

often sided with program and field personnel against the Washington office, was preparing a solid record of accomplishment in case the labs were threatened in the future.

The first change in the wind is that the roles of the laboratories in developing nuclear, fossil, solar and geothermal energy technologies are likely to be made more specific. Many laboratories, includ-

ing the weapons laboratories, ventured into a variety of areas under ERDA, but that diversity may change. "We don't want to be so firm as to name lead labs for each energy technology," said Meyers in an interview with *Science*, "but we will probably move more in that direction." Meyers, who came to the department from the presidency of North American Aviation (*Science*, 16 Septem-

ber), is making many of the decisions about the shape of the new department and is a pivotal figure in deciding the role of the laboratories.

Beyond the question of what work should be done where, there looms the larger question of what role the labs should have in implementing an energy research program. Should they be groomed as centers of excellence in par-

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Humanists on the Move

Two Princeton historians have hatched an idea for a AAAS-type organization devoted to the humanities—to be called, appropriately enough, the American Association for the Advancement of the Humanities.

The AAAH has just been incorporated in Washington, D.C. As yet it has no office, members, or money—just three board members: James Banner and Theodore K. Rabb, of Princeton, and John W. Shumaker, dean of humanities and fine arts of the State University of New York at Albany.

Banner explains that the humanists—and by that term he means those engaged in the humanistic side of all branches of endeavor, including science—have been sitting out public policy debates for too long. "They have played no major role, for example, in the national debate over recombinant DNA research. They have offered no specially informed testimony before congressional committees investigating privacy, human rights, nuclear weaponry, or environmental protection."

In leaping into the public policy arena, the AAAH is expected to perform a function that various learned societies either cannot or do not want to do, says Banner. "We're going to have to adopt a mode of behavior that is going to be alien to most humanists."

Long-term plans include conferences, political internships for humanists, and general advice-giving. What the group wants to do as soon as possible is start a publication called the Washington Humanities Report. This, says Banner, will be "an information and analysis sheet" that reports on public policy matters "in a rather combative and hard-bitten style"—a sort of hard-boiled News and Comment for humanists. He says the controversy

over the appointment of Joseph Duffy to the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Humanities is a recent example of a story that was inadequately covered by existing publications.

Banner says everyone he and his colleagues have approached about forming the new organization think it is a fine idea, including AAAS executive director William Carey, who was reportedly "very helpful and enthusiastic."

Battle Heats Up over Sugared Cereals

Threatened by the possibility of imminent restrictions on television advertising of junk food for children, the Kellogg Company staged a media blitz on 15 November to extol the virtues of sugar-coated cold cereals.

Their ad, which covered two full newspaper pages in metropolitan dailies around the country, is evidence of the fact that breakfast cereals have become the major battleground between nutrition activists and food manufacturers. Many so-called "ready-sweetened" cereals have sugar as their main ingredient. Consumer activists have made them a major target for several reasons: the prime consumers are children, whose lifetime eating habits are in the process of being formed; breakfast cereal is a vitamin-enriched dietary staple, unlike snacks that lay no claim to nutritional merit; sugared cereals are often eaten as snacks without milk, which makes the sugar more likely to stick to the teeth; and sweetened cereals are overpriced as well as oversugared. And they are hawked unremittably: one study showed that pre-sweetened cereals are advertised five times as often as nonsweetened ce-

reals on television programs for children.

Cereal producers, instead of backing away gracefully from this product, have become increasingly aggressive in its defense. Their general line of reasoning, a nugatory one in the eyes of nutritionists, is that the only way to get kiddies to pack in enough nutrition is to sugar-coat everything.

The issue now seems to be coming to a head. Last spring two organizations, the Boston-based Action for Children's Television (ACT) and the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), petitioned the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to ban the advertising on children's television programs of all sugar products typically eaten between meals. The cereal people were scheduled to make their case before the FTC on 22 November, and the FTC is expected to announce a decision before the end of the year. Short of a ban, the agency could take any number of actions such as restricting advertising time for the products or requiring sugar warnings in the commercials.

An FTC nutritionist told *Science* that the advertising campaign appears to be a last-ditch attempt to rally public opinion to the ready-sweetened cause. The ad has a slightly desperate quality, including as it does charts, graphs, footnotes, and a bewildering diagram intended to show there is not much difference between the sugar molecules in cereal and those in fresh fruit.

Also, according to Michael Jacobson of CSPI, it contains some misleading information. It uses "ready-sweetened" in a fashion that makes it appear to be interchangeable with "ready-to-eat" (RTE), although RTE includes all cold cereals. It says "ready-to-eat cereal eaters skip breakfast less than non-ready-to-eat cereal eaters." This, in Jacobson's view, is a tautology which means "people who eat breakfast eat breakfast more often than those who don't."

The ad also cites studies showing that

ticular research areas, a role similar to their past nuclear efforts, or should they be serving as technical managers advising Washington and coordinating efforts between the program managers and outside contractors. This philosophical issue is as yet unresolved, says Meyers, who came to the job from an aerospace background and says candidly that he has a lot to learn yet about energy pro-

grams. "On the issue of inside versus outside work at the labs, we've been trying to understand the capabilities—for centers of excellence, for capability to manage. It varies greatly from lab to lab and operation to operation." According to another Washington official familiar with the question, the large ERDA labs did well as centers of excellence but not so well as program managers. The more

specialized labs, such as the energy centers, were also called upon by ERDA for program management support.

Spending about \$2 billion of the department's \$10.4 billion budget, the laboratories will be a large part of the Carter Administration's energy effort. The entire R & D program is intended to be geared much more closely to the economic considerations of the energy mar-

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cereal consumption does not increase tooth decay in children, although these studies have been criticized by other researchers as being too poorly designed to separate out the role of cereals from that of the rest of youthful diets.

The ad further claims that RTE cereals account for only 2 percent of sugar consumption. But this statistic, says Jacobson, does not reflect the fact that the percentage would be much higher if it only related to children.

Despite the rising agitation among parents and nutritionists, cereal companies are finding new ways to mine a market whose potential apparently remains to be fully exploited. The latest entry into the presweetened field comes to us from Ralston Purina—called Cookie Crisp, the cereal is 45 percent sugar, comes in chocolate chip or vanilla, and looks like tiny cookies.

A New Attempt to Help the Deinstitutionalized

There are between 1.5 and 2 million mentally disabled people in this country who are not sick enough to be institutionalized and not well enough to take care of themselves without help. Many are in hospitals and nursing homes; the majority are scattered around in such places as welfare hotels, living in a shadow world, socially isolated, ill fed, ill housed, jobless, and confused. They are the "walking wounded of the mind," says Bertram Brown, director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)—the products of the vast and continuing movement toward deinstitutionalization of mental patients.

The plight of the deinstitutionalized is a major issue in mental health care. Now

the government has announced the beginnings of a program, called Community Support Systems (CSP), to take the walking wounded under its wing by helping them individually to take advantage of available services in such areas as housing, health, employment, and rehabilitation.

To do this, \$3.5 million worth of CSP contracts (the money was originally slated for upgrading of mental hospitals) have been awarded to mental health agencies in 16 states. The states will then subcontract to what is being called a "core service agency"—this can be a community mental health center or other service agency. The designated agencies will have responsibility for coordinating all local resources of potential help to the mentally handicapped. Within each core agency case managers will be assigned to keep in continuous contact with mentally handicapped individuals.

The program does not create new services but is an attempt to get people plugged into ones already available. It will also be very manpower-intensive—an NIMH official told *Science* that if the demonstration programs are effective, they may lead to a "whole new profession" of case manager.

Judith Turner of NIMH said at a press conference that the task of coordinating government services will be enormously complex, but that it can be done—they do it in southwest Denver, anyway, where there are comprehensive community services for deinstitutionalized people. For many people, though, the only systematic follow-up available is monthly visits to some clinic for medication.

Next year will see only a small increase in CSP funding. However, if Rosalynn Carter's mental health commission snaps up the idea and incorporates it in its final recommendations next April, the program could bloom.

Russell Peterson Says Yes—He Will Head OTA

Everyone at the Office of Technology Assessment is reportedly heaving vast sighs of relief at the news that Russell Peterson has consented to become the OTA's new director. He'll start work on 16 January.

Although Peterson was not the OTA board's first choice, he appears to possess the Renaissance-type qualities all were seeking: a background in science, management, and government; breadth of vision; and a prestigious reputation.

Peterson, who has spent 2 years setting up the global lobby New Directions, says he is "very excited" about his new job. "I think there's a great need to get more people in critical decision-making positions to face up to the longer term and more holistic aspects of the impact of our decisions. Most people spend too much time on the urgent and too little on the important. Everyone focuses on the near term. We need more attention to long-term considerations."

Peterson believes it's a logical move from New Directions to OTA since "critical technical issues are world problems." He is expected to exert rather more decisive leadership than did Emilio Daddario, OTA's first director, who resigned last summer. Daddario's authority was partially undermined by the fact that all his staff were formally hired by the chairman of the OTA congressional board. Peterson sought and received assurances from the board that he would have authority over hiring and firing.

OTA has been floundering around for many months; now, says one staffer, everyone is optimistic that Peterson will bring the "breadth of imagination and strength of leadership that has been so desperately lacking."

Constance Holden