government officials, congressmen, and a flock of distinguished scientists practically pounding on the door?

Thursday morning, the day of the symposium, the first copies of *The Limits to Growth* hit the bookstands.

Women's Lib and NIH Advisory Committees—Progress?

In the course of the last year, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has come under heavy fire from feminists for discriminating against women in the appointment of scientists to its advisory committees. As a result, on 29 September 1971, Elliot L. Richardson, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, issued a memo ordering that one-third of those nominated or appointed to the committees should henceforth be women (*Science*, 15 October 1971). Since then, NIH officials maintain that they have been trying to comply. But problems have arisen.

First, NIH slowed the entire nominating process for the 500-odd upcoming vacancies for 2½ months, allegedly in order to wait for a group of women scientists to submit a list of candidates for the post. Second, the effort among women's groups to compile a roster of candidates has hit some internal snags. Third, there is now the possibility that the whole question of committee appointments may be tied up by feminists in court.

NIH deputy director John F. Sherman says that NIH stopped inviting scientists to fill the upcoming 500-odd vacancies from 15 November 1971 until 1 February 1972 because NIH wanted to obtain lists of qualified women scientists who might be eligible to fill the jobs. One-fourth of the 2000 prestigious advisory jobs become vacant automatically each July. In the meantime, Sherman says, NIH continued to invite scientists to join committees that had vacancies left over from last year. Acceptances, he says, have come in precisely at the rate specified in the Richardson memo. In January, 8 women were among the 23 scientists who agreed to fill prior vacancies, and, in February, 15 women were among the 45 scientists who accepted other vacancies. Sherman says that the number of women serving on the committees has risen from 73 in July 1971 to 197 at present.

But there now seem to be problems concerning the way in which NIH should go about filling the majority of committee vacancies, that is, those available 1 July. At present, it appears that a list of 1000 women's names, with as many as 21 candidates for a single specific committee vacancy, is being withheld from NIH on the grounds that NIH officials tinkered with the number of committee vacancies and failed to keep an alleged promise to pay the clerical costs of compiling the list. For their part, NIH officials say that the number of vacancies, originally stated at 500 but subsequently found to be 413, was first only estimated. They also insist that there never was a clear agreement that NIH would pay clerical costs. In the meantime, since 1 February NIH has started to fill vacancies from its own roster of qualified women, which numbers only 450. This roster

is being compiled in the Division of Research Grants.

Sherman says that, until a short time ago, NIH was under the impression that a group of women scientists, who had met with officials and who had as spokeswoman Julia T. Apter of Rush Medical College, Chicago, would supply NIH with a roster of qualified women to fill specific vacancies by 1 February. He says NIH has not received the list. Apter is declining to comment on its existence and its present whereabouts.

However, other women's groups that have helped, since November, in putting together the Apter list say that it contains over 1000 names matched to specific NIH committee vacancies, and in some cases proposes as many as 21 women candidates for a single specific vacancy. They say that Apter decided to withhold the list from NIH until she had been reimbursed for \$1435 in clerical expenses. Apter's lawyer, Sylvia Roberts, says that there never was a firm agreement about turning a list over to NIH, and that the work of finding qualified women is NIH's job anyway.

However, sources in other women's professional groups appear to advocate a more moderate path. Their view is, it seems, that despite the money dispute, the list should be given to NIH to facilitate the process of adding women to the committees. One informed source who agreed to be quoted is Judith Pool, senior scientist at Stanford University Medical Center, and co-president of the Association of Women in Science (AWIS). AWIS itself is preparing a roster of 4500 women scientists based on *American Men and Women of Science* (formerly *American Men of Science*). AWIS helped to compile the Apter file. Pool agrees that finding qualified scientists is really NIH's job, not that of feminists. "But since we had made a head start on it and we offered to share the work with NIH, I for one would have been willing to overlook the fact that NIH was having its work done for it. . . . I wouldn't have tried to punish NIH by withholding the list because we would be punishing ourselves."

However, another move, apparently contemplated by Apter, could tie the whole matter of NIH committee appointments in court. AWIS and other women's professional groups have signed a statement circulated by Apter suggesting a court case based on Executive Order 11478, which prohibits employment discrimination by federal agencies. In accompanying correspondence, Apter said, ". . . It is obvious that NIH could have found these women had it made the effort. . . . Our legal action will seek to raise the participation of women on these advisory bodies from its present 2 percent to 50 percent and shall be invoking the provisions of Executive Order 11478. . . ."—DEBORAH SHAPLEY