

proposed to abolish this power, requiring prior authorization for appropriations. Researchers contended that without it their work could be disrupted for lack of funds.

Among the routine provisions passed were extensions of the authorities of the National Cancer Institute, the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, and the National Institute of Arthritis, Metabolism, and Digestive Diseases (NIAMDD). The bill also dubbed NIAMDD with a new name—The National Institute of Arthritis, Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

Primate Center Attempts Bailout Through Congress

The New York University primate center is struggling to rescue itself from imminent closure by asking Congress in its final hours of session for necessary money to keep the facility open.

The primate center, known as the Laboratory for Experimental Medicine and Surgery in Primates (Lemsip), is due to close 31 December because of mounting deficits and the loss of more than a half million dollars in contract support from the National Institutes of Health.

Lemsip's attempt at the last minute bailout is the most recent development in a history of strained relations between the center and NIH. Lemsip officials pin the blame for most of their troubles on NIH's division of research resources. Center officials charge that the NIH group has repeatedly played favorites with its own seven officially designated primate centers.

According to NIH's director of laboratory animal sciences program, John Holman, the institute dropped Lemsip's contract support because the money was only intended as interim funding. Furthermore, NIH wants to concentrate its resources on its own primate centers, he says.

The eleventh hour lobbying to win congressional funding is led by a center researcher. Three days before Congress was to adjourn 5 December, Eugene I. Goldsmith, chairman of the center's utilization committee and a professor of surgery at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center,

spent a day on Capitol Hill drumming up support from several senators, including Jacob Javits and Warren Magnuson. Goldsmith left town with assurances that the measure, which allocates Lemsip \$400,000 for 1 year, would pass. However, a Senate filibuster on fair housing has delayed action on several measures, including the Lemsip appropriation. Congress may stay in session until close to Christmas.

According to Lemsip director, Jan Moor-Jankowski, the laboratory has served as the model for primate centers of other countries such as Britain, France, Israel, India, and the Soviet Union. It is also one of two centers collaborating with the World Health Organization for research with primate animals.

Its current research projects include studies on the pathology and treatment of sickle-cell anemia and research on baboons with alcoholic cirrhosis.

Lemsip, located in Sterling, N.Y., about 40 miles north of New York City, houses about 450 primates and has already advertised the sale of some of its animals in anticipation of the closing. The facility is mainly used by investigators from the New York City area. More than half of its researchers are clinicians whose responsibilities to patients make it difficult to travel to distant primate centers for research.

Ever since Lemsip opened 15 years ago, its relations with NIH have never been rosy. NIH's centers emphasize strong intramural programs of basic research that are conducted by a nucleus of researchers. Lemsip has taken a different tack, stressing service projects that are jointly researched by scientists from several institutions.

Holman of NIH says, "Several advisory groups looked at the primate programs and recommended that Lemsip should be given low priority because it was service-oriented." As a result, NIH terminated Lemsip's \$300,000 core contract that ended June 1979. Simultaneously, Lemsip lost a renewal bid on a \$400,000 contract from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, which is the subject of a pending lawsuit filed by New York University against the government. NYU alleges, in part, that Lemsip was unjustly denied the bid that was awarded instead to the Southwest Foundation for Research and Education in San Antonio.

Lemsip has applied twice for official status as a government center but was denied both times because it "didn't have a theme to its research," Holman says. Goldsmith notes, however, that official centers never had strong intramural programs when they opened.

New Watchdog Group Ponders Scientific Freedom

The prospect of government control over scientific communication has National Academy of Sciences president Philip Handler worried. As a result, he is forming a temporary committee to analyze it.

The issue of government restriction on the free exchange of scientific information has been raised several times during the past year. Last spring, for example, the federal government prevented scientists from Communist countries from attending two conferences. During the past session of Congress, Senate legislators considered a bill that would establish an agency to monitor the export of information on high technology.

"It's a problem of open, free conduct versus national security," Handler said in an interview. "I want to see if we can find guidelines on how these two can live comfortably together. I'd like the committee to tell us what else is brewing so we can anticipate unforeseen problems."

Since last spring, scientists have been perturbed by clumsy actions of the Departments of Commerce and of State, both of which denied visas to Soviet scientists who were to attend a meeting on computer bubble memory technology. Scientists from the People's Republic of China were required to sign statements that they would not divulge information gathered at the conference to other Communist nations. A week later, the government again denied visas to Soviet researchers to a conference on laser fusion.

More recently, the National Security Agency sought to restrict publication of studies in cryptography supported by the National Science Foundation.

Committee members have not yet been named nor a time set for the first meeting.

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