dinand Marcos, who ordered last year that work cease until all safety issues had been resolved. At present, he is negotiating with Westinghouse for reactor safety improvements pegged to the accident at Three Mile Island. Westinghouse hopes to conclude these negotiations by the end of May.

The company says it is pleased by the NRC's decision to limit the scope of its review for this case and others. "Foreign purchasers of nuclear reactors, faced with . . . increased construction costs and long delays or licensing decisions" will go elsewhere, a spokesman says. "As a consequence, the United States is being viewed in some quarters as an unreliable and therefore undesirable source of nuclear reactors." Westinghouse's reactor sales have recently been entirely to other countries.

## CIA Charter Proposals Die in Congress

Efforts in Congress to enact a comprehensive charter for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) are now considered dead, although congressmen could still enact restrictions on the agency's use of academics as spies.

The House and Senate Intelligence committees have given up for the indefinite future proposals that would have permitted, among other things, warrantless wiretapping and burglary of U.S. citizens at home and abroad, and the monitoring of sensitive U.S. business communications overseas. The committees also have set aside proposals to exempt the agency from provisions of the Freedom of Information Act and to forbid the disclosure of CIA contacts or sources on university campuses and elsewhere—provisions that aroused great concern among historians and journalists (*Science*, 29 February).

The Senate committee has substituted a less controversial proposal it expects the House to accept, which simply reduces the number of congressmen the CIA must inform when it conducts covert actions, such as its support for rebels in Afghanistan. The proposal attempts to tighten the reporting requirements by calling for "full and current" disclosure, instead of "timely" disclosure called for by present law. But the committees won White House support only by attaching a series of exemptions and qualifying phrases that may result in maintenance of the status quo.

The Senate committee asked its members to withhold amendments when the bill is considered on the Senate floor. But Senator Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.) plans to introduce an amendment that would bar secret CIA employment—on a full or part-time basis—of academics, journalists, and clergy. Moynihan's aides say he is motivated by the concerns of prominent news organizations and by members of the academic community, including Harvard President Derek Bok, that restrictions are needed to preserve the integrity of members of these professions working overseas. The Moynihan proposal is bitterly opposed by CIA Director Stansfield Turner, who says he does not want a flat prohibition written into law. Moynihan's aides give it less than a 50 percent chance of success, but say they will press their case anyway. The bill will probably be considered in June.

## Proposals to Study Veterans Criticized

The National Research Council and a veterans group have concluded that political bias and scientific defects will cripple federal plans for studying Vietnam veterans exposed to the defoliant Agent Orange, unless the plans are reworked.

A panel of epidemiologists assembled by the research council found so many flaws in a study proposed by the Air Force that it suggested the study be turned over to someone else. "There would appear to be valid legal reasons for the Air Force to conduct a large-scale examination" of 1200 men who flew and serviced aircraft that sprayed the defoliant during Operation Ranch Hand, the panel said. "However, if this program is to be part of an attempt to provide a scientific basis for awarding compensation to [those with claims against the government] it is inappropriate for the Air Force or Department of Defense personnel to collect these data themselves."

The panel said its concern was reinforced by a discovery that the Air Force study was not statistically sensitive enough to detect medical problems of the type alleged by servicemen, including uncommon neurological, immunological, liver, and reproductive ailments. Birth defects, perhaps the veterans' major concern, would not be adequately assessed under the Air Force design, the research council notes. Too great an emphasis would be placed on mortality rates, which are not expected to reveal anything yet because of the latency of chronic disease. Neither the Air Force nor initial reviewers at the University of Texas School of Public Health were able to uncover these deficiencies.

The research council says the study might be salvaged if its time period is lengthened considerably, perhaps to 10 or 20 years, and if the sample population is expanded, perhaps by including Marines who were present on the ground beneath the spraying. Also, medical examinations should be focused more carefully on problems that veterans have claimed. Unless these changes are made, the study might be falsely negative, a finding that veterans would dismiss because the Air Force had conducted the study itself.

In a prepared response, the Air Force says it will implement changes as circumstances warrant, taking predictable umbrage at remarks about its credibility. But the agency leaves the question of ultimate sponsorship open, to be resolved by an interagency committee headed by Joan Bernstein, general counsel at the Department of Health and Human Services.

The National Veterans Task Force on Agent Orange has attacked on similar grounds a larger study proposed by the Veterans Administration (VA), and has filed a suit in federal court claiming the study would produce scientifically flawed results. Thus far, the VA has merely published study guidelines, and at present is deciding which of at least four study proposals it will accept. But the veterans group objects to the guidelines themselves, particularly because they call for participation in the study by VA personnel.

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