

NEW FISCAL YEAR BEGINS; BUDGETS CONTINUE AT OLD YEAR LEVELS *MS*

Fiscal Year 2003 began on October 1, 2002. Since Congress, however, has not enacted any of the 13 appropriations bills, federal agencies continue to operate under Fiscal Year 2002 funding levels. Congress has passed two Continuing Resolutions (CR) to enable the government to continue to function. It is anticipated that further CRs will be necessary since Congress appears unlikely to finish the regular appropriations process anytime soon.

Congress originally had hoped to adjourn on October 4 so that its members could return to their states and districts to campaign for the 2002 elections. That target was originally extended to October 11 but it now appears that some arrangement will be worked out that will allow members to leave Washington on October 18 without an actual adjournment. Details are still uncertain, but House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) has argued for a series of short-term (weekly) CRs until after the election. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) has talked about keeping the Senate in session until the Homeland Security bill passes. The only thing somewhat certain is that the 107th Congress will return after the election for a lame-duck session in November or December.

By continuing funding at 2002 levels, the agencies cannot undertake any new programs and those slated for increases, such as NSF and NIH, will have to await further developments. Congress hopes to complete the Defense and Military Construction spending bills the week of October 7 and send them to the President. With debate on resolutions giving the President the blessing of Congress for war with Iraq occupying most of the rest of that week, not much progress is expected on other legislation for the time being.

Although neither the NSF reauthorization nor the Office of Educational Research and Improvement reauthorization (see related story) has reached the Senate floor yet, staff discussions underway may smooth the enactment of both these

bills before the session ends. The House has made some progress at the appropriations committee level with a few bills in the last few weeks, and the hope is that the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies spending bill, which includes NSF funding, will make it out of the committee in the next two weeks. Unfortunately, full House action on all spending bills remains blocked, as no compromise has been reached that would move the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education appropriations bill off the floor and allow the other bills stacked up behind it to proceed.

With the congressional elections still viewed as too-close-to-call and possible complications affecting their outcome and the lame-duck session, major uncertainty remains and the possibilities for mischief abound.

OERI REAUTHORIZATION BILL PASSES SENATE COMMITTEE; CONFERENCE PROCESS UNDERWAY *JW*

Almost five months after the House passed its version (H.R. 3801) of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement's (OERI) reauthorization (see *Update*, May 13, 2002), the Senate finally took action on a companion bill, as the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee reported out S. 2969 on September 25. The two bills do vary in some respects, but it is nonetheless likely that these differences can be smoothed over quickly allowing Congress to send a completed measure to the President by the end of this session.

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While the full Senate has not yet acted on S. 2969, key staff members representing HELP Chairman Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and House Subcommittee on Education Reform Chairman Rep. Michael Castle (R-DE) have opened a series of pre-conference meetings. The goal of the sessions is to produce one piece of legislation that both Houses of Congress can pass without a formal conference process. Carmel Martin, Counsel to HELP Committee member Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), recently told a panel audience at the American Educational Research Association's Organization of Institutional Affiliates Fall Policy Meeting that the differences between the House and Senate bills should not serve as major sticking points or prevent compromise. She noted the disparities to include:

- Whether or not the National Assessment Governing Board will control the release of National Assessment of Educational Progress data;
- The number of comprehensive local centers authorized to provide technical assistance, facilitate communication between education experts and practitioners, and carry out research corresponding with the educational needs of the region;

- Whether the topics to be investigated by the centers should be named in the law or determined by the Administration;
- Whether or not the Educational Resources Information Center Clearinghouses, part of OERI's current information dissemination efforts, will be continued.

If all goes as planned, it's possible that the reauthorization bill could be passed by unanimous consent in both Houses and sent to the White House later this month. The President is likely to sign the measure into law.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STUDY TAKES SHAPE

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The National Children's Study (NCS), a project designed to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship between children and the environment, is moving forward with a series of meetings to design the venture. Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the National Institute of Environmental Health Diseases (NIEHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Study is expected to serve as a catalyst to assess the effects of the environment, including social, behavioral, cultural, medical, and educational factors, on children's health and development.

The NCS will be designed to uncover pivotal breaking points in children's health. According to Duane Alexander, Director of the NICHD, "this study is going to provide the scientific basis for high quality clinical care for children." Authorized in the Children's Health Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-310), the NCS currently supported by an organized consortium of over 40 Federal agencies.

According to Alexander, "there is an almost unprecedented degree of interagency participation, partnership, and coordination from the Federal Government because there has really never been anything quite like this study before." The Interagency Coordinating Committee of the study includes NICHD, NIEHS, CDC, the EPA, and the various organizers and potential funders of the research. The NCS, which grew out of the 1998

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

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President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risk and Safety Risks to Children, is led by pediatrician Peter C. Scheidt.

The 22 working groups involved in designing the NCS include:

- **Social Environment** – observes the impact economics, cultural, structural and other factors influence the child's health and development as a result of the social environment.
- **Injury** – evaluates environmental factors that are associated with childhood injuries.
- **Gene Environment Interaction** – focuses primarily on the childhood psychopathology. This particular working group provides insight to the onset of adult diseases that are attributed to biologic markers and environmental factors such as drugs and alcohol that affect the central nervous and endocrine systems.
- **Health Services** – examines the relationship over time between health care, children and services provided to children with anticipation that the study findings will be integrated into public policy.
- **Development and Behavior** – studies the correlation between behavior and child development. This group plans to devise a framework that distinguishes between cultural/social development and child development.
- **Health Disparities and Environmental Justice** – researches information related to prenatal, infant, child, and adolescent health and development and ensures fair treatment of all people including minority and low income populations.
- **Ethics** – provides guidance for the study on ethical, legal, regulatory issues in the design and conduct of the study.

To carry out the NCS, the working groups, non-Federal and Federal scientists, and investigators plan to begin following approximately 100,000 women, 18-35 years of age, who are as early in pregnancy as possible in mid-fiscal year 2005. Coming from a wide range of backgrounds, the women will be monitored for three years to determine the

consequences of the environment on pregnancy and the children. "We are going to follow them (the children) to 21+ years of age. We will be recruiting from 50 sites over the country and efforts will be made to make the sample as representative as possible," explained Alexander.

Funding

The NCS is able to take steps toward examining developments in children's health through funding from the CDC and the National Institutes of Health. Alexander stated, "for FY02 it is anticipated \$5-6 million has been identified to continue the process and at least \$10 million in FY03. This is not as much as we would like to have, not as much as we could usefully spend, but it will get us well underway with this process," he observed. The Study anticipates receiving the majority of its funding from the Federal government with some money allocated from non-Federal public and private partnerships.

At the enrollment peak of the NCS, the project will cost \$150 million a year. Nonetheless, Alexander is confident that the project will make great progress because Congress and other Federal agencies are in full support of the effort. "The report language most recently from the appropriations committees and the House and the Senate expresses pleasure with the progress that is already being made on this study and encourages us to proceed vigorously with its implementation and planning," he noted.

Through public use data sets, the preliminary NCS results are expected in 2008. It is projected that subsequent results of the study will inform society on the causes of chronic health problems, abnormal sexual maturation, and the social behavior of adults that developed during childhood as a direct result of environmental exposure.

The Advisory Panel Meeting

On September 12-13, the Federal Advisory Committee (FAC) to the NCS held its third meeting to review and discuss proposed hypotheses for the Study. The purpose of the meeting was to begin the Committee's efforts to identify overlaps and gaps and hypotheses not fully developed or suitable for the prospective longitudinal cohort study.

The FAC, chaired by Donald Mattison of NICHD, was created to offer advice to the individuals running the NCS. The Committee is just one of the many organizational components created or tasked to design the study. Other key players include an Interagency Coordinating Committee, the NICHD Director, a Federal Consortium, and a Program Office.

The working groups, of which there are a total of 22, will perform the bulk of the detailed substantive, scientific work necessary for the creation of NCS. The findings will be filtered through the FAC and a diverse range of hypotheses are expected to be produced.

Study Design Working Group Reports

Peter Gergen of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and Nigel Paneth of Michigan State University, chair and co-chair, respectively, of the Study Design Working Group (SD), reported a summary of their deliberations to the advisory committee.

According to Gergen, the SD hopes that its first report provides the FAC with a sense of the complexity of the study, "the care with which the design of the NCS must be addressed, and the critical importance of the interaction amongst all of the current and potential future study groups in developing the scope and design of the NCS."

The SD working group operates in concert with other relevant topic area workgroups and with oversight from the Interagency Coordinating Committee. It will consider the scientific merit and feasibility of investigating a core set of hypotheses that will play a critical role in shaping the ultimate study design and sample size of the NCS. SD will also address major issues in formulating the studies and implementation, including sampling strategies and issues in cohort retention. Additionally, the working group will suggest areas in which pilot study or preliminary research is needed to support the implementation and conduct of the study.

According to Gergen, the working group found that the first step in designing the NCS was to "develop a core hypothesis that will be central in determining the size, scope, and content of the study." To this end, the SD has developed a working definition of the core hypothesis. The

Group has also identified three pilot studies as being of the highest priority for the NCS design: investigating sampling strategies, prioritizing child health outcomes, and investigating methods for cohort retention.

A number of secondary principal hypotheses will also provide direction to the design and implementation of the NCS. These hypotheses will present the rationale for the study to the funding agencies, general public, and participants. In addition to these hypotheses, data will be collected on a wide variety of important aspects of children's health, development, and functioning.

SD also identified 22 content areas of children's health and functioning, including: childhood antecedents of adult diseases, injury, obesity and diabetes, mental health, obesity and diabetes, mental health, school, stress, social factors, risk taking behaviors, health services, nutrition, otitis media, growth and development, community outreach, and neurodevelopment/cognition.

Social Factors and Scientists Missing

The SD summarized and grouped all of the hypotheses submitted by the various working groups to identify overlap across hypotheses and to identify topics left out. It found considerable overlap, as well as important areas missing. For example, social factors were insufficiently elaborated in terms of family processes, violence, child abuse, and economic circumstances. According to the Social Environment Working Group that piece of the hypothesis is in progress. Additional coordination with the Development and Behavior Working Group is needed to more fully develop it. Other missing topics include learning difficulties/school achievement, attention deficit disorders, eating disorders, and depression.

Gergen related that the SD found that "a major difficulty in evaluating the hypotheses so far submitted was the absence of a detailed, agreed-upon matrix of exposures, outcomes, and processes." The matrix should take into account the life-stages at which exposures and outcomes occur, and the need for outcomes which are short-term, medium-term, and long-term, he explained.

The FAC will meet again in December in Baltimore, Maryland. Currently there is only one

social scientist on the Committee: Robert T. Michael of the Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago. There is expected to be, however, a call for nominations to expand the FAC. Clearly, additional social and behavioral expertise is needed by the Committee.

Additionally in December, NCS will convene a meeting of the Study Assembly, which is a broad-based group of stakeholders that are to play an essential role in the planning and implementation of the study. Membership in the Study Assembly is open to any individual interested in the design, conduct, and results of the NCS.

For more information about the NCS see www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov.

COSSA SEMINAR BRIEFS WASHINGTON ON ETHNIC CONFLICT

On September 19, COSSA held its third and final congressional briefing of the year. The session, entitled *Ethnicity and Religion in International Politics: The Middle East, the Balkans, and India-Pakistan*, focused on how underlying ethnic and religious tensions have led to conflict and impact international political decisions.

Lessons Learned from the Balkans

Susan Woodward, Professor of Political Science at the City University of New York's Graduate Center, discussed the lessons we have learned from the conflict in the Balkans. She opened by positing that the Yugoslav conflict "had a formative influence on our thinking about conflict in the post-Cold War era and secondly, about how to deal with those conflicts." She backed this by noting that many organizations used the clash "as a way of reforming and adjusting their own" practices and that the U.S. military, NATO, the UN, and the World Bank were all transformed by it.

Woodward then laid out three key conclusions that political leaders have drawn from the tensions in the Balkans:

- The new threat to international peace and security was ethnic and religious conflict.

- These kinds of conflicts were caused by long-simmering, historically-based hatreds, which either the Cold War or authoritarian governments, or both, had kept under wraps and repressed.
- The idea that both politics and political conflict was generally no longer about ideology, but about identity. And the struggle was largely between civic or liberal identities on the one hand, and ethnic, religious, national, and racial identities on the other.

She also explained that these conclusions go hand in hand with strategic lessons that have been drawn by policymakers studying the Yugoslav conflict: 1) bombing works to change the military balance and bring people to the bargaining table, 2) sanctions work to get rid of rogue regimes, and 3) power-sharing principles involving the leaders of armed groups are the best way to accommodate ethnic conflict and a war.

Woodward next discussed the social science tenets on ethnic conflict, the study and formulation of which was prompted in large part by the hostility in the Balkans. She noted that contrary to prevailing thought, "the more ethnically heterogeneous and pluralistic a society, the more likely it is to be peaceful and democratic." In addition, the process of democratization is highly vulnerable to violence. Research has also shown that the longer a civil war lasts and the higher the number proportionally of casualties, "the far more difficult it is to restore peace and get the country back on track."

To conclude, Woodward asked and answered the question, "What do these lessons suggest for policy?" She did so from a social science perspective, countering some of the inferences she noted earlier had been drawn by those in political positions. She asserted that it's important to be careful about what is labeled ethnic or religious conflict. Such a designation can empower fundamentalists and further destabilize a region. Woodward also stated that it's important to act early and coherently in an area threatened by ethnic or religious clash. Another rule is that bombing alone cannot solve problems – air power must be supplemented by ground forces. Finally, it is vital to recognize that bombing and sanctions can actually strengthen the position of a rogue leader. As

Woodward noted, "It makes it much easier for (such an individual) to rule at home in the way they want, and to justify expenditures on repression."

The Indo-Pakistani Dispute Over Kashmir

Devin Haggerty, Professor of Political Science at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, addressed the ethnic conflict that has raged over Kashmir and the stresses it has caused to the relationship between India and Pakistan. He began by laying out the historical record and explaining that Hindu-Muslim relations have only been marked by massive carnage during the twentieth century, not much earlier as is often depicted. The tensions have strained greatly since the British colonists started the process of ceding power back to the people of India.

As the notion of democracy spread, the "Muslim minority grew increasingly anxious about its political prospects in a future India absent the British." This, as Haggerty continued, ultimately led to "the 1940 demand for a state called Pakistan that would be separate from, and have a distinct sovereignty from Hindu-majority India." Ultimately, Pakistan was established as the British formally withdrew in 1946-47. During the partition process "some fifteen million people moved from one side of the border to the other, still considered today to be one of the largest, if not the largest, mass movements of population in all of human history."

Haggerty next explained the origin of the dispute over Kashmir, noting that "at the time of partition, the British unfortunately left a quite vague prescription for" how the roughly 500 princely states of British India should be divided between India and Pakistan. Geographic contiguity generally solved this problem, but the border state of Kashmir posed a dilemma as it held a Muslim majority but was ruled by a Hindu prince.

Almost immediately the sides opened armed conflict in the region and the United Nations (UN) intervened in an effort to forge a settlement. Haggerty noted that "the UN position on Kashmir then and today continues to call for a referendum amongst the people of Kashmir that will decide the political status of the state." But a vote has never been held and the fighting has continued on and off since the late 1940s.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s there was a period of relative stability between the two sides, but during this time Pakistan's government adopted a robust Islamic tone under the leadership of General Zia-ul-Haq, who came to power in a coup. Haggerty also explained that in India at the same time, the governments of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi moved the country away from secularism towards Hindu nationalism.

In 1989 a local uprising in Kashmir against the Indian government gained steam and the material support of Pakistan. Since that time, the standoff has been marked by periods of bloodshed and increasing ethnic division. And as Haggerty pointed out, the conflict has been made immensely more complex in the last five years by the emergence of the two states as overt possessors of nuclear weapons, which has led to a vastly increased level of international interest and involvement.

Haggerty concluded by asserting that United States would be best served by refusing to depict the dispute as an ethnic conflict. Rather, U.S. leaders should continue to handle the situation as they would a political dispute between two sovereign nations. He noted that this situation is complicated by the ongoing war against terror and the necessity to keep both states as allies. This makes mediation difficult and an immediate solution to the clash unlikely.

The Drift Toward War with Iraq

William Quandt, Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia, focused his presentation on Iraq as a problem in American foreign policy. To open, he gave a timeline of relations between the two states over the last twenty years. In 1984, the U.S. renewed diplomatic relations with Iraq (they had been suspended since 1967) owing to our interests in the Middle East and our worry that Iran might become too powerful if it won the war waging between the nations.

To aid Iraq during this period, we sent billions of dollars worth of Agricultural credits and allowed allies, such as Saudi Arabia, to transfer military equipment, related Quandt. After the war ended in a stalemate, the U.S. tried to engage Saddam Hussein but "the Bush Administration in August of 1990 woke up and realized that Saddam had ambitions of his own and had taken our moderation in

engagement as a kind of green light for him to do what he wanted.”

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait later that year led to the brief Gulf War and Quandt related that since then we've decided largely to contain Iraq and deter Hussein from threatening other Middle East states. Quandt asserted that this strategy has largely been a success and he questioned why we are all of a sudden now calling for Hussein's ouster.

To this end, he laid out five concerns he has about the Bush Administration's rush to go to war:

- Iraq isn't presenting anything new in terms of potential threats.
- The chances are now much greater than in the Gulf War that Hussein will use chemical or biological weapons against our troops. This is due to our pre-announced goal of regime change.
- Shifting our focus to a war against Iraq compromises our ability to continue the campaign against terrorism.
- Taking on Iraq without international backing is risky because it highlights the fact that the U.S. views itself as able to do whatever it wants, whenever it wants. This will greatly hinder our standing in the world community.

Quandt's fifth point relates to the ethnic tension in Iraq's population and how it will play out if Hussein is removed from power. Democratization will be difficult because of the disparate groups that live in Iraq. Sixty percent of the people are Shiite Muslims, 20 percent are Sunni Muslims, and 20 percent are Kurds.

Despite their majority status, the Shiites have been the group most discriminated against, explained Quandt. The Sunnis have typically been the privileged segment of society, and they worry greatly about what will happen if there's a democratic government. The Kurds are in an odd situation. They generally live in northern Iraq, which is "essentially a self-governing autonomous area, with a degree of democracy," and they "are a bit worried about whether their privileged position . . . is going to survive a transition to the new Iraq." Quandt noted that whoever serves as the head of a

post-Hussein government would have to do quite a juggling act to meet the demands of all the groups.

COSSA will prepare edited transcripts of the seminar, which included a question and answer period. These should be available by the end of November. If you would like a copy, please e-mail cosssa@cosssa.org.

COSSA TRANSCRIPTS NOW AVAILABLE

Transcripts from the Consortium's first two Congressional Seminars of 2002 are now available. *The Genetic Revolution and the Meaning of Life: How Will Society Respond to the Explosion of Knowledge?* features Troy Duster and Dorothy Nelkin of New York University and Susan Weller of the University of Texas Medical Branch.

Welfare, Children, and Families: Results from a Three City Study features Ronald Angel of the University of Texas, Austin, P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale of Northwestern University, and Andrew Cherlin and Robert Moffitt of Johns Hopkins University.

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COSSA WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

The American Educational Research Association's status within COSSA changed recently from Affiliate to full Member. We look forward to working more closely with the Association on education policy and other issues of interest to its members.

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