

two-thirds affirmative vote after Congressmen returned from vacation meetings with their constituents.

The act would provide grants for training rescue personnel, developing centralized EMS communication networks, purchasing emergency vehicles, providing facilities for follow-up care and teaching the public about first aid. Two-year grants for establishment of new EMS systems would require 75 percent local funding by the second year and self-sufficiency after that. Grants for improving existing EMS systems would require 50 percent local funding from the outset.

The Administration had requested \$15 million to finish seven regional EMS demonstration projects. Instead, Congress authorized \$185 million, spread over three years, to help communities throughout the country establish their own EMS systems. In his veto message, the President asserted that the proper Federal role was establishment of a few demonstration projects that other communities could use as models. The congressionally authorized funds, he said, were "far in excess of the amounts that can be prudently spent," and local communities should be free to spend their funds for "local purposes of higher priority."

In his 1972 State of the Union message, President Nixon spoke of the "sad and staggering" loss due to accidents in this country and later proposed a "new Federal Partnership with the private sector" to help combat the loss with improved EMS systems, beginning with the seven so-called "model systems."

The loss is indeed "sad and staggering." Some 20 percent of accidental fatalities and 30 percent of heart attack deaths could be prevented by prompt, efficient emergency medical care. Perhaps 60,000 lives could be saved every year by raising the American EMS standards to that of several other developed nations.

The EMS situation now—in the words of one knowledgeable Congressional aide—is a "horror show." Less than two-fifths of all ambulances meet minimum design standards and only five percent of ambulance drivers have passed the minimum training course established by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. By the Ambulance Association of America's own estimate, 25,000 people are permanently injured or disabled each year by untrained ambulance attendants and rescue workers. Emergency rooms are overcrowded, recommended communications networks linking various emergency services exist in only a handful of communities and only half the needed number of physician emergency medicine specialists are practicing.

SCIENCE NEWS has learned that the initial draft of the President's veto

message originated in the HEW office of Undersecretary Frank C. Carlucci, who sent it with a memo to Roy C. Ash, director of OMB, setting out further objections to the EMS act. A new agency set up by the bill to administer EMS development would "erect new barriers to efficient and effective organization of the Department," he told Ash. The money authorizations "promise a level of Federal funding for such development that cannot be met."

The Administration also objected to inclusion in the act of a rider to keep seven Public Health Service hospitals open—a measure hastily included when Congress learned of HEW intentions to close the facilities.

Congress and the Administration apparently agree that the EMS crisis is not a matter of developing new technology to save lives, but rather a matter of coordinating and improving existing facilities. Most important is the concept of regionalism, with major hospitals in a given region sharing responsibility for treating various types of injuries (one hospital taking burns, another head injuries). Such a system requires a sophisticated network of radio communications and highly trained workers at every level. Where the legislative and executive branches part company is over the question of to what degree local initiative needs to be supplemented with Federal funds. Even if an override should succeed, Carlucci's memo would seem to portend im-

Europe finally establishes a space agency

After years of haggling, Europe is finally getting together in space. Last week, ministers from 11 Eastern European countries reached an agreement to merge the existing European Space Research Organization (ESRO) and the European Launcher Development Organization (ELDO) into a new NASA-type space agency (SN: 1/13/73, p. 25). The final signing of the agreement is now being delayed by Italy which has to reevaluate its position due to a recent change in its government. The new organization will be called the European Space Agency.

The agreement includes three major joint projects. The countries will scrap the unsuccessful Europa launch vehicle in favor of development of the French launcher, the L-3S. The nations also agreed to develop a space laboratory, sometimes called the *sortie* lab, which will be placed into earth orbit in the cargo bay of the space shuttle, now being built by NASA. This laboratory would take scientists from the European countries as well as from the United States into space for several weeks of research (SN: 1/27/73, p. 54).

The decision to build the space-laboratory, which is considered an

integral part of the shuttle program, will mean a commitment of about \$300 million by the Europeans. Since 1969, NASA has been encouraging the European nations to work with the United States in just such a project. Joint scientific efforts not only tend to ease political tensions, but also eliminate costly duplications of efforts. The lab will be built in Europe by European money. But requirements and the final design of the laboratory will require close contact with the U.S. aerospace industries now working on the shuttle.

The third major project agreed upon by the European nations concerns the launching of a series of British communications satellites for ship-to-shore transmissions over water routes between Europe and the Persian Gulf.

Each of the 11 nations—Belgium, Denmark, France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Britain, Italy, Norway and Sweden—will contribute specified amounts to the \$870 million program.

Any agreements between member nations and non-member nations, such as the various French-Soviet joint projects, will not come under the jurisdiction of the new agency. □



University of Maryland
Infant in portable incubator is rushed from copter to hospital in University of Maryland's emergency care project.

pounded funds and interagency friction.

Local initiative will certainly be needed to relieve the nation's EMS shortcomings, but local resources are limited, which helps explain why 70 percent of deaths from motor vehicle accidents occur in rural areas and communities under 2,500 population. Upon the outcome of the current debate may depend the lives of 60,000 Americans every year. □