

## Reagan Administration reshuffle

## All-change in wake of Rostow

## Washington

PRESIDENT Reagan fired his arms control chief, Eugene V. Rostow, last week as part of a shake-up of his Administration in arms control, health and conservation. Rostow is to be replaced by the 36-year-old former Pentagon official, Kenneth Adelman, who is now part of the US delegation to the United Nations, and close to conservatives around Washington. The President chose David Emery, a former congressman from Maine, to be deputy director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) under Adelman. In addition, Richard Starr, who had been US representative to the conventional force reductions talks, was replaced by Morton I. Abromowitz, a foreign service career officer. The White House had sought Starr's resignation because he seemed to have become excessively concerned with security.

Rostow had clashed with the White House over several issues, the most important being his view that the Administration should signal to the Soviet Union some "intelligent flexibility" in the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force



Rostow — hawk or dove?

Negotiations to resume in Geneva on 27 January. Soviet leader Yuri Andropov has indicated some willingness to cut the number of Soviet SS-20 missiles and the number of warheads aimed at Western Europe, but conservatives in Congress and the White House want the Administration to stick to its original demand — "zero option".

In addition, the White House last week dropped its support of Robert T. Grey, an ACDA official whom Rostow had fought long and hard to have confirmed as deputy director of the agency. Grey's nomination had been opposed by conservatives in Congress seeking to influence Rostow's handling of arms control issues.

In a farewell to his staff, Rostow quoted Talleyrand, saying he had violated the Frenchman's famous principle "*surtout, pas de zèle*". Noting that ACDA was demoralized when he took over in 1980, he said he was sorry if he had brought renewed turbulence to the agency.

In an unrelated move, the President

appointed former congresswoman Margaret Heckler, who represented a district in Massachusetts until her defeat last year, to become the new Secretary of Health and Human Services. Heckler replaces Richard Schweiker who announced he would leave, for financial reasons, to take a post connected with the life insurance industry.

Schweiker's huge department was the target of large budget cuts in domestic programmes, but he tended to protect the research community, including to some extent the National Institutes of Health.

Heckler represented Massachusetts for years, and might be expected to be sympathetic to the needs of the research community. In addition, she sat on the House of Representatives Science and Technology Committee. But one congressional source says that in the last Congress she took the opposite position from the research community — sometimes with a vengeance. She supported the animal rights bill prominently, she supported small business set-asides, which researchers argued would diminish their funding, and she supported conservatives seeking to limit fetal research.

A change of importance to environmental issues occurred when the Department of Energy (DoE) fired its top conservation official, Maxine Savitz, deputy assistant secretary for conservation and renewable energy. Savitz had been with DoE since its formation and had become an articulate spokesman for the programmes she came to head. DoE's conservation efforts have been a target of the Administration. **Deborah Shapley**

## US universities

## Biological sciences ranked

## Washington

A TOTAL of 616 US biological sciences departments have been rated in the latest report of the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils, issued last week. The board, under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences, is releasing its surveys volume by volume. Previous instalments dealt with the physical sciences, humanities and engineering (see *Nature* 299, 476; 1982). The last volume will cover social and behavioural sciences.

As in its other reports, the board declined to assign a single ranking to each department. Previous surveys that did so were criticized, especially by middle and low-ranked universities, for overlooking some of their good points.

Thus the Conference Board tried to be more subtle and asked respondents to rate

each department by 16 different measures, ranging from library size to the employment plans of graduates. Despite this effort, measure number eight — the scholarly quality of a department's faculty — has been seen as the key index to overall quality.

The survey divided biological sciences into six categories: biochemistry, botany, cellular/molecular biology, microbiology, physiology and zoology. Because work in these fields can occur in departments with various titles, the schools themselves were allowed to categorize their own departments. The top-ranked departments in two categories are indicated below, with the departments being ranked in parentheses.

## Top ranked departments (scale 1-5)

Biochemistry	
MIT (Biochemistry)	5.0
Harvard (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Graduate School)	4.9
Stanford (Biochemistry)	4.9
UC Berkeley (Biochemistry)	4.6
Univ. Wisconsin, Madison (Biochemistry)	4.6
Yale (Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, Pharmacology, Biology)	4.5
Cellular/molecular biology	
MIT (Biology)	4.9
Caltech (Biology)	4.8
Rockefeller (Cellular Biology, Molecular Biology)	4.8
Yale (Biology, Cell Biology/Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry, Genetics)	4.7

Since biology has advanced rapidly in the past few years it is useful to know which departments have advanced the most:

## Departments most improved in past 5 years (scale 0-2)

Biochemistry	
Univ. Texas San Antonio Health Science Center (Biochemistry)	1.7
UC San Francisco (Biochemistry)	1.7
Virginia Commonwealth University Medical College (Biochemistry)	1.7
Univ. Alabama, Birmingham (Biochemistry)	1.6
Univ. Texas, Houston Health Science Center, (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Biochemistry)	1.6
Cellular/molecular biology	
Univ. Utah, Salt Lake City (Biology)	1.8
UC Los Angeles (Molecular Biology)	1.6
Stanford (Structural Biology)	1.6
Syracuse Univ. (Biology)	1.6
Univ. Virginia (Biology)	1.6
Univ. North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Cell Biology, Molecular Biology)	1.6

As measured by the scholarly calibre of the faculty, the best microbiology programmes were at MIT and Rockefeller. In botany, the best were UC Davis and Vanderbilt. The best physiology programme was at UC San Francisco and the best zoology programme was at Harvard.

The report cautioned that the ratings for middle and lower ranked schools were less certain because fewer of the respondents were familiar with their programmes.

**Deborah Shapley**