The report of the Senate Panel of Consultants represents a continuation of these arguments outside the forum of the NIH. The panel was cochaired by a long-time colleague of Mrs. Lasker, Sidney Farber of the Boston Children's Cancer Research Foundation, and Mrs. Lasker helped Senators Yarborough and Jacob J. Javits (R–N.Y.) pick the panel members. A former staff member of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee has been quoted as saying that members were chosen on the basis of their national reputation in cancer research or philanthropy, since "this was a PR operation as much as anything." Although the scientific portion of the panel's report—by far its major component—won general praise, its chief recommendation, in favor of an independent cancer agency outside NIH, was to some extent blunted in impact by having been predicted. In asking the Senate for funds to set the panel up in March 1970, Senator Yarborough said the panel should direct particular attention "toward the creation of a new administrative agency which would guarantee that the conquest of cancer becomes a highly visible national goal."

The panel's recommendation was the basis of the Senate bill introduced in January this year and passed essentially unchanged in July. An important, maybe crucial, factor in the Laskerites' victory was the defeat of Senator Yarborough last year and his replacement as chairman of the health subcommittee by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D–Mass.), regarded in the White House as a serious contender for next year's presidential election. The Administration at first firmly opposed the Kennedy-Lasker bill (known as S. 34). By way of countermeasure, President Nixon in his State of the Union message in January asked for an additional $100 million to be appropriated for the NCI (even though last year the Administration asked the Senate appropriations subcommittee to cut the NCI budget by $20 million). The President's science adviser, Edward E. David, urged in a speech in February that the cancer effort remain within the NIH, adducing the argument—since repeated by a train of scientific spokesmen—that it would be a mistake to isolate cancer research from the mainstream of the life sciences.

After these initiatives, the Administration rested its lance in the belief that the threat from the Kennedy bill had been headed off. Kennedy held 2 days of hearings in March, at which the members of the Senate panel and the American Cancer Society testified in favor of S. 34 and a preponderance of witnesses from the biomedical com-

Briefing

Two Cultures Note

The summer schedule of the director of the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke (NINDS) has drawn critical notice on Capitol Hill and has prompted a review of the use of government time and money by National Institutes of Health (NIH) scientists and administrators.

A wire service story last week related that, since he came to NINDS as director in 1968, Edward F. MacNichol, Jr., has spent 2 months each summer at Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and collected $25-a-day government per diem payments during the time he was there.

The issue was raised in an anonymous letter sent to, among others, NIH director Robert Q. Marston and Representative L. H. Fountain (D–N.C.), chairman of the House Government Operations Committee's subcommittee on intergovernmental relations and a frequent critic of NIH management. At Fountain's request, General Accounting Office (GAO) staff members assigned to NIH were asked to check relevant travel records.

GAO attention has apparently focused on the per diem payments, and MacNichol announced last Thursday that he had decided to place in escrow the total amount of the per diem payments pending review of the matter.

The incident occurs at an awkward moment for NIH since the question of whether the big new cancer research program will be administered by NIH or by a separate agency is under debate and should be settled before Congress adjourns (see story above).

MacNichol's own reactions are set forth in detail in a letter addressed "To My Unknown Critic" and made available by NIH. In the letter he points out that "for many years it has been customary for some intramural scientists and extramural grantees to come to Woods Hole for summer research. There is nothing illegal or immoral about this, and it has some important scientific advantages that the leadership of NIH has long felt far outweigh the extra cost." He notes that fresh experimental material of special use in his own work is available at Woods Hole, and that the concentration of American and foreign scientists at Woods Hole in the summer provides opportunities for collaboration and exchange of ideas.

MacNichol, who had spent five summers working at the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole before he assumed the NINDS directorship, says in the letter that his "participation in summer research was thoroughly discussed" with the then NIH director James A. Shannon and his staff at the time he was interviewed for the NINDS directorship. MacNichol writes, "They approved and indeed encouraged me to continue to do research and to continue to come to Woods Hole." MacNichols was a professor of biophysics at Johns Hopkins before joining NINDS.

Shannon, who retired in 1968, told Associated Press reporter G. C. Thelen, who wrote the original story, that he remembered no discussion of a Cape Cod office. Shannon said that "in general I do not think it advisable" for an institute director to administer his institute from a distance, but that he could "think of the right constellation of factors that would make it possible."

There is apparently no documentation of the arrangement in NIH files, and an exchange of correspondence between Shannon and current NIH director Marston is said to be aimed at clarifying the matter. Martson was out of Bethesda on institute business when this was written and was not available for comment. He has, however, defended MacNichol's work at Woods Hole as important to NIH. At the same time, Marston has said that he is reviewing "off-campus" work by the ten institute directors and other NIH officials. Sources at NIH say that Marston is expected to set up a committee to review standards that apply to travel

munity testified against it, including representatives of the Association of American Medical Colleges, the American Hospital Association, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, and the American Medical Association. In a letter to Kennedy, Philip Handler, president of the National Academy of Sciences, wrote that those responsible for the proposed National Cancer Authority "will find it necessary to reinvent virtually all of the National Institutes of Health within the Authority," if it is to succeed in its mission.

Until April, there were too few votes in the Senate health subcommittee to report the Kennedy-Lasker bill out, a situation that seems to have changed abruptly early in May. On May 11, the morning that the subcommittee was to meet in executive session to mark up the bill, the White House belatedly launched a second counteroffensive, with the unappealing name of Cancer-Cure Program (*Science*, 28 May 1971). A statement made by the President indicated a substantial shift which seemed to bring the Administration's position almost into line with the Kennedy proposal. But the Administration bill (S. 1828) that embodied the new position contained, among other features displeasing to the Lasker forces, a provision that the President could redelegate his authority for the proposed cancer agency back to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, which would leave everything much as before.

For reasons that are not wholly clear, the White House tacticians agreed to an abject compromise, which consisted of the substance of the Kennedy-Lasker bill (S. 34) topped with the number of the Administration's bill (S. 1828), plus a face-saving and otherwise unsupported phrase stipulating that the proposed cancer agency should be an independent agency "within the National Institutes of Health." The outlines of this compromise once agreed, two Senate aides set about fashioning a revised version of S. 1828 with the aid of a pair of scissors and a copy of S. 34.

This compromise, by which the Administration traded the integrity of the NIH in return for Kennedy's dropping his sponsorship of the bill, met the approval of all but one of the 80 senators who voted on the measure. The basic tenet of the Lasker strategy for a separate cancer agency—that Congressmen do not dare vote against more funds for cancer—seemed vindicated by the outcome of the Senate debate. But Senator Gaylord Nelson (D–Wis.), who cast the lone dissenting vote, believes he has not been harmed politically by his stand. "I haven't received any bad reac-

Briefing

and scientific work away from Bethesda by scientists and science administrators.

There seems to be no question about MacNichol's scientific standing. His special field is the neurophysiology of vision, and detached observers say he has done first-rate fundamental work in the biophysics of color vision. He came to NINDS as director apparently under the proviso that he would also direct his own lab at the institute. During the summers, two professionals who work in the Bethesda lab go to Woods Hole. MacNichol spends much of the summer catching up on the literature in his field, reviewing the past year's work with his research team, planning the coming year's research, and developing new research instruments in a workshop that he installed in the cottage he has owned in Woods Hole since 1968. As he sees it, he gets more work done away from the interruptions at NIH.

MacNichol's anonymous critic complained as well that NINDS director of intramural research, Henry G. Wagner, also spends two summer months at Woods Hole. In addition, the critic noted that MacNichol and two other NINDS officials had detoured on an Aegean cruise while MacNichol was en route to the Dalmatian coast to visit Kotor laboratory, which is partly supported by U.S. counterpart funds. In his own letter MacNichol replied that he and his colleagues had taken official leave during the cruise and had paid their own travel expenses.

Behind the criticism is the whole question of scientific tourism that involves university scientists as much as government scientists and administrators. On the principle that science knows neither national nor international boundaries, American scientists have built domestic and foreign travel into their life styles and grant applications. Scientists are not masochists, and scientific gatherings are seldom scheduled in disagreeable surroundings. MacNichol, for example, gave as a reason for accepting per diem during his summers at Woods Hole that "I lose money during the rest of the year attending meetings of professional groups which are usually held at expensive hotels." A remarkable number of international meetings are held in European capitals or in the ambiance of the Aegean, Adriatic, or Mediterranean.

Since World War II, federal science agencies have generally accepted the arguments for scientific cosmopolitanism although a cost benefit analysis would be difficult to make. The meetings range from exhaustive and exhausting work sessions to pleasant social gatherings in congenial surroundings. Side trips to interesting places are accepted as part of the life of successful scientists and their spouses. Other government officials, including those in the Congress, make the most of such opportunities, as do businessmen when they can, and scientists are probably at least as scrupulous as others about paying for the detours themselves.

On Capitol Hill, in the case of MacNichol, scientific tourism appears to be a secondary issue, and the question of the per diem payments are not the most bothersome aspect. One Hill aide familiar with the case said that he expects no technical violation will be found. He notes, however, that MacNichol has taken annual leave in addition to spending 2 months at the Cape in the summer, is an enthusiastic sailor who apparently sails regularly in season. The aide asks, "How can an agency do a vigorous job when it has a part-time director?"

A chronic problem for NIH lies in recruiting and retaining able scientists and science administrators when competing institutions, particularly medical schools, often can offer higher salaries and greater freedom. Ironically, NIH has contributed materially to creating these conditions. It is regarded as an advantage for NIH to have a man of MacNichol's scientific reputation in a top job. But MacNichol's explanation of how his work habits help him to do a more effective job is hard for NIH's patrons on Capitol Hill to understand and accept.—J.W.