

Psychiatrists: Working for change from within

The Cambodian incursion of 1970 and the subsequent Kent State tragedy set off an explosive round of protest that was heard in all segments of society. In the scientific world many ivory towers were rattled and some cracks were made in the establishment. Last year, for example, when the American Psychiatric Association met in Washington many concerned psychiatrists took to the streets and joined the May Day anti-war demonstrations (SN: 5/6/71, p. 315). They protested the war and the Government's heavy-handed treatment of the protesters. This week when the APA met in Dallas the noise of protest was almost inaudible. Many of the young psychiatrists are still advocating social involvement for the society, but it appears they have decided to work for changes from within the system. They did this by nominating a candidate to run for president of the APA against the nominee of the society's governing body. The opposition candidate, Alfred M. Freedman of New York Medical College, won the election (after a recount) by three votes.

With such a slim margin of victory it is obvious that not all APA members feel the society should become involved in or take stands on social issues. Many feel their only allegiance is to their patients. An Army psychiatrist, for instance, might have trouble explaining his membership in an organization that is actively campaigning against the Vietnam War.

As president-elect, Freedman will be in a position of power, but immediate changes are not anticipated. Freedman is a respected and well-established psychiatrist and is definitely not a wild-eyed young radical. His election, however, does indicate a feeling of disenchantment with the present leadership and there will probably be a gradual movement toward some sort of socially relevant policy changes within the APA.

The radical caucus was talking about abortion legislation, gun control laws, poverty, the problems of women and minorities and the war. They were also considering holding a day-long moratorium, making a march to the Texas School Book Depository (where President Kennedy was assassinated) and disruption of the APA business meeting. The Committee for Concerned Psychiatrists—the group that backed Freedman—was talking more softly about particular issues within the society.

One specific change was proposed in a paper by Robert L. Taylor and E. Fuller Torrey of the National Institute of Mental Health. They called for mandatory psychiatric certification and

periodic recertification. At present to practice psychiatry requires nothing more than a medical license. No training in psychiatry is required, and more than two-thirds of the nation's psychiatrists practice without certification. The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology does certify psychiatrists but

Congress and NSF: More for science education

Congressional support for the science education programs of the National Science Foundation has resulted in indications that NSF will be authorized more funds in fiscal year 1973 than the Administration requested for the agency. In the budget, NSF requested \$646 million. Five Senators have introduced a bill authorizing \$740 million, and the House has passed a bill authorizing \$673.8 million. However, the authorization process is separate from the actual appropriations process, which often results in smaller appropriations than are authorized.

Both the House and Senate groups made it clear that the increased funds they have in mind would be to spend for education programs, and both expressed displeasure that the Office of Management and Budget held up release of \$21 million that Congress had appropriated in fiscal 1972. The administration's budget for fiscal 1973 provides for release of that impounded money.

On April 19 Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and four other Senators introduced a bill that would authorize \$740 million for NSF. Of the \$94 million increase, \$56.2 million was for the politically popular science education programs, bringing the total to \$131.2 million. The specific programs receiving additional funds would be institutional improvement for science, grants to colleges and universities to be used to improve their science programs; graduate and postdoctoral fellowships; and programs aimed at improving science education at all academic levels.

The increases are necessary, said Kennedy, to arrest the recent decline in Federal support for science education. "The situation has been further exacerbated by the Administration's unconscionable action in impounding \$21 million in fiscal year 1972 appropriated funds for the National Science Foundation educational programs."

The requested amount for energy research and technology would be doubled, with the emphasis on finding new sources of power and on earthquake engineering.

On April 25, the House, by a vote of 329 to 16, passed a bill authorizing increases of \$11 million for institutional grants, \$10.8 million for graduate student support and \$13 million for science education improvement. Within

only on a voluntary basis. Taylor said, "This type of self-regulation of American psychiatry is a facade that hides the absence of meaningful regulations from the public eye." Certification and recertification, he feels, would serve the public interest as a measure of quality control. □



Kennedy



Davis

the last category, particular emphasis is placed on funds for two-year colleges. The bill also contains an increase of \$200,000 for intergovernmental programs, designed to assist state and local governments in utilizing science and technology. The House cut funds for basic research conducted by individual scientists and for national and special research programs, such as the Global Atmospheric Research Program and the International Decade of Ocean Exploration.

Rep. John W. Davis (D-Ga.), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Development, pointed out that even with the increases the total authorization is only \$21.3 million above the NSF authorization for fiscal 1972, an increase of about 3 percent, and still provides "only the minimum resources necessary for our nation to maintain adequate progress in scientific research and science education."

Rep. James Symington (D-Mo.), a member of the Committee on Science and Astronautics, noted that "this is the third year in a row, to my knowledge, that our committee has endeavored to get across to NSF that it should maintain support for science education at a level commensurate with its past efforts." Of OMB's freezing of 1972 funds, he said, "it is becoming increasingly clear that some authorities in either OMB or in the foundation, or in both, are opposed to the maintenance of the foundation's traditional role in support of science education."

The House bill, along with Kennedy's bill and the Administration request, will now be considered by the Senate's special subcommittee on the NSF, of which Kennedy is chairman. After holding hearings, which began Thursday, the committee will draft a final authorization bill which, if passed by the Senate and if different from the House bill, must be approved by a House-Senate conference committee. □