sult with their attorneys when developing policies in this area.

In addition to its attention to procedures for handling allegations of fraud, the AAMC committee looked to some other elements of university life that need attention with an eye to "maintaining high ethical standards" in the first place. Again, its thinking reflects lessons drawn from the few recent instances in which fraud has occurred. Among the points it makes are these:

- Faculties should be encouraged to "discuss research ethics to heighten awareness and recognition of these issues." Nathan Hershey, a professor of law at the University of Pittsburgh, thinks it would be a good idea for medical schools to hold ethical grand rounds from time to time.
- Institutional policies should be established to provide: (i) an appropriate and clearly defined locus of responsibility for the conduct of research, (ii) assurance that individuals charged with supervision of other researchers can realistically execute their responsibility, and (iii) particular attention to adequate supervision of large research teams.
- Policies should be set on authorship of papers and abstracts "to ensure that named authors have had a genuine role in the research and accept responsibility for the quality of the work being reported." As one committee member noted, were this idea to gain real acceptance, the number of papers to a department chairman's credit would drop precipitously, and rightly so.

In many ways, much of what the AAMC has said seems obvious. Institutions should have in place procedures for coping with fraud so that the faculty doesn't have to cope ad hoc when problems arise. Although fraud is rare, and probably never can be totally prevented, those pressures of academic life that drive some people to dishonest research should be reviewed. Quality rather than quantity of research ought to be what counts in building a reputation.

None of this is startling, except the fact that it apparently needs to be said. As Krevans remarked in an interview, "One of the most important things about this statement is that it puts us on the record as recognizing the problems and the fact that it is the universities' own responsibility to deal with them."

—BARBARA J. CULLITON

Frank Press Takes Exception to NAS Panel Recommendations on Marijuana

Academy president registers dissent on proposals for marijuana policy, says data insufficient to justify committee's "value-laden" judgments

National Academy of Sciences president Frank Press has taken the unusual step of publicly stating his personal disagreement with the central recommendations of an Academy report on marijuana policy* and suggesting that the committee may have exceeded its charge.

Press apparently reacted particularly to the committee's expressed preference for ending criminal penalties for possession of small quantities of marijuana and its recommendation that serious consideration be given by the federal government to decriminalizing measures for control of supply of the drug.

In his letter of transmittal accompanying the published report, Press wrote, "My own view is that the data available to the Committee were insufficient to justify on scientific or analytical grounds changes in current policies dealing with the use of marijuana. In this respect I am concerned that the Committee may have gone beyond its charge in stating a judgment so value-laden that it should have been left to the political process."

The report, released with no fanfare, is the product of a 4-year deliberation by the Committee on Substance Abuse and Habitual Behavior, a standing committee of the National Research Council, the research arm of the Academy. The committee's activities are supported mainly by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

NIDA administrator William Pollin says that he was "not pleased," with the report. Asked to comment on Press's suggestion that the committee had gone beyond its charge, Pollin said, "It's not a matter of exceeding the charge." His main objection was that the committee "skipped the main question."

Pollin says NIDA expected the panel to help NIDA to come up with "an analysis of costs and benefits on a range of policy options" including decriminalization of marijuana use and a move to regulation of supply rather than prohibition. NIDA was particularly interested in learning "under which options you would get a decrease in overall consumption." The committee "did not do this," said Pollin. "They made the assumption that a change in policy would not lead to increased use."

Pollin said that he had other criticisms of the report and that a letter to Press detailing them was being drafted. Pollin was at pains, however, to say that despite his reaction to the marijuana policy report, the committee had been "overall a very useful committee" to NIDA and the "Academy is an important and valuable scientific resource" for the agency.

How has the committee taken the response to its work? The committee's chairman, Louis Lasagna, head of the department of pharmacology and toxicology at the University of Rochester Medical School, said that he has not polled his colleagues, but "My own feeling is that Press has the right to express his opinion if he wants to. But I hope that the letter doesn't give people the impression that the report didn't go through the full Academy review process." He says that the final version of the report satisfied the reviewers and all but a few members of the committee.

Lasagna adds that he doesn't think that people who read the complete report should react strongly to it. He notes that the committee points out that marijuana is a harmful drug and that lighter enforcement of laws against possession "have not led to an avalanche of new use." He suggests that the report's major emphasis on the value of public discussion of the pros and cons of changing policies on marijuana "is not a radical thing to say."

For its assessment of the health effects of marijuana use the report leans heavily on the recent report, *Marijuana and*

**An Analysis of Marijuana Policy.*

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Health sponsored by the Academy's Institute of Medicine (*Science*, 19 March, p. 1488). That report attributes a broad range of psychological and biological effects to marijuana but says that the "available information does not tell us how serious the risks may be."

The policy report's conclusions say of marijuana that "Heavy use by anyone or any use by growing children should be discouraged," and adds that an "a priori likelihood of developmental damage to some young users makes marijuana use a cause for extreme concern."

The body of the new report is devoted to an attempt to weigh what is known about the health effects of marijuana use against the realities of the changing social and legal context of use and control of the drug. This attempt at balancing is reflected in the key paragraphs of the report's conclusions section that drew Press's fire:

> At the same time, the effectiveness of the present federal policy of complete prohibition falls far short of its goal—preventing use. An estimated 55 million Americans have tried marijuana, federal enforcement of prohibition of use is virtually nonexistent, and 11 states have repealed criminal penalties for private possession of small amounts and for private use. It can no longer be argued that use would be much more widespread and the problematic effects greater today if the policy of complete prohibition did not exist: The existing evidence on policies of partial prohibition indicates that partial prohibition has been as effective in controlling consumption as complete prohibition and has entailed considerably smaller social, legal, and economic costs. On balance, therefore, we believe that a policy of partial prohibition is clearly preferable to a policy of complete prohibition of supply and use.
>
> We believe, further, that current policies directed at controlling the supply of marijuana should be seriously reconsidered. The demonstrated ineffectiveness of control of use through prohibition of supply and the high costs of implementing such a policy make it very unlikely that any kind of partial prohibition policy will be effective in reducing marijuana use significantly below present levels. Moreover, it seems likely to us that removal of criminal sanctions will be given serious consideration by the federal government and by the states in the foreseeable future. Hence, a variety of alternative policies should be considered.

Lasagna and others note that the report's main recommendations differ little from those of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse in its 1972 report *Marijuana: A Signal of Misunderstanding*. The commission favored partial prohibition for marijuana, that is, that users of small quantities of the drug not be subject to criminal prosecution, but that criminal sanctions be retained in respect to supply.

What is different a decade later, however, as several committee members noted, is the public attitude toward marijuana. Lasagna recalls that when the national commission produced their report "Carter was in office and Bourne was around and there was a more tolerant attitude toward marijuana than now." (Peter Bourne was a physician and White House staff member who resigned after irregularities related to a prescription for sedative medication he had written were made public. Allegations of drug use were later made against other officials of the Carter Administration.)

In recent years, the increasing use of marijuana among younger people has resulted in sharp demands from parents, in many cases well organized, for tighter controls. The Reagan Administration is regarded as likely to react negatively to any recommendation for what would be regarded as more permissive policies on marijuana.

The marijuana policy report seems to have had a particularly long and rough passage both within the committee and in the review process. By one account, the report underwent review and revision three times at the hands of the Assembly for Behavioral and Social Sciences, the committee's parent group. The main sticking point was a proposal to recommend replacement of the prohibition on supply with a system of legal regulation. At the start, the committee was sharply divided between what one member called "libertarians," who favored total decriminalization, and "hard liners," who opposed such a move. The proposal on decriminalization of supply apparently never came to an actual vote in the committee, but disappeared from later drafts because of opposition from the Assembly and NIDA and because the committee could not formulate an acceptable regulation scheme.

The report apparently crossed the final hurdle of the Academy's report review committee with no changes. Press's action in attaching his reservations to the report marked the first of its kind since he took office a year ago, but was not unprecedented. His predecessor in the post, Philip Handler, on a few occasions during his 12 years in office appended negative comments. Notable occasions were in 1972 when he noted uncertainties in evidence put forward by the committee studying Red Dye No. 2, and in 1978, after the fact, so to speak, he stopped distribution of a report on solidification of radioactive wastes several months after its release, and later sent out a supplement dealing with doubts that had been raised about the data base used in the report. Press's action, however, seems more categorical in character.

Citing precedent, Press says that registering personal disagreement is an Academy president's "prerogative," but he acknowledges that it is "not the usual thing." Restating the objection made in his letter, he said he thought the judgments made in the report were based on incomplete information and were of the sort "I think should be part of the political process."

Press said that he had not intruded on the committee's "editorial prerogatives" or intervened in the review process. Various sources say that Press did raise the issue at the April meeting of the Academy's governing council; the draft letter was apparently moderated somewhat in tone as a result of the discussion.

In his letter, Press noted "one further concern that cannot go unaddressed. I fear that this report, coming as it does from a well-known and well-respected scientific organization, will be misunderstood by the media and the public to imply that new scientific data are suddenly available that justify sudden changes in public attitudes on the use of marijuana."

As for Press's suggestion that the committee had gone beyond its charge, it appears that committee objectives were never precisely stated in written form, but evolved in discussion between NIDA staff members and representatives of the committee. The committee chairmanship also changed in 1980, when Lasagna took over from Gardner Lindzey, director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, who remains a member.

Similar views about setting boundaries to committee comment were expressed by several members of the committee, including Professor Thomas C. Schelling of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, who also participated in the review of the report by the assembly. Schelling observed that, "if you're going to get 20 reasonably distinguished academics to contribute a lot of time learning about an issue," they must be expected to comment on what they regard as the important policy issues.

Touching on an old dilemma for the Academy, Schelling also expressed the view shared by several of his colleagues when he said that one problem is that scientists trained in the physical sciences are uncomfortable about getting involved in issues that cannot be resolved by scientific evidence alone. Either the Academy will have to avoid dealing with such issues or it will have to accept that they require "a lot of judgment."

—JOHN WALSH