

project, no itemized budget is even requested (4, pp. 2-3).

Circular A-21 appears to expressly recognize the valid use of such fixed amount awards by exempting "awards under which the institution is not required to account to the Government for actual costs incurred" (5) from its cost principles. Lest disgruntled bureaucrats wonder where their rallying cry—accountability—has gone under a fixed amount award, let them look to the work product itself—the diligent inquiry and advancement of knowledge which, after all, is what research is all about.

The Sloan Commission on Government and Higher Education properly recognized that excessive oversight creates a costly burden of paperwork and that its effect on the research process itself is self-defeating (6). Their recommended solution, however, was not to remove the attached strings of A-21 from research grants as does a fixed amount award, but rather to develop a corps of federal auditors, sophisticated about scientific research and how research universities operate. The preferred option is accountability measured not by stacks of personnel activity reports open to scrutiny by auditors—sophisticated or not—but by the work product itself.

The fixed amount award is a move in this direction, and I applaud its use even on this small scale. Evidenced by ongoing moves to sever from block grants the strings of Circular A-87, the cost principles for state and local governments that are counterparts to those in Circular A-21, the time may be ripe for expanded use of this type of award to achieve the same results for colleges and universities.

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References and Notes

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5. *Fed. Reg.* 44, 12368 (6 March 1979).
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Erratum: Figure 1 in the report "Muscle fatigue and the role of transverse tubules" by C. P. Bianchi and S. Narayan (15 Jan., p. 296) was inadvertently transposed with figure 2 in the report "Sedimentation field flow fractionation of liposomes" by J. J. Kirkland *et al.* (p. 297). The figure legends are correct.

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