

AFTER LAST YEAR'S THREAT TO NSF, MIKULSKI ISSUES ANOTHER MANIFESTO

Following last year's commanding declaration on "The Future of the NSF" in a report of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the same committee issued a report (103-311) on 17 July on the bill (HR 4524) to fund the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and independent agencies. The section on NSF was prepared at the direction of Senator Barbara Mikulski, the Maryland Democrat who chairs the appropriations subcommittee that rules over the foundation, and was adopted by the full committee. In last year's report, Mikulski threatened to reduce the foundation's budget if it did not heed her committee's command to broaden its mission to do more "strategic and applied" research (see PHYSICS TODAY, October 1993, page 109). The language in her latest report was blunt but less bombastic. Following is an excerpt on research universities:

"With the national focus on deficit reduction, research universities will be under increasing pressure throughout the next decade to reassess their priorities and to allocate resources judiciously. Federal funding cannot be expected to compensate decreases in private-sector research investments. Growth in the number of graduating PhD students educated in narrow disciplines cannot be sustained, while dramatic improvements in science, math, engineering and technical education at all levels will be necessary to build the broadly competent work force the nation will need to support a strong and productive economy. Industry will look to universities more and more to deliver capable, well-educated graduates as well as to make research advances that will improve their products and processes over the long term. Universities expect and need leadership from the National Science Foundation to help them design and implement a new agenda for the future of research and education. The foundation's leadership must be exercised within the context of an inte-

grated Federal investment strategy for research and development that is designed to stimulate the creation of new knowledge and new technologies that in turn lead to new employment opportunities, greater economic security and an improved quality of life for all of our citizens."

In the House-Senate conference report (103-715) issued 2 December on the same appropriations bill, the panel had other recommendations that bore the imprint of Mikulski and her House appropriations subcommittee counterpart, Representative Louis Stokes, an Ohio Democrat. Here is a section from that report:

"The committee of conference recognizes that NSF has actively supported education activities to encourage participation of women and minorities who are underrepresented in science, engineering and mathematics and persons with disabilities. NSF is encouraged to continue emphasizing this area. Further, the conferees urge NSF to coordinate its programs with related programs in other Federal agencies to ensure that Federal resources achieve the maximum

beneficial effect. . . .

"The conferees join in support of the Administration's commitment to investment in science and technology and concur with the belief that our nation's economy and future well-being are dependent upon these essential investments. Consistent with the Administration's position to invest in science and technology as part of its agenda to build a prosperous economy, the conferees direct each agency under its jurisdiction [NSF, NASA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Science and Technology Policy and others that are not engaged in R&D activities] to establish an interagency economic impact and diversity council to provide guidance and advice with respect to issues in the areas of science and technology as they impact racial and ethnic minorities, women and persons with disabilities who are underrepresented in these fields. OSTP is to monitor and report back to the committees on the creation of these councils by 31 October 1994."

— IRWIN GOODWIN

WASHINGTON INS & OUTS

OSTP GETS THREE MORE PHYSICISTS; FAMILY EISENSTEIN SETTLES AT NSF

Ever since the White House enlisted scientists to work on military technologies during World War II, physicists have been on the front line. As advisers and staffers, physicists were dominant in science and technology circles at the Old and New Executive Office Buildings into the Reagan and Bush years. The Clinton Administration has made a calculated decision to diversify the backgrounds and experience of its scientific and technical people. Even so, a tiny team of physicists operates in today's Office of Science and Technology Policy under its director, John H. Gibbons, who not

only trained and practiced as a physicist but continues to think like one (see PHYSICS TODAY, August, page 41).

While there are no physicists in the positions of associate directors, several physicists occupy the ranks just below. They include **Frank von Hippel**, on leave from Princeton University, who is assistant director for national affairs, and **Henry C. Kelly**, lured from the Office of Technology Assessment, a think tank established to advise Congress and headed for nearly 14 years by Gibbons, to be assistant director for technology. (For more on von Hippel and Kelly,