

type postdoctoral institute for research in biomedical sciences. The results of the year-long feasibility study are due this summer. This idea is embryonic, according to Rodney Nichols of Rockefeller. The location has not been determined—planners are leaning toward Shiraz—and Rockefeller has yet to decide whether it really wants to “mother or father” the whole thing. Nichols, however, appears optimistic about the prospects of such an endeavor. He says the politics of Iran are not as much of a deterrent to expansion of the intellectual community as might be thought, and that there does exist a cadre of foreign-trained Iranians who could supply the indigenous core for the institution.

On a more down-to-earth level is

an agreement Iran has made with the Wentworth Institute and Wentworth College of Technology, a Boston technical school. In February Wentworth signed a \$1.8 million, 5-year contract with the Imperial Organization for Social Service to aid in the establishment of a technical school in Shiraz. Six Iranians will be spending an intensive summer of training at Wentworth and will return in the fall to teach the first group of 50 students. Electronics and mechanics are the only two courses on the agenda now, but several courses will be added in the future. The school is to be expanded to a faculty of 100 with a student body of 1000. Plans are that by 1977 they will have the use of a \$7-million building designed by the firm of

Cambridge architect Hugh Stubbins.

Another arrangement worth noting is a unique university-to-university agreement between Georgetown University and the University of Ferdowsi in Mashhad, which is located in the north-eastern corner of Iran. Harold Bradley, director of international programs at Georgetown, says Georgetown is sending consultants to work out a postdoctoral program in the sciences, and will also be concerned with persuading Iranians now in the United States to return and assume teaching positions. Mutual student exchanges and cooperative research projects are planned, and Georgetown professors will spend a year or less teaching at Ferdowsi. Iranian faculty members are expected to be attracted by the idea of sabbaticals at

Ford Cool to New Science Advisory Operation in White House

President Ford apparently has decided not to reconstitute the White House Office of Science and Technology, with a science adviser and a staff of several dozen persons. Instead, according to an Associated Press story of 26 March, Ford is leaning toward the idea of creating a “small board of science advisers, possibly consisting of three consultants.”

A White House spokeswoman confirmed that the AP story was an accurate reflection of presidential thinking, and added that he “doesn’t want to establish another OST operation” or create “another little bureaucracy.”

She said that a final decision might be made in about a month.

It could not be learned when Ford had come to this conclusion, what was meant by the word “consultants,” or what precisely the arrangement was that Ford did favor. Presidential aides were uniformly unresponsive to such questions and thus did nothing to dispel the general murk that has surrounded the search for a new White House science advisory structure over the past few months. Officials of the National Science Foundation, including NSF Director H. Guyford Stever, were as much in the dark as anyone outside the White House, even though Stever holds the title of presidential science adviser.

This latest report would seem, however, to dash cold water on hopes widely shared in the scientific community that Ford might set up an advisory body analogous to the Council of Economic Advisers or the Council on Environmental Quality. Both councils consist of three presidential appointees, backed by staffs of 40 to 50 persons. Seemingly with the CEA and the CEQ in mind, a special panel of the National Academy of Sciences, headed by James Killian, recommended last July (*Science*, 5 July 1974) that the White House set up a Council on Science and Technology of at least three full-time scientists and engineers with a staff of 25 to 30 persons.

Since then several “option papers” outlining alternative

schemes have circulated among the President’s executive staff, including one last December from the Office of Management and Budget. At about that time, Ford asked Nelson Rockefeller, newly confirmed as Vice President, to provide another set of recommendations. Rockefeller, borrowing from the staff of the Commission on Critical Choices, which he had organized while governor of New York, is said to have forwarded, about the end of February, a still undisclosed set of recommendations. According to the AP story, an unidentified White House aide said these suggestions “didn’t jibe with the President’s views,” and Rockefeller was asked to try again.

In the past few months, it has become increasingly clear that two centers of power in the Executive Office—the Domestic Council and the National Security Council—would defend what they saw as a prerogative to seek their own science advice from whom they choose. These two policy units are understood to have resisted moves to superimpose over them a new, internal source of advice in the White House.

Moreover, Representative Charles Mosher (R-Ohio), the ranking minority member of the House Committee on Science and Technology, says Ford is reluctant to appear as if he’s inflating his own staff in a time of huge budget deficits. Mosher told *Science* he was convinced that Ford “recognizes the need, and wants to do something rather positive, but without seeming to set an example of adding staff.”

It is well known that a new format for science advice is not one of President Ford’s hottest priorities, but it doesn’t seem to be one of the National Science Board’s either. If anyone has had a chance to sample presidential thinking on the matter it was the membership of the NSB (the NSF’s governing council). Twenty-one NSB members met for an hour with Ford and Rockefeller on 21 March, but no one raised the subject. “They’ve made their thoughts known all along,” one NSF staffer explained. “It just wasn’t on their minds.”—R.G.