

on one of the two occasions this region has been probed, but lack of time—this is only the fourth diving season on the site—and of money—Treasure Salvors has recently been in financial straits—have confined the search to shallower waters.

Mathewson's judgments about the site are assailed by critics who suggest that neither he nor Lyon would long be retained by Fisher if they started to doubt his claim to have found the *Atocha*. No wholly independent identi-

fication of the site is available because the one body that could give it, the division of archives and history, prefers to sit glued to the fence. But according to John K. Mahon, professor of history at the University of Florida and chairman of the advisory council of the division of archives and history, both Mathewson and Lyon are professionals who "would not distort their evidence just because they work for Fisher." Mahon has not studied the controversy over the site but says he has confidence in what-

ever Mathewson and Lyon may say about it.

By the end of last year the site had yielded 168 items of treasure, including the 3 silver bars, 8 gold bars, 7000 coins, an Oriental gold chalice set with emeralds inside, a jadeite pendant, an 8-pound silver pitcher, and 33 gold chains. Treasure Salvors has also recovered muskets, cannonballs, an astrolabe, and 364 other objects, some too entrusted to identify.

All objects are handed over as soon

## Energy: Cannibalism in the Bureaucracy

Persistent reports that John C. Sawhill, administrator of the Federal Energy Administration (FEA), was in official disfavor were confirmed on 29 October when Sawhill resigned, effective 1 January. He will be replaced by Andrew E. Gibson, president of an oil transport company and a former Assistant Secretary of Commerce. In a news conference, President Ford made it clear that Sawhill's resignation had been sought by Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton, chairman of the new inter-agency Energy Resources Council (ERC).

Faced with a continuing muddle in federal energy policy, Congress has tried to bring coherence to this field by establishing two new agencies, the FEA and the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA). Now, however, the muddling may simply be giving way to bureaucratic cannibalism.

In one of its first actions, the ERC, created by the legislation that created ERDA, has begun stripping the FEA of its primary responsibility for energy conservation and transferring that responsibility to agencies such as the departments of Transportation and Commerce.

Although the Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 authorizes the FEA to call on other agencies for help in carrying out its mission, this new agency's mandate to assume primary responsibility for energy conservation is clear and unequivocal. The act declares that the FEA administrator shall "develop and oversee the implementation of equitable voluntary and mandatory energy conservation programs. . . ."

The mandate of the Energy Resources Council, on the other hand, is quite vague, consisting chiefly of the charge to ensure interagency "communication and coordination" in energy matters. Had Sawhill, the FEA administrator, been named chairman of the ERC, the status and importance of the FEA and its mission would have been reinforced. But, instead, President Ford named Secretary Morton, one of his closest advisers and an old friend from his days in Congress.

Long ambitious to have Interior transformed into a new "Department of Energy and Natural Resources," Morton has had reason to want the FEA cut down to size. But how effective Morton himself would be as an energy czar is open to question. A former chairman of the Republican National Committee, Morton has sometimes behaved more as a politician than as a committed

administrator of government policies. Last spring, to go along with an abrupt change of policy by a beleaguered President Nixon playing impeachment politics, Morton abandoned the proposed national land use legislation that he had previously supported warmly—a switch which Russell E. Train, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, refused to make.

After the ERC held its first regular meeting on 24 October, Morton announced that Secretary of Transportation Claude Brinegar will be principally responsible for having the automobile industry meet the President's goal of a 40 percent improvement in the fuel economy of new cars by 1979. He explained that this assignment was in keeping with a new policy of having various agencies assume the lead role in particular energy matters. Later, it was learned that Secretary of Commerce Frederick B. Dent would have the primary responsibility for having such energy-intensive industries as steel and aluminum use substantially less energy per unit of output.

The FEA has been conducting programs addressed to both these conservation objectives, and no longer to have the principal responsibility for them is a come-down keenly felt and resented by FEA officials. And they contend that more is at stake than their own bureaucratic self-interest. As one put it, to give major conservation responsibilities to departments such as Transportation and Commerce, which in some instances tend to regard industry more as a client than a subject of regulation, is like assigning "rabbits to watch over the lettuce." The Department of Transportation is set to assert its new leadership role at a White House meeting with automobile manufacturers on 29 October—a meeting from which the press and representatives of the labor, environmental, and consumer movements are to be barred.

As a new agency, the FEA has made mistakes, but, on balance, many observers in Washington seem to feel that it has performed capably. But Sawhill, its administrator, apparently is too aggressive to suit Morton and certain other officials, such as Secretary of the Treasury William E. Simon, who preceded Sawhill as energy administrator. It is widely believed within FEA and elsewhere that much of Sawhill's troubles arose after the news media reported that he had boldly suggested that President Ford seek a gasoline tax as an energy conservation and anti-inflation measure.—LUTHER J. CARTER