

### White House Fellow Program Charged with Bias

One of the finalists for this year's White House Fellowship program is suing the program for discriminating against women.

Psychologist Serena Stier, an administrator at the American Psychological Association (APA), was one of 32 finalists, 9 of whom were women. Of the 14 chosen, 2 were women.

Stier developed doubts about the selection process during a 3-day "final selection" weekend where she says women candidates were asked irrelevant questions about personal and family relationships that were not asked of the men. Her suit contends that the 11-year-old program has manifested bias against women since its inception. Of a total of 182 White House fellows, only 20 have been women, and the propor-

tion of women chosen has been consistently smaller than the proportion of women among the finalists.

Stier is getting financial support for her suit from the Women's Legal Defense Fund and the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights. She also has the support of the Women's Equity Action League, and the APA's division on the psychology of women which is filing an amicus curiae brief describing how sex discrimination affects society. Stier, who has served as APA liaison with groups engaged in litigation relating to the rights of the mentally ill, hopes her suit will add to the small number of cases in which social science information has been used to contribute to a legal decision.

The annual White House Fellowship program was set up in 1964 by President Johnson to give outstanding young professionals the opportunity to work at various high-level positions in the Executive Branch.—C.H.

supplies of natural gas, fix mandatory energy conservation standards for all new commercial and residential buildings, and provide tax credits for home insulation (and 100 percent subsidies for insulation in the case of poor families). Congress may go along with all of these proposals, although some significant compromises no doubt will be required (for instance, Congress may insist that the conservation standards for new buildings be voluntary instead of mandatory).

But even if all of the energy conservation measures the Administration has proposed (including the decontrol of oil and natural gas prices) were to be approved and fully implemented by 1985, FEA officials do not think that these measures could make up for a big shortfall in development of any of the major domestic sources of energy supply.

Most energy statistics should be taken with a grain of salt, but the following analysis by a ranking energy official who believes that a Btu tax will ultimately prove necessary seems indicative of the situation that is emerging. As he sees it, the conservation effect of the higher energy prices that have followed the Arab embargo of 1973-74 is itself enough to keep total energy consumption in the United States from being any higher than the equivalent of about 50 million barrels of oil a day (mbd), which would be some 15 mbd greater than total consumption in 1973. The added effect of the various conservation measures which Congress has either already passed

or is considering would reduce demand by maybe another 5 or 6 mbd, thus limiting total consumption to about 44 or 45 mbd.

On the supply side, according to this official, domestic production of energy in 1985 can be put at not less than the 29 mbd produced today even if one proceeds from rather pessimistic assumptions, and it probably will be at least 35 mbd. But if it is no greater than the latter figure, this would mean a gap of about 10 mbd between demand and domestic supply. Under these circumstances, a prolonged embargo could have a crippling effect on the American economy because imports would be much greater than what could be replaced out of a strategic reserve of the size planned.

If energy independence goals were met, the difference between demand and domestic production would be down to 2 or 3 mbd, a level where an embargo would pose little threat. But while the Administration is still trying to put an optimistic face on things, there is reason for pessimism.

Since domestic oil production peaked in 1970, daily production has been decreasing each year by about 400,000 barrels. The production from the Alaskan North Slope that is to begin in 1978, plus whatever additional oil comes through improved recovery methods in old oil fields, may only arrest the overall decline, if indeed it accomplishes even that.

The nuclear industry is in such trouble that many people are saying, with some truth, that a de facto moratorium on further nuclear development already exists.

During 1975, the number of orders for nuclear reactors canceled and deferred was several times greater than the number of new orders placed. And in referenda now pending, the citizens of California and other states may decide that development of nuclear power is to be formally stopped or curtailed.

The mining and burning of coal also is slow to increase. In 1975, production of coal for domestic consumption was up by only about 1 percent over the previous year. Although production should rise substantially during the next few years, many people in the coal industry seriously doubt that the energy independence goal of doubling the present output by 1985 will be attained. FEA officials are watching Congress warily with respect to the Clean Air Act amendments because they think that the tightening of stack emission standards now under consideration would itself limit coal consumption sharply.

Prospects for production of oil and natural gas from the outer continental shelf (OCS), which along with the Alaskan North Slope represents the last frontier for development of these fuels, are also highly uncertain. If anything, the environmental constraints—and the closely related problem of conflicts arising between federal and state authorities—are even more acute in this case than in that of coal development. The extent to which the oil industry is willing to take on the risks of exploring and developing the frontier provinces of the OCS is also unclear. Bidding at the recent sale of leases for OCS tracts off southern California was generally disappointing.

In light of these discouraging indications of the prospects for energy independence, there is nothing fanciful about the idea that a Btu tax will be necessary if this Administration goal is to be seriously pursued. The alternative, of course, is for oil imports to continue at a high and probably increasing level and for Americans simply to learn to live with the possible threat of embargoes—just as the British, French, Germans, Japanese, and the people of nearly all other industrialized countries are living with it.

If this choice between accepting a Btu tax and abandoning the energy independence goal is ever to be confronted, unusually bold political leadership will be required. The more comfortable course for Congress and the White House is simply to allow events to take their course.

Certainly, the energy bureaucracy is not likely to speak up on the issue. The official who referred to a Btu tax as inevitable in an interview with this reporter did not want his name mentioned in connection with it. "I was around when John Sawhill was fired," he remarked.

—LUTHER J. CARTER

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