

their agencies individually, and found that by eliminating duplication they could do better science with only six missions—while cutting the aggregate costs from \$2 billion over the next decade to roughly \$750 million.

Under the new plan, NASA would be responsible for four spacecraft: WIND, measuring fundamental solar wind parameters; SOLAR, monitoring solar oscillations and the corona; POLAR, observing the earth's aurora; and EQUATOR, monitoring the circumterrestrial plasma. Meanwhile, ESA would launch MULTIPOINT, a four-spacecraft system for studying plasma turbulence. And ISAS would contribute TAIL, investigating the wake of the solar wind as it streams around the earth.

The next step in the program is to get the official endorsement of all three agencies. Early indications are good—and in the United States, at least, presidential science adviser George A. Keyworth, II, has already been quite complimentary about the idea.—**M. MITCHELL WALDROP**

Institute to Aid Congress on Environment Policy

A private organization is being formed whose primary purpose will be to help members of Congress make dispassionate and informed judgments about environmental matters.

The new Environmental and Energy Study Institute will complement the work of Congress's Environmental and Energy Study Conference. Congressman Richard L. Ottinger (D-N.Y.) and others decided that a new private group was needed to get around a new law which prohibits congressional service organizations, like the conference, from getting non-congressional financial support. The conference was getting 40 percent of its \$300,000 budget from the public.

Director of the institute is Ken Murphy, former staff director of the conference. He says the institute will avoid adding to the population of 200-page reports but will perform short-term analyses aimed at making information digestible for lawmakers. He believes the institute is coming on the scene at a "critical juncture," where the reasoned debate that surrounded many

environmental issues in the late 1970's has degenerated into polarization and stalemate.

The institute is aiming for a \$400,000 yearly budget, partially financed by subscriptions to the conference's *Weekly Bulletin*, which it will continue. It has a weighty board of directors composed of congresspersons, scientists, environmentalists, and former government officials.

—**CONSTANCE HOLDEN**

Supreme Court to Review Pesticide Data Release

The Supreme Court will decide how much health and safety data on pesticides should be made available to the public. The Court has agreed to review the decision of a lower court, which ruled in favor of the Monsanto Company in a dispute with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over its interpretation and administration of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Specifically, the suit, which originally was brought by Monsanto, deals with the ownership and disclosure of data a company submits to EPA to register products for sale.

In April 1983, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri found that "Congress exceeded its regulatory authority and violated the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution" when it amended certain sections of FIFRA in 1978. Those changes allow other companies and also the general public access to information, such as health and safety data, produced by a company during the development and testing of a product. U.S. District Judge H. Kenneth Wangelin concluded that such disclosures represented an unfair "taking" of Monsanto's intellectual property that then could give competitors an unfair advantage.

As for a need to disclose test data for public review, he concluded that a "product's label provides the public with the assurance that the product is safe and effective and with the knowledge of the product's qualities." Going further would "permit the public to share in the regulation of the pesticide industry," a task that belongs to EPA, he claimed.—**JEFFREY L. FOX**

Ruckelshaus Disappoints Canadians on Acid Rain

Many people expected William Ruckelshaus, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to use a meeting with Canadian environmental officials this month as the occasion for announcing a new policy on acid rain. As planned, Ruckelshaus attended the ceremony in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 16 October; he signed a supplement to a Great Lakes pollution control treaty; and he spoke about acid rain. But his message disappointed many listeners. He all but announced that his plans for attacking acid rain have been quashed by other officials in Washington.

In the last 6 months Ruckelshaus has tried hard to fashion an acid rain policy that would be acceptable to the utilities, the coal-producing states, and the states whose waters and forests are being damaged by the pollution. His enthusiasm seemed to promise that there would be a change from the policy of studied ignorance adopted by his predecessor at EPA. But the Cabinet Council on Natural Resources, a White House task force, vetoed two proposals submitted by Ruckelshaus in mid-September, leaving the United States once again with nothing to propose to the Canadians.

"The faces have changed, but the game has not," says environmentalist Elizabeth Barratt-Brown of the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Two weeks ago we learned that the Canadians were told not to expect anything. It looks like it's time for us to go back to Congress" to try to get some action on acid rain, she said. Senator Robert T. Stafford (R-Vt.), chairman of the Committee on Environment and Public Works, is considering holding a session on November 15 to mark up a bill that would impose new controls on sulfur dioxide emissions.

Ruckelshaus told the gathering in Halifax that when he took his acid rain proposals to the White House, he suddenly discovered that "we were dealing with a very big, very controversial issue," one that brings out sharp sectional conflicts in the United States. For this reason, he said he could not hold out hope for quick action.—**ELIOT MARSHALL**