

for inclusion in the CSOC complex. Its computers perform the same sort of space-tracking functions. During a fight in outer space, moreover, it would be in charge of identifying hostile forces. Yet this type of urgent information at SPADOC would have to go through complex communication networks in order to reach the offensive command post 27 miles away at CSOC. In the meantime, the battle may have been lost.

The Air Force recognizes the problem. In a 1979 report it said: "The capability to calculate orbits for predictive avoidance in CSOC and SPADOC would allow the flexibility to run the program in SPADOC while CSOC is saturated with another high priority job, or during a subsystem failure." Nevertheless, the commands remain separate. One problem is that they are run by different generals.

Other programs that could be consolidated into the space command post include the Global Positioning System satellites and the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program. Yet these programs remain autonomous.

Is the rush to build a \$1.4-billion space operations center really necessary, especially when it appears to leave careful planning far behind? One of the critical arguments the military makes in favor of haste is that the expansion of the military shuttle program requires immediate action. The Controlled Mode at Johnson can handle only 6 to 8 missions a year, not the 12 to 14 the military expects by 1989. The GAO takes sharp issue with this analysis. First, it questions whether enough shuttles will be built to reach this goal. Second, the current turnaround time of 90 days would limit the Pentagon's flights to four or five per year by 1987. "In this event," notes the GAO report, "the controlled mode at Johnson Space Center should be able to accommodate the Department of Defense needs, on an interim basis, until CSOC is properly developed." GAO also recommends an interim backup for the satellite control facility in Sunnyvale until the central space facility gets a better blueprint.

It seems that the poor start for the command post is about to trigger yet another GAO investigation, this time into the policy implications of a centralized space command. Says a Capitol Hill aide who has been watching the developments, "There is a major policy shift concerning space that is taking place. It is all being done on the sly, with the Controlled Mode and all that. We intend to examine the process in more of a public manner."—WILLIAM J. BROAD

Environmentalists Now Targeting Reagan

A coalition of environmentalist groups has launched a "spring offensive" on the Administration's energy, environmental, and natural resource policies. On 31 March the groups issued a 35-page "indictment," claiming that the President has "broken faith with the American people on environmental protection" and has appointed officials who "have simply refused to do the job that the laws require."

The criticism reflects a shift in the environmentalists' strategy away from blaming Reagan appointees for environmental transgressions and instead calling the President himself to task.

The report primarily covers the activities and proposed activities of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of the Interior. The scores of offenses, large and small, enumerated in the indictment add up to a description of a coherent and extensive program designed to ease the burdens of regulation on private industry; stimulate the development of oil and mineral resources; promote nuclear power as the nation's foremost energy priority; reduce public participation in decision-making; cut back on health research and environmental analyses; halt designation of new national parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas; relax controls on pollution emissions; cut back on enforcement; eliminate subsidies for conservation and the development of renewable energy sources; delay development of regulations called for by environmental protection laws; sell public resources to private interests at artificially low prices; and pump new blood into hoary pork-barrel projects that were long ago shown to be unsound.

"The Reagan Administration's approach to the environment and natural resources is not conservative; it is radical," says the indictment.

The indictment was issued on the heels of a report by a coalition of many of the same groups damning the Reagan energy policies. Describing these as "radical, costly, dangerous, and inconsistent," it contends that the precipitous plunge in funding for conservation and renewable energy sources undermines goals of eco-

nomic revitalization, national security, and increased energy self-sufficiency.

The report says the Administration's commitment to reviving the nuclear power industry "comes at a time when energy economists have all but declared the industry dead," and chastises the Administration for blurring the line between nuclear power and weapons by reviving plutonium reprocessing, pushing the breeder reactor, and eyeing plant wastes as a source for plutonium for weapons.

The Interior Department and the EPA have pooh-poohed the indictment as politically motivated, and a detailed rebuttal of the charges is being prepared at Interior.

—Constance Holden

Fewer Grants Next Year, Says Future NIH Director

The Reagan Administration is sticking to its guns on two key budget issues concerning the National Institutes of Health (NIH), according to the director-designate of the institutes.

James B. Wyngaarden, testifying at his Senate confirmation hearing on 21 April, said that the Administration's proposal to fund only 4100 competing grants appears to be a "firm figure" for fiscal 1983. He told the Labor and Human Resources Committee that 4100 is "a substantial number," but added that he still believes in the previous goal of 5000 competing grants a year. The 5000 grant figure was the recommendation of a National Academy of Sciences committee, which said the number would assure the continuity of research from year to year. Wyngaarden, who was a member of that committee, said at the hearing, "as the economy recovers, I hope it can be restored."

Wyngaarden reiterated the Administration's position that full funding of 4100 grants was possible only with a 10 percent cutback in indirect cost reimbursement and a transfer of money from noncompeting grants. Proposed reductions in indirect cost reimbursements have caused a furor among institutions, which are now reimbursed 100 percent of their overhead expenses by NIH. Wyngaarden noted that methods of calculating re-