

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON


August 6, 1993

Roz  
Can this be done  
on Thurs or  
early Fri.

OEOP 424

MEMORANDUM

To: Carol Rasco, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

From: Jack Gibbons  Assistant to the President for Science and Technology Policy

Subject: Strengthening the White House Science and Technology Policy Making Process

During the campaign, the President and Vice President declared that U.S. scientific and technological leadership are national priorities. They reiterated this conviction in the technology plan, Technology for America's Economic Growth: A New Direction to Build Economic Strength, released in February. Contemporaneously, the President and Vice President promised to: 1) streamline White House operations, assigning me responsibility for the National Space Council (NSpC) and the National Critical Materials Council (NCMC); and 2) reinvigorate the Office of Science and Technology Policy, which I direct, and the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology (FCCSET), which I chair.

Accordingly, I want to bring you up to date on a proposal the Vice President and I have discussed concerning reorganization of the White House science and technology function. This proposal closely parallels a recommendation independently developed by the National Performance Review's Science and Technology Team.

Both plans incorporate the commitments concerning science and technology and the Administration's overarching goal of working closely with the private sector to optimize the Federal Government's investments. The proposal I have discussed with the Vice President specifically calls for: 1) consolidating NSpC, NCMC, and FCCSET in a single council, renamed the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC); and 2) forming a private sector Science and Technology Advisory Committee (STAC) to advise the President, Vice President and other members of the NSTC and to assist NSTC working groups with obtaining private sector input on their activities.

The principal functions of NSTC would be: 1) to ensure science, space, and technology policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's goals; 2) to coordinate interagency implementation of the President's science, space, and technology policy agenda; 3) to facilitate international cooperation in science, space, and technology. The membership would comprise the President, Vice President, myself, other key EOP

representatives, and the Cabinet secretaries and agency heads of the Federal institutions essential to science and technology policy. It would function through a deputies committee composed of the major S&T agencies and EOP offices (essentially the S&T group formed earlier this year by the Vice President to facilitate the technology initiatives) and working groups on major issue areas. NSTC would be staffed by OSTP and agency representatives (as FCCSET is today) and would have the ability, exercised through Presidential review and decision directives, to shepherd S&T policy development and implementation from beginning to end and make cooperation in the process a productive endeavor for Federal agencies and the private sector.

Private sector involvement with the NSTC would be essential to its effectiveness since S&T policy will be geared toward helping American businesses achieve sustainable growth and create high quality jobs, as well as toward sustaining our academic and research institutions' world leadership in science, engineering, and mathematics. STAC -- a successor to PCAST -- will have a membership reflective of this Administration's appreciation of the broad spectrum of S&T's influence on society. As the President's advisory committee, it will help ensure private sector input at the technical and policy levels to ensure government's responsiveness to public needs. An umbrella organization such as STAC may also help eliminate some potential problems with the Federal Advisory Committee Act at the working level.

Consolidating the existing councils into the NSTC and creating STAC to work with a reinvigorated OSTP solves immediate and long-term problems for the Administration:

1. It effectively consolidates the responsibilities of the National Space Council, the National Critical Materials Council, and the Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology in a single Presidential Council, fulfilling the commitment to reorganize the White House and reduce staffing requirements.
2. It satisfies concerns on Capitol Hill about the seriousness of the Administration's intent regarding space policy, in the short-term, and redirecting science and technology toward national goals, in the longer-term.
3. It creates an effective decisionmaking process for setting science and technology priorities and allocating and evaluating use of R&D budgets, and it enables streamlining of the current FCCSET committee and subcommittee structure.

I would like to schedule a brief meeting with you to discuss this proposal. I plan to move forward with a decision memorandum for the President by the end of next week.

↑  
15-20 min.  
Susie Bechtel  
x7116