

# White House Vs. MIT

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## Washington

The White House considered cutting off all federal research funds to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a political reprisal against its people and policies.

The reprisals were considered in October, 1971, and April, 1972, but were never acted upon, at least partly because of a lack of support from the federal agencies financing the research, heated opposition to the idea from the Pentagon or a combination of both.

The idea of political reprisal against MIT was discussed in two White House memoranda obtained and

published yesterday by Science magazine, editorial arm of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The first memo was sent from former White House aide Jon Huntsman to then presidential assistants George Shultz, Henry Kissinger and John Ehrlichman. The second went from Ehrlichman to President Nixon.

Science quoted the April, 1972, memo from Ehrlichman to the President in part as follows:

"You should give guidance on these specifics:

"Cut out the DOD (Department of Defense) laser

program (\$40 million); order no further funding of non-defense programs as of June 30, 1972 (\$31 million); cancel non-defense contracts now (\$31 million), less cancellation penalties."

Ehrlichman is also reported as writing:

"The \$31 million (non-defense funds) is fair game and will be identified by contract number immediately. The best method is to order no further funding, rather than cancellation, to avoid penalty claims and lawsuits. Such an order would actually stop funds as of June 30 (71 days from now)."

In response to the Science story, the White House said

it could find no record of Ehrlichman's memo or Huntsman's memo. The White House said it would continue to search its files for both memos and did not issue a denial that they had been written.

The Huntsman memo was labeled "confidential/sensitive" and discussed a plan of political reprisal against MIT raised by Mr. Nixon as far back as 1970. This memo was addressed to Shultz, Kissinger and Ehrlichman by Huntsman, who was White House staff secretary at the time.

"Upon reading the attached article which appeared in the Wall Street Journal, Oct. 12, 1971 (about

the ABM debate and the scientific community)," the Huntsman memo reads, "it was requested that you report on the progress that has been made on the President's directive of a year ago to cut back on MIT's subsidy in view of Wiesner's antidefense bias."

The Wiesner referred to by Huntsman is Jerome B. Wiesner, president of MIT and onetime science adviser to the late President Kennedy who led academic opposition to development of the anti-ballistic missile. Wiesner argued publicly that the ABM wouldn't even work.

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