

Small Science

■ Mixed news awaits the practitioners of so-called small science in 1992. Despite a healthy year of budget increases in 1991, small science boosters are shaking off their egg nog fugue in preparation for what one lobbyist predicts will be "the hardest and most merciless federal-funding scramble ever."

↔ The word from sources close to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) suggests that the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)** could be in for rough treatment at the hands of the Bush Administration. OMB apparently wants to see some cost cutting at NIH: Well-placed eavesdroppers tell *Science* that the president's 1993 request for NIH will probably rise to about \$9.7 billion—just 2% above inflation, compared with 3.4% in last year's request. OMB also plans to continue its year-old tradition of sliding a chunk of NIH's budget into the following fiscal year: \$575 million, up from \$400 million last year.

↑ Meanwhile, over at the **National Science Foundation (NSF)**, one budgeter says NSF hopes to "keep the trend in the direction" of the 9.5% budget increase the agency received this year. Science lobbyists say that to get NSF's full funding through Congress, they'll join other lobbyists in a frontal assault on last year's budget agree-

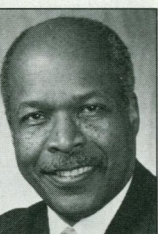
ment, which currently prevents Congress from cutting the defense budget to pay for domestic programs.

The High and Mighty

■ There's nothing like an election year to roil the upper ranks of the federal science establishment. Even if George Bush wins a second term, major changes are being forecast—and if a Democrat is elected, all bets are off. For the sake of argument, let's suppose it's Bush for another 4 years.

↓ Science advisor **D. Allan Bromley** is not expected to stick around for 4 more years in the White House. Policy mandarins suggest that Bromley's frustration with battling the Office of Management and Budget over science funding will make the attractions of the private sector irresistible soon after the election.

↓ Health Secretary **Louis Sullivan** could be another quick casualty in a second-term



Bush White House. Sullivan has been muzzled since early in the Bush Administration, when he upset con-



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servatives with some moderate comments on abortion. Since then, the White House has steadily cut him out of the loop on important decisions relevant to his agency, such as national health care. One long-shot rumor holds that NIH director Bernadine Healy will replace him.

↓ The same insiders suggest that the competent but colorless **James O. Mason**, currently assistant secretary for health, will follow in Sullivan's departing footsteps. Why? No one is saying.

↑ One survivor of a term-shift is likely to be non-controversial, somewhat laid-back **Walter Massey**, currently the director of the National Science Foundation. Then again, he only came on board 10 months ago.

Big Science

■ Having survived a major political scare in mid-1991, the nation's premier Big Science projects—NASA's space station and the Superconducting Super Collider (SSC)—both appear to have regained enough momentum to make it through another contentious year.

↑ Scientific critics of the **space station**, cheered by flagging European enthusiasm, predict:

↓ **Research universities**, squeezed by slow endowment growth, state budget cuts, and conservative accounting practices adopted as a result of the indirect costs scandal, will turn increasingly to their only remaining source of funds—tuition hikes—for increased revenues. But there's a limit to how much parents can afford, especially when faculty cutbacks may prevent undergraduates from graduating in 4 years.

"This could be the year we kill it." But congressional foes grudgingly admit that Congress will have a difficult time stopping the project this year. Aides to Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AR), who last year led a losing charge to cancel the station, say the senator can only hope that the recession and the huge federal budget deficit will erode political support for the Administration's \$2.3-billion 1993 request.

↔ The odds for approval this year of the Administration's \$650-million **SSC** request are good, and project



backers are bullish about progress in the formerly troubled magnet production effort and the detector program. Still, the accelerator's fate could rest on the validity of recent Japanese news reports that claim Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa will soon offer the United States a contribution of \$500 million to \$1.5 billion for the SSC in order to defuse Japanese-U.S. trade tensions. Without some sign of its promised \$1.7 billion in foreign contributions, the SSC could end up sinking beneath the weight of its unkept pledges.

What to Expect on the Misconduct Front

■ Research misconduct, a particularly irksome subject for much of the scientific community, will remain a controversial topic in 1992. Here's why:

↓ NIH's **Office of Scientific Integrity (OSI)**, whipsawed by Representative John Dingell (D-MI), NIH director Bernadine Healy, and much of the scientific community, is likely to see its troubles mount. By the end of the year, OSI will probably find itself operating under new guidelines that define misconduct in terms of intent. And there will be increased pressure to offer subjects of investigations more due process. While both can be accomplished, an increasingly harried OSI staff may be tripped up by the shifting ground underfoot.

↔ OSI may finally complete its investigations of **Robert Gallo** and **Thereza Imanishi-Kari**.

While Gallo appears likely to escape misconduct charges, his former associate Mikulas Popovic will probably face a formal finding of misconduct, which he will almost certainly appeal. The Imanishi-Kari case seems destined to end up in court one way or the other. Either the U.S. Attorney in Baltimore will formally charge the Tufts immunologist with making false statements to the government, or Imanishi-Kari will sue NIH for the damage its two lengthy investigations have done to her career.

↓ **The joint Franco-American patent on the AIDS blood test** could come undone as federal and congressional investigators zero in on what some sources have described as false statements by U.S. officials in the legal documents underlying the patent agreement.

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