

was in the offing, the FCC in 1979 asked the Electronics Industries Association (EIA), which sets many industry standards, to evaluate rival teletext systems and recommend a U.S. standard. The 23-person task force, made up of executives from TV broadcasting, manufacturing, and engineering companies, was chaired by a CBS official.

After 1 year of evaluation, on 29 July 1980, CBS did an end run around the EIA task force and directly petitioned the FCC to adopt the French Antiope system. The reason soon became clear. On 6 August, a vote taken by the EIA committee showed that the British system had won more adherents than the French system. Though the vote was secret, the *New York Times* reported that the ratio was 2 to 1. This was short of the 18 votes needed before a recommendation could be made to the FCC, but the

“Let the teletext people compete with us,” says an ABC official. “But why should we help them?”

writing was on the wall. Said *Broadcasting* magazine: “Since the most popular system is the British one, it is highly unlikely that CBS would ever have been able to swing a simple majority, let alone 18 votes, to the Antiope system it favored.”

Whether the move by CBS will prove effective remains in doubt. FCC officials of late have tended to apply a free-market philosophy to regulatory problems whenever possible. Teletext, they say, may be the perfect case for market determination of broadcasting standards. “We clearly would maintain some kind of interference standard,” says Paul Fox, an official in FCC’s office of plans and policy. “But the staff thinks very highly of not having a detailed, specific standard that would favor a particular system.”

If this free-market approach were adopted, many U.S. manufacturers maintain that Antiope would not make the grade. “Any of the experimental Antiope decoders that you see around are bigger than a suitcase,” says Walter Ciciora, research and development manager for Zenith, the largest U.S. manufacturer of television sets. “They

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OMB Offers Option on A-21

The Office of Management and Budget has bent a bit on the provisions of new federal accounting rules that have drawn the most strenuous objections from university researchers.

Affected are the requirements for time and effort reporting in the newly revised OMB Circular A-21 that governs accountability on federally sponsored research in universities (*Science*, 3 October). These rules have been the target of a mounting barrage of complaints.

The basic reporting requirements of A-21 will remain unchanged, but OMB will permit an alternative method of documentation that apparently would reduce the paperwork burden on individual researchers.

The alternative is based on a suggestion by Saunders MacLane, professor of mathematics at the University of Chicago and vice president of the National Academy of Sciences. MacLane says that he discussed the matter with the President’s science adviser, Frank Press, in August and that the alternative was developed subsequently in exchanges between Press’s office and OMB officials. MacLane says that the alternatives meet his own “most serious objection,” which is that “A-21 seemed to require reporting of activities not supported by government funds.” The present rules require that researchers report fully on all activities connected with their university jobs whether supported by federal funds or not.

In a speech to an alumni group on 16 October, Yale president A. Bartlett Giamatti noted that similar strictures were dropped in 1968 after a government task force decided that such time-and-effort reporting was “meaningless and a waste of time.” He blasted the rules as the type of “excessive or unthinking” regulation that has “seriously damaged” relations between government and science.

OMB agreed to the new alternative method in a letter to MacLane on 21 October. MacLane says that at this point discussions with universities of the new option are not far enough along “to know how well it will work out.”

The new method provides for a three-stage “multiple certification” to

document faculty salary costs. The individual faculty member would certify only the time he spends on “direct activity” related to a research grant. A department chairman would certify percentages of activity relevant to indirect cost categories. The university president would, in effect, certify that faculty were not being compensated with federal funds for activities not specified under grants.

An OMB paper elucidating the new option notes that “OMB is concerned that the proposals would increase the paperwork burden of compliance with Circular A-21 since three certifications would be substituted for one. But if a university chose it, and if faculty and administrators agreed that it was preferable to current reporting methods, then it would be possible to work it out within the framework of the circular.”

John Lordan, chief of the financial section of OMB notes that, for multiple certification alternatives to be approved, a “university at large must be willing to do it,” not simply the individual researcher.

Details of the new alternative had not reached the universities as this was being written and there was no ready reaction.

—John Walsh

Doctors Must Put Patients First, Says Editor

Doctors should forswear their lucrative sideline income so as to avoid a conflict between their interests and those of their patients. If the medical profession is to have the public’s trust, practicing physicians should have no financial stake in profit-making health care enterprises.

That is the message Arnold S. Relman, editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, has been trying to get across in recent months. In a special article in the journal’s 23 October issue, Relman uses the term “medical-industrial complex” to portray a burgeoning segment of the economy—proprietary hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and diagnostic laboratories—which last year grossed an income of around \$35 to \$40 billion. This section is “the most important recent development in American health care and it is