Rauscher Named NCI Chief

President Nixon last week named Frank J. Rauscher, Jr., to succeed Carl Baker as director of the National Cancer Institute. The official announcement, which had been anticipated for several weeks (*Science*, 21 April), apparently was held up while Rauscher's security clearance moved through FBI channels.

Speaking to the press after meeting with the President, Rauscher said that Nixon had emphasized his desire to see the cancer program get under way without "bottlenecks"to slow things down.

Baker, who directed the NCI for 3 years, has been named special assistant to the director of NIH for technology implementation, a job that will keep him within the NIH hierarchy.—B.J.C.

employer to voluntarily recognize an organization of employees and certify their acceptance to the local National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an independent agency with authority to police labor negotiations in private industry.

More commonly, however, a group of employees, deciding they want to become recognized, may circulate a petition among themselves. When 30 percent of the group have signed, the petition goes to the local NLRB (there are 31 around the country). NLRB then holds a hearing to determine whether the group bringing the petition is in fact a coherent economic interest group. The NLRB looks for common work tasks, required skills, salary scales, and so forth. If the board approves the petition, an election is held among the group of employees. If a simple majority votes a go-ahead, the whole group automatically becomes a certified bargaining unit. Then, under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, as amended, the employer must sit down at the bargaining table with unit representatives, whether he likes it or not.

Organizing thousands of engineers or scientists is expensive and difficult. In addition, a union representative must cope with the inevitable snobbism of the better educated engineer or chemist toward the blue collar connotations of unionization. Organizing is made even more difficult by the fact that, under federal law, people whom the NLRB defines as professionals must specifically chose if they are to join with a group of nonprofessionals. This means that the professionals at a plant which is otherwise unionized must take separate steps to join with the production and maintenance staff, and a separate organizing procedure is followed.

Hence, it is no surprise that the major unions, until a short time ago, have shown little interest in the plight of this better educated and rather snooty segment of the labor force. As the UAW's Emerick observes, "We don't organize anybody. The employers provide the motivation of the employees to organize. We just capitalize on it." However, the West Coast drives seem to indicate that this hands-off attitude is changing. Most union spokesmen appear to be convinced that some form of unionization would inevitably permeate the engineering and scientific professions.

Potential Disputed

However, there is wide disagreement on the potential benefits of unionization. One critic is the new head of the American Chemical Society, Alan C. Nixon, who was also the first president of Shell's AIS many years ago. "Unionization is no panacea," he warns. "Unions have publicity value, but a company is not much more likely to act when there is a union with no clout than when there is a group like the ACS speaking for members. Professionals don't have a hell of a lot of clout anyway."

One principal criticism of unions for scientists is that the idea of scientists on strike simply sounds absurd to many. One physicist said, "What good would it do for us to strike, anyway? No one would miss us. I mean in 10 years there wouldn't be any new products. Of course you wouldn't have a space program either." And a disgruntled physicist who follows employment issues closely also said that a strike by basic researchers would be ineffective. "I would organize with the computer scientists. By letting the computers go to hell they could wreak havoc in America. They really do have some leverage. I wouldn't join up with chemistry or biology." But, typical of the lack of experience the scientists display in thinking about unionization, the physicist confessed that he didn't know the name of any computer professionals' society which the physicists could contact.

A spokesman familiar with both the problems of unionization and the hang-ups of the scientists and engineers is Jack Golodner, the executive secretary of the Council of AFL-CIO Unions for Scientific, Professional, and Cultural Employees. Golodner believes that unionization is inevitable, because the country's research and development establishment has become "highly corporatized." Before World War II, he says, the engineer still could walk away from his company and start his own firm—the way lawyers still can. Now, however, the engineer is part of a bureaucracy, and his chances of having face-to-face contact with his boss are "vitiated."

Unions can do two things for scientists at their place of work, he says. They can assist them in the layoff situation with operative standards, supplementary unemployment benefits, and relocation rights (so that if a company shuts down a plant in one state and expands the plant in another state, the professionals at the closed plant must be offered work at the new site). Sometimes, a union contract can include work-sharing arrangements, which enable a team to keep working together, part time, instead of having some team members laid off.

A second role of engineers' and scientists' unions could be to implement consumer advocate Ralph Nader's concept of whistle blowing. "The engineer is losing his professionalism by not organizing," says Golodner, who is a lawyer by training. "In the law, there is a sense of the obligation to the court, to a higher loyalty. So if a client asks you to do something illegal, you have an obligation to tell the court.

"If I am employed as an engineer to provide a professional service, I should not be forced to forego my obligation to serve the public in order to satisfy my employer. Through a union, I could insist that my voice in professional standards was heard by writing into the contract a grievance procedure. In this way the contract could define standards of professional conduct. Thus if the employer asks the engineer to do something unprofessional, like approving the design of an unsafe car, the en-