

Sawhill: New Science Budget Czar

To anyone reading the newspapers these days it is obvious that, between Phase IV and hoax Watergate telephone calls, George Shultz, the President's assistant for economic affairs, including science, is plenty busy. Likewise busy is Shultz's principal aide, Kenneth W. Dam, whose broad responsibilities for economic policy were expanded last February, when he was made executive director of the White House Council on Economic Policy. Back then, Dam was handed the responsibility for keeping track of national science policy for Shultz (*Science*, 2 February), but it has become clear in the interim that, despite a genuine interest in and concern about the subject of science, Dam hasn't had much time for it.

This, then, makes the de facto executive branch staff chief for science policy matters John C. Sawhill, one of four associate directors of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and who was hired in April after a top-level OMB reorganization. Sawhill's responsibilities are science, energy, and natural resources, with program authority for many of the agencies concerned, including the National Science Foundation (NSF). Dam is still participating in some science-related work, primarily in the energy area; Sawhill has full-time responsibility for energy and science. As some have predicted, with the White House distracted and crisis-ridden, OMB's role is becoming more important.

Sawhill, 36, has a doctorate in business administration from New York University and a background as an executive in the credit and lending field. For 4 years before coming to OMB, he was senior vice president of Business Services Group, a Baltimore financial group with annual gross revenues of \$140 million. His previous employers have included the management consultant firm of McKinsey & Co. and, in the early 1960's on a part-time basis, the House Committee on Banking and Currency. Sawhill testified on 23 July before the House Committee on Science and Astronautics (he was scheduled for 19 July but his appearance was

postponed by the committee), where he made a strong and lengthy defense of Nixon's science and technology policies and outlined some of OMB's and NSF director H. Guyford Stever's possible activities in the energy research field.—D.S.

Anders to the AEC

President Nixon has nominated former Apollo astronaut William A. Anders, a member of the crew that first circumnavigated the moon at Christmas 1968, to a 5-year term on the Atomic Energy Commission. Since leaving the space agency in 1969, Anders has served as executive secretary of the National Aeronautics and Space Council, a White House advisory unit that officially went out of business on 30 June.

Anders, whose contact with things nuclear is limited mainly to some graduate engineering work he did between 1960 and 1962, replaces commissioner James T. Ramey, by any measure one of the most influential and controversial figures in the nation's nuclear affairs since the late President Kennedy named him to the AEC in 1962. A former assistant general manager of the AEC, Ramey was then staff director of the congressional Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (JCAE). According to news reports at the time, joint committee Democrats were so insistent that their man be elevated to the AEC that they refused for a full month to consider any Kennedy nominee for either of two positions then open on the 5-member commission unless one of the nominees was Ramey.

Ramey subsequently came to be known as the "committee's man" on the commission, a hard-line opponent of the AEC's environmental critics, who tied the commission closer than ever to the will of the JCAE. In the process, Ramey reflected the joint committee's single-minded determination to press on with the development of civilian nuclear power—and especially with the breeder reactor program—in spite of an intensifying national debate over the safety and the environmental side

effects of large and even more numerous nuclear power plants.

Among the AEC staff, Ramey, an attorney by training, earned a reputation for diligence and for the depth of his technical knowledge over the gamut of AEC affairs. For his special niche, he staked out the territory of reactor technology, becoming a principal source of political power behind Milton Shaw, the AEC's tough and controversial director of civilian reactor development.

Ramey's friends say he had very much wanted to be appointed to a third term on the AEC, to see the breeder program through. In spite of lobbying in his behalf by elements of the nuclear industry, and in spite of bipartisan Senate support (among others, George Aiken, Republican of Vermont, and Mike Mansfield, the majority leader, wrote letters to the White House in his behalf), the 30 June expiration date for Ramey's term slipped by without a word from the President. His ties with the Democratic Party probably didn't help, but neither did an apparent falling-out with new AEC chairman Dixy Lee Ray. In June, Ramey and Shaw lost a major fight over a reorganization plan that stripped Shaw of his authority over safety research programs. Significantly, Ray is said not to have supported Ramey's reappointment. Shaw subsequently retired and has been replaced by Thomas A. Nemzek, manager of the AEC's reactor site at Hanford, Washington.

For Anders, the move to the AEC, if approved by the Senate, should be a refreshing change of environment. The space council, whose direction was one of the Vice-President's few statutory duties, had been a relatively lively place under Hubert Humphrey, but Vice-President Agnew—to say nothing of the rest of the White House—evinced little interest in its advice. Anders is said to have lobbied hard for higher space budgets, and especially for the space shuttle project, with a mixed reception from the budget-makers. "Given the limitations on him, he did a hell of a fine job," says one congressional observer. "But frankly he wasn't given much to do."

—R.G.