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## I. INTRODUCTION

Elected with a mandate for change, President Clinton is aggressively pursuing it. On February 22, 1993, he outlined his new program on industrial and technology policy: an attempt to restore the competitive edge of American industry, forge partnerships between business and government, rebuild and modernize the infrastructure, and develop an environmentally friendly car -- among many other proposals.

At the same time, a health care reform package is being designed. Although not released at this writing, the package to be presented to Congress undoubtedly will project great changes in the system. All of this comes at a time when major breakthroughs are on the horizon. Science and technology are poised for great advances: from molecular biology and its understanding of genetic disease, to telecommunications technology and its impact on the ways human beings will talk to each other, work, and shop, to new environmental technologies that may well mitigate our impact on the environment.

There is evidence that the public is deeply interested in these issues. In fact, SIPI has just released the results of a poll, completed for us by Lou Harris, which shows just that. (The Executive Summary is attached.) In addition to seizing the moment in terms of the Administration's activities, SIPI must also take advantage of the public's willingness, right now, to learn about these issues.

With the likelihood that the Democratic Congress will (at least partially) embrace President Clinton's initiatives comes the certainty that the public must be informed and kept up to date on a staggering array of new subjects for debate, among them:

**\* Defense Conversion: Nuts and Bolts.** The Department of Defense currently accounts for almost two thirds of the \$70 billion federal research budget. The military supports at least one quarter of all U.S. scientists, and one in ten of all manufacturing workers. "Shifting that money to peacetime uses," writes Stephen Kindel in Financial World (January 19, 1993), "could help determine whether the U.S. will reemerge as a competitive industrial economy in the 1990s." The Clinton Administration has proposed to shift \$8 billion from military to civilian-oriented research and development, but lacked specifics on how the new technology research would translate into economic growth. What are the economic and social dislocations of military retrenchment? How does conversion work, in the laboratory, in the marketplace and in people's lives?

The goal of the Office of Science and Technology is to reduce the proportion of defense spending to about 50% of federal R&D. Will this increase the size of the civilian federal research budget, or will the total decrease? Particularly in such a technology-based economy as ours, the answer is crucial to understanding the impact of the shift. Yet few in the citizenry understand the details.

**\* The "Clean" Car.** Over 50% of air pollution in most cities in the United States is caused by the automobile. It is by far the single biggest contributor to this seemingly intractable problem. As well, its use depends on a diminishing feedstock, petroleum, and its manufacture also involves a great deal of pollution.

As it has been dramatically proven in the last decade, maintaining the competitiveness of the American automobile industry is essential to the nation's economic health. What are the prospects for a "clean" car that at the same time is economically competitive on a worldwide basis? Are new materials necessary, and if so, who is developing them? The same applies to new fuel sources. Fuel cells, for example, are key to the development of alternative energy sources for the automobile; what is the state of this development and what are the prospects for the future?

Several newspaper articles have talked about an active collaboration between the government and Detroit on developing an environmentally sound, highly competitive new automobile. If successful, this could be an example of a government-private industry cooperative endeavor in an area where antagonism used to be the only appropriate word to describe the relationship. Are the projections currently being made realistic? The public needs to be adequately informed.

**\* Basic Science: The Politics of "Pure" Research.** Although such projections are filled with uncertainty, the National Science Foundation may well be able to look forward to a \$2.3 billion increase in funding over the next four years. So far, NSF officials plan to use the vast majority of the 1993 installment to fund existing research in manufacturing, advanced materials, biotechnology and high-performance computing. The National Institutes of Standards and Technology's Advanced Technology Program, now funded at \$68 million, will (according the Clinton-Gore plan) explode into a \$750 million program by fiscal year 1997, while the overall NIST budget will more than double in the same time. How will this money be spent? The most highly publicized of the proposed new programs is the development of a new electronic car, which, if successful, would revolutionize the automobile industry and drastically reduce the level of air pollution.

In any event, the increases themselves are in doubt. With great attention being focused on spending cuts, no one can predict with certainty an increase of any size in any part of the federal budget. Again, the size of any of these increases will have significant influence on their ultimate impact, yet only a small number of the lay public understands the details and the nuances.

These ideas will dictate the future of the American economy for some decades to come, however, and therefore warrant extensive discussion.

**\* Socially Relevant Science and Technology.** What role can science and technology play in the solution of such social problems as housing, poverty, drug abuse and infant mortality? What are the policies for stimulating and enhancing the contribution of science to the solution of these social ills? True, technology or science is not going to solve any of them by itself; however, it is equally true that it is highly possible that science and technology can contribute more to their solution than is currently the case. What policies should the government adopt to ensure that the necessary connections take place, so as to make science and technology maximally useful? Again, public involvement in this key set of discussions is essential.

**\* Medicine and Health Care Technologies.** For decades, American medicine was the envy of all. Our hospitals were the best, our doctors trained better than any, our medical technology the most effective; our pharmaceutical companies composed one of the most highly competitive sectors of American industry.

The problem, however, is cost. The cost of medicine in the United States is the highest in the world, and as a result, some 27 million Americans have no health insurance and must resort to hospital emergency rooms for their primary care. Everyone agrees that something must be done -- but there the consensus ends. When President Clinton's health care reform proposals are finally presented, there will be plenty of news coverage -- at least for a few days. More important, however, will be the ongoing analysis of the program and the discussion of what the plan, and various alternatives, will mean to medical science.

In addition, there are important policy questions that go beyond the specific task force proposals. Are the corporations buying the universities, with an egregious example being the \$300 million deal between Sandoz and the Scripps Oceanographic Institute? As well, the rapid advances in medical genetics have raised countless ethical and social questions. If one has the gene for Huntington's Disease, for example, who should be privy to this

information? One's spouse, or prospective spouse? One's insurance company or employer? And if privacy is warranted, what are the safeguards and who is in charge? Major public discussion is needed.

**\* Lost in Space: Where's NASA?** Despite its noble call to the "final frontier," the appeal of pure exploration and the thrilling possibility of exploring the universe, the space program has always been inextricably linked to Cold War tensions and pressures. Since the '50s furor over the Soviet Sputnik, space exploration has been valued not merely for its own sake, but for national prestige and military hegemony. With the collapse of the Soviet Union rendering military maneuvers in space obsolete, NASA faces a \$2.1 billion cut in the \$30 billion Space Station project over the next four years. This will entail redesigning and scaling back the entire project -- for the fourth consecutive year. Is space no longer to be explored with the vigor it once was? What are the implications of this cutback?

**\* The Information "Superhighway:" Worth the Ride?** No one disagrees with the notion that fiber optic technology will transform modern communications. Already, 500-channel cable TV is a reality, giving rise to horrific notions of total television-enforced passivity, on the one hand, and reduced television watching, due to video burnout and pay-per-view, on the other. The prospect of interactive video shopping malls, and endless rebroadcasts of "I Love Lucy," is not the part of the "superhighway" that thrills Vice President Gore, who has declared: "This is by all odds the most important and lucrative marketplace of the 21st century." Five billion dollars have been earmarked for this project over the next four years, nearly \$3 billion of which would be spent on supercomputers, and the rest on learning how to transmit different kinds of technical data on the network, and on providing schools, hospitals and libraries with access to Internet, the world's computer bulletin board and data bank.

\* **Environment.** Never before have discussions about the economy -- from trade agreements with Mexico to bolstering our manufacturing sector -- been so intrinsically tied to environmental concerns and debates. The debates are heating up within the Administration and throughout the country, engaging the public's attention on many levels. In terms of issues, there is something for everyone, whether it is a community or regional topic -- the siting of an incinerator or nuclear waste storage facility, timber jobs being pitted against the spotted owl -- or an issue affecting the entire populace, such as the sale of pollution rights, regulations to inhibit global warming, or the relatively new field of green technology and what its cost will be to industry and, ultimately, the public. The decisions to be made in the next several years will have a profound and lasting effect on everyone.

Investing each of these debates is the question of risk assessment and cost, a core issue on which consensus is elusive.

Clearly, a public which has been subject to scare headlines on the one hand and confusing scientific data on the other, must be better informed if there is to be any progress in the public discourse, and sacrifices made for the good of future generations.

How can journalists be encouraged and educated to produce thought-provoking pieces on such things as a national high-speed computer network, an information "superhighway," the difficulties of redirecting Federal money from military to civilian research, or retraining workers whose skills are obsolete?

Through our extensive media workshops, conferences, roundtable discussions and the day-to-day information exchange provided by our Media Resource Service and Videotape Referral Service, the Scientists' Institute has amassed invaluable experience as a bridge between the disparate worlds of science and journalism. We propose to use our experience to develop a media outreach program focusing on the changing world of science and technology policy.

## II. PROGRAM

On January 6th, SIPI President Alan McGowan and Executive Vice President Fred Jerome met with Dr. Jack Gibbons, head of the Office and Technology Policy, to explore this notion. An old friend of SIPI's, he had agreed to join the SIPI Board of Trustees but could not do so due to his appointment as President Clinton's science advisor.

Dr. Gibbons declared his willingness to work closely with SIPI and discuss its program with others in the Administration, particularly Vice President Gore. Alan McGowan has established a series of regular meetings with Dr. Gibbons and his chief lieutenant, Lionel H. Johns, once the assistant director of the Office of Technology Assessment.

Our focus will be on providing broad media access to the critical debates and decisions on science and technology policy facing the Administration. Important to the success of this program will be the active participation of Administration people, including Vice President Gore, Jack Gibbons, Donna Shalala, Richard Riley, Hazel O'Leary and Carol Browner, whose involvement will add substance to the debate.

In this regard, it is clear that although the Office of Science and Technology Policy plays a leading role, practically every other agency in government is involved as well. One of the key strategies in developing the program will be to establish a series of regular meetings with the leading science contacts in each of the relevant Cabinet agencies. Departments such as State, Criminal Justice, Defense, and so forth, all have a very important impact on and are influenced by scientific developments. It will be necessary to formalize these relations in some way to ensure that they continue; perhaps establishing a committee of the relevant science people in each of the departments would be necessary.

More important, however, is the participation of independent commentators and experts representing the spectrum of informal opinion, critical or otherwise. The program will present a wide spectrum of responsible points of view, starting with such people as Roland Schmitt (who has just agreed to become SIPI's Chairman as of September 1, 1993), Lewis Branscomb, and Charles Zraket -- all independent experts who generally support the Clinton view -- to critics such as Erich Bloch, Ted Galen Carpenter, Michael Bishop and Norton Zinder.

The program, which will place a major emphasis on television, would include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. An annual one-day technology policy briefing for television news people, similar to our highly successful "TV News: The Cutting Edge" conferences. The latter are weekend events bringing together 45-50 television news directors and journalists from across the country with about 15 scientists to discuss breaking stories in medicine, health, science and technology. Professional camera crews are in place so that the journalists can conduct one-on-one interviews with the scientists. B-roll for each topic is also available. At the last "Cutting Edge," held March 1992 in Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, 114 interviews were taped for airing on stations across the U.S. and Canada.

All of the Administration's proposed technology policy programs (as well as other issues which the Administration might not think important but SIPI and its advisors do) would be subjects for debate during the briefing. For instance, a panel discussion might focus on the data superhighway. Proponents such as 3Com President Eric Benhamou claim that it will "exceed the impact of the space program and the national highway system combined;" doubters such as New York Law School professor Michael Botein claim that "the country is neither technologically nor economically ready," and that "the prize for being first might be low technology at a high price." The pros and cons of this important issue will be fully explored.

Another issue might be the "environmentally benign automobile," on which the Administration is placing such emphasis. How necessary, how possible is such a car? How soon should we replace petroleum as a major energy source for automobile transportation?

In this one-day technology policy forum, scientists would be joined by government officials and representatives of private industry to discuss in depth the different aspects of the Administration's new programs and priorities. As well as local network news directors and journalists, we would invite representatives of major news magazine and talk shows such as "60 Minutes," "Nightline," "20/20," "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," "Larry King Live" and "Charlie Rose." Rockefeller University officials have expressed great interest in hosting the conference, which would be the flagship of our program and the culmination of the various smaller television news events listed below.

2. A series of programs at journalism schools around the country. SIPI has developed a process whereby daylong events are organized at schools of journalism around the



country, which generate a good deal of publicity in addition to serving to educate and inform future journalists. Typically, a school of journalism will host a session lasting from three to four hours, at which up to four experts will debate a given issue. Journalism students attend, and the meeting is treated as an event by the local media, which often gives it extensive coverage. For example, a debate SIPI held on the "Star Wars" program got six minutes on the local news in Dallas, Texas. Interestingly, because we work extensively with the local news stations before the actual event, the coverage was less on the event itself but on the issues that were its focus. Since we are able to supply videotape, the coverage is often extensive.

In addition, interviews are arranged with the visiting experts on local radio programs as well as with print and television journalists. Finally, pro and con positions on the issues are given space in one of the region's leading newspapers. (See Appendix XX for details on past programs.)

SIPI Board member and former New York Times Assistant National Editor Paul Delaney, now head of the School of Journalism at the University of Alabama, tells us that this program would be widely accepted at schools of journalism around the country. It could have significant impact on regional coverage of technology policy issues.

3. A series of luncheon and/or breakfast seminars for print journalists, held in various cities and regions across the country, where differing points of view will be explored. Based on the success of the seminars organized by the Child Health and Development Program, these seminars, which would include local experts as well as local, regional and Federal government officers, would produce a spate of stories in local and regional news outlets.

4. A banquet hosted by SIPI, featuring Jack Gibbons and a leading television news executive such as Roone Arledge, at which not only the policies themselves will be discussed, but also the problems of providing them with adequate news coverage.

5. A series of dinners for television personnel to meet and mingle with key Administration officials and independent experts. Similar to the ones we have held as part of our Peace and Security Program, these informal events could be either on- or off-the-record, depending upon the wishes of the participants.

6. A "Technology Writers Group," based on our very successful Defense Writers and Environmental Reporters groups, in which a group of major reporters engages in an informal, but on-the-record, question and answer session

with government officials and independent experts. Eventually, with sufficient funding, these could be organized in a number of cities, including Washington, New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco.

7. An MRS/VRS "tip sheet" and MRS/VRS Media Alert which would be sent to print and electronic journalists around the country, highlighting recent developments in policy matters. This would include story ideas, sources for interviews, sources of relevant videotape (for television journalists), and will project possible future developments. These would be supplemented by regular Media Alerts on breaking news sent by fax.

The Media Resource Service (MRS) maintains a data base of over 30,000 experts in all fields of science and is the "source" of sources for journalists around the country working on science, health and technology stories. The Videotape Referral Service (VRS) provides both expert and videotape sources to television news stations around the country. (A recent VRS tip sheet is attached.)

In addition, we have begun to explore with a number of television professionals the possibility of a "Science Policy Roundtable" news program, again including regular appearances by Administration personnel, including Al Gore, Jack Gibbons, and others. We have already spoken with Tom Bettag, Executive Producer of "Nightline"; Paul Sagan, News Director, NY1; Will Wright, News Director, WWOR-TV; and Terry O'Reilly of WTN. On the Administration side, SIPI Board member General Edward C. Meyers (USA-Ret.) talked to Dr. William Perry, designated to be No.2 in the Defense Department. Dr. Perry is also an old friend of SIPI's and was a longtime member of the Advisory Committee for the Peace and Security Program. The response from all quarters has been strongly positive.

### III. CONCLUSION

Clearly, the U.S. is at a turning point in matters of technology policy. President Clinton's initiatives are an attempt to seize the moment and regain American technological pre-eminence. SIPI, too, must "take the current when it serves." That the public is interested in issues and ideas, far more than was previously assumed by many news organizations, is no longer in question after an election year in which citizens asked the candidates more "hard news" questions than the reporters themselves. Our commitment to informing the public, therefore, is stronger than ever. Keeping technology policy newsworthy,

comprehensible and interesting to the layman is the goal underlying this ambitious new program.

#### A NOTE ON SELF-SUSTAINABILITY

Although it is not our intent here to present a detailed business plan in which the activities proposed will be able to become self-supporting, there are several possibilities in this regard. For example, the authoritative presentation of scientific and technical information -- a sort of extensive "Tip Sheet" as described in Item 8 -- could very well become so useful to journalists that their publications might be willing to pay for it. It is our intent to attempt to establish such a payment scheme, starting with a very low fee. If successful, this could generate an income stream which could help support, among other things, the Media Resource Service and Videotape Referral Service, which SIPI has traditionally had difficulty funding.

In a similar vein, the events at schools of journalism might well generate fees and other kinds of support from the host schools. A similar thing has happened with SIPI's "TV News: The Cutting Edge" series, in which local institutions, including universities and others, provide support in return for the event being held in their region.

Also, the banquet mentioned in Item 5 could well turn out to be a fundraising event in and of itself. If this were to become an annual event at which a leading scientist or technologist and a leading media personality would discuss the issues of covering science and technology, significant income might be realized.

In addition to the importance of the substance of the material, therefore, some of these events hold the potential for developing into sources of income for the Scientists' Institute. Because of that attractive feature, they have the potential to become ongoing programs without the need of foundation support.

## I. INTRODUCTION

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All of the Administration's proposed technology policy programs (as well as other issues which the Administration might not think important but SIPI and its advisors do) would be subjects for debate during the briefing. For instance, a panel discussion might focus on the data superhighway. Proponents such as 3Com President Eric Benhamou claim that it will "exceed the impact of the space program and the national highway system combined;" doubters such as New York Law School professor Michael Botein claim that "the country is neither technologically nor economically ready," and that "the prize for being first might be low technology at a high price." The pros and cons of this important issue will be fully explored.

Another issue might be the "environmentally benign automobile," on which the Administration is placing such emphasis. How necessary, how possible is such a car? How soon should we replace petroleum as a major energy source for automobile transportation?

In this one-day technology policy forum, scientists would be joined by government officials and representatives of private industry to discuss in depth the different aspects of the Administration's new programs and priorities. As well as local network news directors and journalists, we would invite representatives of major news magazine and talk shows such as "60 Minutes," "Nightline," "20/20," "The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," "Larry King Live" and "Charlie Rose." Rockefeller University officials have expressed great interest in hosting the conference, which would be the flagship of our program and the culmination of the various smaller television news events listed below.

2. A series of programs at journalism schools around the country. SIPI has developed a process whereby daylong events are organized at schools of journalism around the

country, which generate a good deal of publicity in addition to serving to educate and inform future journalists. Typically, a school of journalism will host a session lasting from three to four hours, at which up to four experts will debate a given issue. Journalism students attend, and the meeting is treated as an event by the local media, which often gives it extensive coverage. For example, a debate SIPI held on the "Star Wars" program got six minutes on the local news in Dallas, Texas. Interestingly, because we work extensively with the local news stations before the actual event, the coverage was less on the event itself but on the issues that were its focus. Since we are able to supply videotape, the coverage is often extensive.

In addition, interviews are arranged with the visiting experts on local radio programs as well as with print and television journalists. Finally, pro and con positions on the issues are given space in one of the region's leading newspapers. (See Appendix XX for details on past programs.)

SIPI Board member and former New York Times Assistant National Editor Paul Delaney, now head of the School of Journalism at the University of Alabama, tells us that this program would be widely accepted at schools of journalism around the country. It could have significant impact on regional coverage of technology policy issues.

3. A series of luncheon and/or breakfast seminars for print journalists, held in various cities and regions across the country, where differing points of view will be explored. Based on the success of the seminars organized by the Child Health and Development Program, these seminars, which would include local experts as well as local, regional and Federal government officers, would produce a spate of stories in local and regional news outlets.

4. A banquet hosted by SIPI, featuring Jack Gibbons and a leading television news executive such as Roone Arledge, at which not only the policies themselves will be discussed, but also the problems of providing them with adequate news coverage.

5. A series of dinners for television personnel to meet and mingle with key Administration officials and independent experts. Similar to the ones we have held as part of our Peace and Security Program, these informal events could be either on- or off-the-record, depending upon the wishes of the participants.

6. A "Technology Writers Group," based on our very successful Defense Writers and Environmental Reporters groups, in which a group of major reporters engages in an informal, but on-the-record, question and answer session

with government officials and independent experts. Eventually, with sufficient funding, these could be organized in a number of cities, including Washington, New York, Chicago, St. Louis, and San Francisco.

7. An MRS/VRS "tip sheet" and MRS/VRS Media Alert which would be sent to print and electronic journalists around the country, highlighting recent developments in policy matters. This would include story ideas, sources for interviews, sources of relevant videotape (for television journalists), and will project possible future developments. These would be supplemented by regular Media Alerts on breaking news sent by fax.

The Media Resource Service (MRS) maintains a data base of over 30,000 experts in all fields of science and is the "source" of sources for journalists around the country working on science, health and technology stories. The Videotape Referral Service (VRS) provides both expert and videotape sources to television news stations around the country. (A recent VRS tip sheet is attached.)

In addition, we have begun to explore with a number of television professionals the possibility of a "Science Policy Roundtable" news program, again including regular appearances by Administration personnel, including Al Gore, Jack Gibbons, and others. We have already spoken with Tom Bettag, Executive Producer of "Nightline"; Paul Sagan, News Director, NY1; Will Wright, News Director, WWOR-TV; and Terry O'Reilly of WTN. On the Administration side, SIPI Board member General Edward C. Meyers (USA-Ret.) talked to Dr. William Perry, designated to be No.2 in the Defense Department. Dr. Perry is also an old friend of SIPI's and was a longtime member of the Advisory Committee for the Peace and Security Program. The response from all quarters has been strongly positive.

### III. CONCLUSION

Clearly, the U.S. is at a turning point in matters of technology policy. President Clinton's initiatives are an attempt to seize the moment and regain American technological pre-eminence. SIPI, too, must "take the current when it serves." That the public is interested in issues and ideas, far more than was previously assumed by many news organizations, is no longer in question after an election year in which citizens asked the candidates more "hard news" questions than the reporters themselves. Our commitment to informing the public, therefore, is stronger than ever. Keeping technology policy newsworthy,

comprehensible and interesting to the layman is the goal underlying this ambitious new program.

#### A NOTE ON SELF-SUSTAINABILITY

Although it is not our intent here to present a detailed business plan in which the activities proposed will be able to become self-supporting, there are several possibilities in this regard. For example, the authoritative presentation of scientific and technical information -- a sort of extensive "Tip Sheet" as described in Item 8 -- could very well become so useful to journalists that their publications might be willing to pay for it. It is our intent to attempt to establish such a payment scheme, starting with a very low fee. If successful, this could generate an income stream which could help support, among other things, the Media Resource Service and Videotape Referral Service, which SIPI has traditionally had difficulty funding.

In a similar vein, the events at schools of journalism might well generate fees and other kinds of support from the host schools. A similar thing has happened with SIPI's "TV News: The Cutting Edge" series, in which local institutions, including universities and others, provide support in return for the event being held in their region.

Also, the banquet mentioned in Item 5 could well turn out to be a fundraising event in and of itself. If this were to become an annual event at which a leading scientist or technologist and a leading media personality would discuss the issues of covering science and technology, significant income might be realized.

In addition to the importance of the substance of the material, therefore, some of these events hold the potential for developing into sources of income for the Scientists' Institute. Because of that attractive feature, they have the potential to become ongoing programs without the need of foundation support.