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CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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**THE BUSH BUDGET: IS THE NEW BREEZE A FREEZE OR JUST HOT AIR?**

On February 9, President Bush presented his "kinder and gentler" budget proposals for "Building a Better America" in FY 1990 and beyond. In his joint address to Congress and in the written material provided by the White House, Bush outlined increases from FY 1989 funding in some areas and applied his "flexible freeze" to others. Although the rhetoric about commitment to science and research was excellent -- "Science and technology form the foundation of economic power" -- the dollar figures do not significantly differ from the proposals in the final Reagan budget.

Bush proposed funding the National Science Foundation (NSF) at the same level as Reagan's budget -- \$2.149 billion, a 14% increase over FY 1989. (Bush rounded the figure up to \$2.2 billion in his address to Congress; one may forgive this enhancement, as it apparently represented the first time a presidential address to Congress has included specific mention of NSF.) In the Bush proposal, funding for AIDS research (\$1.6 billion) and basic biomedical and behavioral research at the

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The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

Raymond E. Wolfinger, *President*

Howard J. Silver, *Executive Director*

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National Institutes of Health (NIH) (\$6.8 billion) remains the same as the funding levels proposed in the Reagan budget. The same is true for the highly touted NASA increase.

Education research and statistics are given rhetorical support as Bush underscored the need to "expand experiments for educational achievement." The President also proposed a flurry of new programs with increased spending (\$411 million) to reward successful schools, recognize superior teachers, foster magnet schools, and establish a national science scholars program. These funding increases are offset by proposals for better accountability and a decrease in the Guaranteed Student Loan interest subsidy for lenders.

Bush called for significant increases over FY 1989 spending for Head Start, programs for the homeless, drug abuse, prisons, and acid rain cleanup. These will be offset by increasing defense spending at the rate of inflation and applying the "flexible freeze" to all other programs. The freeze requires that non-defense FY 1990 outlays, in aggregate, do not exceed total outlays for such programs in FY 1989. Given the proposed spending increases, this will require about a 7% reduction in all other programs from the "current services" level (last year's spending plus inflation and built-in demographic changes). This leaves room for much maneuvering. Bush has asked Congress to negotiate with the administration how these reductions will be distributed. Congress wants more specifics from Bush.<<

#### NRC COMMITTEE RELEASES AIDS REPORT

Tying AIDS research to social and behavioral science in general, a recently released National Research Council (NRC) report claims that "a history of underfunding" of social and behavioral science research has hampered efforts to understand and fight the disease. The 589-page report, AIDS: Sexual Behavior and Intravenous Drug Use, outlines various shortcomings in the federal response to the epidemic and offers a wide range of specific recommendations. Among them, it calls for the federal government to expand its current programs for monitoring the spread of HIV infection, begin an unprecedented effort to collect data on sexual behavior and drug use, and provide better support for programs designed to change risky behaviors.

The report, compiled by NRC's Committee on AIDS Research and the Behavioral, Social, and Statistical Sciences, chaired by Lincoln Moses of Stanford University, in many ways echoes the findings of other groups that have advised the federal government on how to respond to the AIDS epidemic. One example is the report's support of explicit and targeted education campaigns, advice made by the Presidential Commission on the HIV Epidemic and the National Academy of Sciences/Institute of Medicine (see Update, June 10, 1988), among others. However, because the NRC report deals exclusively with the social and behavioral sciences,

it covers these disciplines in more detail than earlier, more wide-ranging advisory reports on AIDS.

The NRC report is divided into three main sections. The first offers a comprehensive review of the prevalence of HIV infection in the United States and current knowledge about sexual and drug-use behaviors that transmit infection. The second section details principles of behavioral change that might prove useful in designing and using intervention strategies to stem the disease's spread. The last section reviews social obstacles and barriers to research that have stood in the way of effective AIDS prevention. Among the report's recommendations:

- High priority should be given to methodological studies to determine ways of improving the quality of self-reports of sexual and drug-use behavior.
- AIDS research should be considered for exemption from the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act.
- The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health should take responsibility for an evaluation strategy that will provide timely information on the relative effectiveness of different AIDS intervention programs.
- There should be a substantial increase in the number of trained behavioral and social scientists employed in AIDS-related activities at federal agencies responsible for preventing the spread of HIV infection.
- Public Health Service (PHS) fellowship programs and Intergovernmental Personnel Appointments should be used as an interim means for rapidly enlarging the cadre of senior behavioral and social scientists working on AIDS programs at PHS agencies.

AIDS: Sexual Behavior and Intravenous Drug Abuse is available for \$24.95 from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20418; 202/334-3313.<<

#### **OMB ANNOUNCES INTERIM RULES ON DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS**

On January 31, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued interim final rules implementing the Drug-free Workplace Act of 1988. Passed last November as part of the omnibus drug legislation, the act requires all contractors and grantees to certify, as a pre-condition for receiving federal funds, that their workplace is drug-free. The bill merged the numerous amendments attached to appropriations and authorization bills in 1988.

The interim rules are government-wide, affecting most contractors and grantees. Requirements for contractors are outlined in an amendment to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, the existing rule on suspension and debarment of nonprocurement contractors. Requirements for grantees are outlined in a parallel, but separate, common rule.

The rules require institutions funded through contracts larger than \$25,000 or grants of any amount to certify that a good-faith effort will be made to promote and maintain a drug-free environment. "Good faith effort" is defined through a series of institutional requirements that include:

- publishing, disseminating, and enforcing an anti-drug policy statement;
- establishing a drug-free awareness program;
- requiring employees, as a condition of employment, to abide by the policy and to inform the employer if convicted of an on-the-job drug violation;
- notifying the funding agency if convictions occur; and
- taking appropriate action against convicted employees, such as personnel sanctions or requiring participation in a drug abuse treatment program.

Individuals to whom awards are made directly also must certify that they will not engage in illegal drug-related activities. Individuals working alone are not required to develop a drug-free awareness program.

Violating the act can lead to suspension or termination of awards, or suspension or debarment of the contractor or grantee. Debarred institutions or individuals may be ineligible for any federal awards for a period of up to five years. Several actions would constitute a violation of these rules, including: submitting false certification; failing to comply with the certification; or having enough convicted employees to warrant doubt about good-faith efforts to maintain a drug-free work site.

To meet the statutory deadline, the interim rules will take effect on March 18, 1989. OMB will receive comments until April 3. If required, changes will be incorporated prior to publishing the rules as final.<<

#### 'AGENDA' PROPOSED FOR ARCTIC SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Committee on Arctic Social Sciences, an offshoot of the National Research Council's Polar Research Board, has released a multidisciplinary blueprint for federally supported social and behavioral science research in Arctic areas. The report, Arctic Social Science: An Agenda for Action, recommends that the National Science Foundation (NSF) be given official recognition as the lead agency in coordinating such Arctic research. At a meeting convened for the report's release on February 3, Committee Chairman Oran Young said NSF is "clearly" the appropriate agency to play this role. The report further recommended that NSF hire a social scientist experienced in Arctic research to manage the overall effort.

The report is divided into two principal sections; the first covers program initiatives while the second examines

organizational issues. The report does not address the financing of its recommendations, though it notes that even without budgetary increases for Arctic research, improvements in the current research structure can be made. (Young did note that NSF would need resources to hire the proposed program manager.) One Polar Research Board staff member noted that Agenda for Action will be used at least in part as a guide in the first biennial revision of the U.S. Arctic Research Plan, due in July.

At the February 3 meeting, Young noted the difficulty his committee faced in pulling together a comprehensive plan for studying the human components of Arctic regions. After conferring with experts in the social and behavioral science disciplines, Young said committee members had an "impossibly large" number of themes and ideas with which to work. In an effort to "prioritize," several criteria were set, including the recommendation that proposed initiatives should transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries and link social and natural scientists.

The report outlines the three major themes under which program initiatives would fall. They are: human/environment relationships; community viability; and rapid social change. The report offers the background and justification for each of these themes, as well as representative types of questions and issues to be incorporated into applied and basic research; research in the context of opportunities for international cooperation is also explored. The report notes that the types of research questions cited to illustrate program opportunities are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive.

Suggested program initiatives are quite varied. They include studies on: methods of resource allocation; the impact of global warming trends on Arctic populations; Arctic family and education research; motivation and psychosocial adjustments of the Northern work force; obstacles to community survival; and social stress, alcoholism, and mental health in the Arctic environment.

Beyond its call for NSF to serve as the lead federal agency in Arctic social and behavioral science research, the report recommends strong interagency coordination. According to the report, involvement could span a wide range of agencies, from the Department of Defense and the National Institute of Mental Health to the Department of Transportation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Interagency coordination could produce significant advances in our understanding of Arctic phenomena," the report claims, "even in the absence of increased funding for social science research in and on the Arctic." To achieve this coordination, the report recommended the creation of a task force under the auspices of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee. The task force would consist of social scientists from federal agencies with Arctic responsibilities or interests.

Copies of Agenda for Action are available at no charge from the Polar Research Board, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20418.<<

#### NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CHILDREN HOLDS FIRST MEETING

Led by Sen. John D. Rockefeller (D-WV), the newly established National Commission on Children held its first meeting on February 6. The meeting kicked-off what will be a 1 1/2-year attempt to highlight and resolve some of the troubling issues facing today's youth. The organizational meeting offered Commission participants an opportunity to get acquainted and to gain a broad perspective about their mission.

The Commission is the result of a 1987 amendment to the Social Security Act that called for a bipartisan effort to study the problems of children in the areas of health, education, social services, income security, and tax policy. The amendment was championed by Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX), with support from Reps. George Miller (D-CA) and Dan Coats (R-IN), the chair and then-ranking minority of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families.

The Commission consists of 36 voting members, with appointments made equally by the President, the Speaker of the House, and the President pro tempore of the Senate. Thirty-five panelists have been selected to date; President Bush will make one additional appointment. The membership represents a broad spectrum of perspectives, including organizations that serve children, academic researchers, federal, state and local government officials, and parents groups.

Bentsen opened the meeting by asking the Commission to view itself as a "forum for children." He stressed the need for a comprehensive, analytic approach directed by input from social scientists, doctors, and community members. He asserted that the Commission's recommendations must be realistic and conducive to implementation, and that private-public sector cooperation should be highlighted in any recommendation, particularly in light of current budgetary constraints.

The Commission also heard from Cheryl Hayes of the Committee on Child Development Research and Public Policy of the National Academy of Sciences. She offered an overview of some of the most pressing challenges facing children and families and expressed hope that the current political climate would lead to serious consideration of the Commission's recommendations.

The Commission's charter requires the group to provide recommendations to the White House and Congress by September 30, 1990. At least four meetings, as well as field hearings, will be held. Funding is available to hire a professional staff. Just how the group will coordinate its functions remains unsettled.<<

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA JOINS COSSA**

In January, the University of Minnesota joined the ranks of COSSA's contributor institutions, bringing the total number of contributors to 52. We offer the University a hearty welcome!<<

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**SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency for further information or application materials. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

**National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases**

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has announced its intention to fund statistical research related to the study of AIDS. NIAID invites applications which consider research in areas pertaining to clinical trials of treatments or vaccines, epidemiologic studies, or laboratory investigations. Research involving mathematical models to predict the course of the epidemic or to further investigate certain aspects of the epidemic such as the latency period, the effect of behavior modifications, the effect of various types of screening programs, etc., is also within the scope of this program. For the purposes of this solicitation, NIAID is interested in methodologies rather than analyses.

**Application Procedure:** Interested individuals should request applications from the contact person listed below.

**Review Process:** Peer review.

**Budget:** NIAID has set aside \$500,000 for the first year of funding, and awards will be made for up to three years. NIAID expects to fund up to three awards.

**Deadline:** March 28, 1989.

**Contact:** Veronica Johnson  
NIAID, AIDS Program  
Biostatistics Research Branch  
6003 Executive Boulevard, Room 241P  
Rockville, MD 20892  
301/496-0694 <<

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