

Carter Will Inherit Ford Appointees on Science Committee

President-elect Jimmy Carter will inherit a science advisory apparatus whose members have already been appointed, in large part, by the outgoing Ford Administration. As a result, the stage has been set for possible philosophical conflict between the new President and some of his chief scientific advisers.

There are four major pieces of the advisory apparatus as established by the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization and Priorities Act of 1976, the legislation which restored a science advisory mechanism at the White House level, whence it had been banished by former President Nixon. The four pieces include an Office of Science and Technology Policy, whose director (not yet chosen by the Carter Administration) will serve as the President's science adviser; a President's Committee on Science and Technology; a Federal Coordinating Council for Science, Engineering, and Technology; and an Intergovernmental Science, Engineering, and Technology Advisory Panel.

The arena where philosophical conflict seems most apt to develop is the President's Committee on Science and Technology (PCST), a group that is mandated to conduct a 2-year study of "the overall context of the Federal science, engineering, and technology effort." That committee, which currently consists of 11 members, is headed by two Republicans who have spent years in leadership positions in industrial research. One is Simon Ramo, vice-chairman of the board and chairman of the executive committee of TRW, Inc., the big aerospace company, who has been appointed chairman of the new PCST. The other is William O. Baker, president of Bell Laboratories, who has been appointed vice-chairman.

Both Ramo and Baker have long been prominent in Republican advisory circles. During the 1972 elections, they were listed as cochairmen of a science and engineering council that was publicized as supporting the reelection of President Nixon. And subsequently they were appointed to head two ad hoc committees that advised the Ford Administration pending formal reestablishment of a White House science office this year.

Both men told *Science* they do not plan to tender their resignations to the new President unless they are asked to do so. They said they considered the committee a nonpartisan group that will deal with nonpartisan issues. Ramo and Baker would ordinarily expect to serve the full 2 years of the committee's mandated life. However, both made it clear that they had plenty of other things to do and would quickly step aside if the new President gave any hint that he wanted his own appointees in charge.

H. Guyford Stever, President Ford's science adviser, expressed hope that party politics would not become a crucial factor in committee appointments. "If political affiliation becomes a strong thing in regard to committees,"

he said, "I think we're in trouble." He said there are Democrats as well as Republicans on the committee, although politics was not the basis for nominating them. Among the more prominent Republicans are Edward E. David, Jr., former science adviser to President Nixon, and Otis R. Bowen, a physician who is Republican governor of Indiana.*

The appointment of Ramo and Baker was not a deliberate effort to preempt the new President's freedom of movement. Under the law, the Ford Administration had no choice but to appoint the committee within 60 days of the reestablishment of the White House science office.

The legislation authorizes the committee to have as many as 15 members in all, so the Carter Administration, even without asking for anyone's resignation, could add another four members to impart its own flavor to the group. There is considerable sentiment—among committee members and outside observers—that more members are needed because the group lacks some kinds of expertise. Agricultural researchers in particular have been clamoring for a voice on the committee.

Ramo and Baker gave some hint of their thinking about problems facing the government at the autumn meeting of the National Academy of Engineering, held in Washington, D.C., on 18 November. Both men gave speeches complaining about overregulation of private enterprise by the government, a trend which they suggested was stifling the innovative capacities of American industry. Baker called on industry to develop assessment capabilities equal to those possessed by government agencies. And Ramo, in a statement that should hearten many basic scientists, said he has been asking many experts what they think of the idea of funding all scientists in the universities who are capable of performing research.

Whether the attitudes of Ramo and Baker will conflict with those of the Carter Administration on issues faced by PCST is uncertain. But two Republicans from industry would seem a strange pair to head the chief scientific committee of a Democratic Administration with close ties to Ralph Nader-style public interest representatives and to organized labor.

The other pieces of the advisory machinery are also being put into place. The Federal Coordinating Council, composed of representatives from 14 federal agencies and offices, has already held two meetings and established a committee structure. Although most of the Council members are expected to leave with the change in administration, many of the committee members and staffers are expected to stay on. The intergovernmental panel has been appointed and held its first meeting on 7 December. And the Office of Science and Technology Policy has assembled a staff consisting primarily of employees on loan from other agencies. Some of these may stay on after the change of administration; others may not. The key science advisory appointment to be made by the Carter Administration will be a new director of OSTP to replace the departing Stever, who has been serving the Ford Administration in this capacity. At this writing, that appointment ranks too low on the new Administration's priority list to have attracted much speculation.—P.M.B.

*The other committee members include W. Glenn Campbell, director, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University; Elizabeth H. Leduc, dean, Division of Biology and Medicine, Brown University; Fritz J. Russ, chairman and president, Systems Research Laboratories, Inc., Dayton, Ohio; Charles P. Slichter, professor of physics, University of Illinois; Charles H. Townes, university professor of physics, University of California at Berkeley; and W. Bradford Wiley, chairman and chief executive officer, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Science adviser Stever serves ex officio.