

the job, but many said they were not interested. One major problem was a marked reluctance to give up high industrial salaries to take a mid-level White House job. Keyworth was among those approached.

It is understood that Teller and Agnew were among those who first brought Keyworth's name to the attention of the White House, and they have both continued to support his candidacy. Agnew even attended the April meeting of the National Academy of Sciences to try to quell unease within the scientific establishment about the nomination. Equally important, however, was Keyworth's service on a search committee that two years ago chose Agnew's successor as Los Alamos director.

That committee included several people who now have strong ties to the Reagan White House. Particularly important is William Wilson, a Reagan-appointed regent of the University of California, who now holds the post of the President's Special Envoy to the Holy See. He is a member of Reagan's so-called kitchen cabinet. Wilson says he was asked by the White House for his opinion on Keyworth, and he told *Science* that he has found Keyworth to be "an extremely competent scientist and administrator."

This was not the route through which most of the other potential candidates for science adviser were brought to the attention of the White House. The names had come mostly from a few prominent scientists who headed a task force that provided advice to the incoming Administration during the transition, and who have been providing informal advice ever since.

As for the workings of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), which the science adviser heads, its relationships with other White House groups will only be decided in detail after an adviser is appointed.

Keyworth says, however, that he has had lengthy conversations with Richard Allen, director of the National Security Council, and Martin Anderson, Reagan's chief domestic policy adviser and that, if nominated, he would expect to work closely with them. He also says that he has been assured that the science adviser would have an input into the budget process. Finally, he has been told that the science adviser would have access to the President.

Keyworth took his bachelor's degree at Yale University in 1963 and a Ph.D. in physics from Duke University in 1968; he has been at Los Alamos ever since.

—COLIN NORMAN

Mormons Rebel on MX

The Mormon Church, in a statement that could prove to be of considerable political influence, has come out strongly against the proposed MX missile-basing system in the desert basin of Utah and Nevada. The church rarely makes statements on political issues—the chief exception being its opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment—but Mormon president Spencer W. Kimball and his two counselors, "after the most careful and prayerful consideration," decided the MX was a moral issue that required a stand.

In the two-and-a-half page statement, the leaders note that the basing plan will include thousands of miles of heavy duty roads, with 4600 shelters for 200 missiles. "With such concentration, one segment of the population would bear a highly disproportionate share of the burden . . . in case of an attack . . ." and that furthermore, such concentration "may even invite attack." The statement mentions problems with water resources and the environment as well as the prospect that the influx of workers "would create grave sociological problems, particularly when coupled with an influx incident to the anticipated emphasis on energy development."

The statement says the current concept "is based on a treaty which has never been ratified" (SALT II), and predicts that, without the treaty, "the proposed installation could be expanded indefinitely." Besides, note the three leaders, "history indicates that men have seldom created armaments that eventually were not put to use." The Mormons were the original settlers of Utah where they intended to "establish a base from which to carry the gospel of peace. . . ." Thus, their leaders find it "ironic" that the same area has been selected for a "mammoth weapons system potentially capable of destroying much of civilization."

The 1 million Mormons in Utah make up 70 percent of that state's population; Mormons also make up more than 30 percent of the Nevada population. They are extremely conservative, patriotic, and defense-minded. The Utah population has been divided about the MX system, and observers say agitation against it

has subsided as many have come to regard it as inevitable. The Mormon statement is therefore expected to breathe new life into the anti-MX movement.

Utah's Democratic Governor Scott Matheson publicly stated his opposition a year ago; the four members of the Utah congressional delegation in Washington have been more ambivalent. They have come out with cautious statements expressing respect for the Church's position and stressing the need to look for alternative basing modes. Senator Jake Garn (R-Utah) and Senator Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.) are planning hearings on the basing mode in late May.

The Administration is expected to make its own recommendation about deployment of the MX in July, after it sees the report of a 15-member panel, headed by Charles Townes, which is now studying the issue for the Air Force.—**Constance Holden**

A First Brush with New Broom at NAS

Dismissal of the National Academy of Sciences' top staff man for international activities recently fueled speculation that the succession of the Academy's president-elect Frank Press might be accompanied by a turnover in senior staff. R. Murray Todd, executive secretary of the Commission on International Relations and staff officer for the Academy's Committee on Human Rights was given notice in mid-April that his employment at the Academy would end on 1 July when Press takes over. Todd is a 19-year veteran of the National Academy of Sciences—National Research Council staff.

Both Press and Academy foreign secretary Thomas F. Malone declined comment on the specifics of the matter. Press said that in a dynamic organization there will be comings and goings and the Todd firing was "part of the normal process of institutional change." He said the dismissal was "not a criticism of Murray." Asked whether other staff changes are pending, Press said he had "no plan for massive changes or cutbacks."

Todd says that Press told him he felt that a new president should have

the opportunity to bring in people of his own choice for policy-level staff positions. Todd said he "can't argue with that concept," but was "surprised" at his dismissal.

By Academy norms, Todd's firing is unusual. The organization has no fixed policy on such matters, but the practice has been to give long-term senior staff a sort of tacit tenure. Some staffers, on occasion, have been moved to lesser jobs. Academy president Philip Handler, whose term ends on 30 June, said that he had not been involved in the action "directly or indirectly" and had no comment.

Todd, 52, joined the Academy staff in 1962 to head the international office when it had a staff of eight and an annual budget of \$200,000. It now has a staff of 80 and budget of \$10 million. The Academy council is reported to be working on details of a "golden handshake" in recognition of Todd's service.—**John Walsh**

Breeder Stumbles in House

The Clinch River Breeder Reactor in Tennessee will have to close down if the House Committee on Science and Technology has its way. On 7 May, the committee voted to eliminate \$254 million to continue construction of the breeder from the Department of Energy's authorization bill.

President Reagan favors the breeder but, ironically, it was Republicans who adhere to the Administration's philosophy of thrift who made the difference in the 22 to 18 vote. Representative Claudine Schneider (R-R.I.), author of the antibreeder amendment, said: "The vote was a clear message that the economy cannot support a project of this magnitude with so little surety of its value in the end." The full committee was scheduled to hold a hearing on 11 May to see how much it would cost to shut the breeder down.

The antibreeder amendment stands only a slim chance of surviving its trip through the Senate. James A. McClure (R-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, is a strong advocate of nuclear power, and the breeder is a favorite project of Tennessee Senator Howard Baker, the Senate Majority Leader.—**Constance Holden**

UCLA Designing Big Agent Orange Study

The Veterans Administration has awarded \$114,288 to the University of California at Los Angeles to design a protocol for a study of the effects of Agent Orange and other phenoxy herbicides on Vietnam veterans.

The study, by far the largest concerning Agent Orange, was ordered by Congress in December 1979, in response to pressure from veterans' groups. Gary Spivey of the UCLA School of Public Health, who has 60 days to come up with a protocol, says the study is likely to involve thousands of vets. The protocol is likely to call for tracing the histories of a cohort of men from the time they left the service to the present. This would include detailed physical exams of some of them, with special attention paid to disorders of the reproductive system, the central nervous system, kidneys, and liver, and to the incidence of soft tissue sarcomas. The study is also likely to include investigations of death certificates of those who have died since their return from Vietnam.

Spivey acknowledges that it may never be possible to get definitive answers on the damage done by Agent Orange. A major and insurmountable problem is that there is no way to determine who has been exposed to the herbicide.

The latest initiative is part of an ongoing series of investigations sponsored by the VA. The Air Force also is moving ahead with a long-term \$35 million study designed to reveal ill effects, if any, to the 1198 men engaged in spraying Agent Orange during the war in the operation known as Ranch Hand. The study will involve questionnaires and physical exams for the Ranch Handlers and a control population of 20,000, with periodic follow-ups over the next 20 years.

Veterans' groups continue to press for government action to take care of thousands of vets who claim to have Agent Orange-related disorders. More than 45,000 vets who have suspected such disorders have been examined at Veterans Administration hospitals since 1978. Although the intensity of the problem does not seem to be as great as it was a couple of years ago, veterans are continuing

to file claims for service-connected disability owing to Agent Orange.

Veterans' groups are currently hammering away at Congress to pass several bills introduced over the past year that would make it easier to get medical care and disability benefits for alleged Agent Orange-related problems. They also want to be sure they will have a voice in the design and conduct of the study now on the drawing boards at UCLA.

No one expects science to lay the issue to rest. But as a political problem, Agent Orange may be expected to subside considerably if veterans can be persuaded that the scientific questions are being approached honestly.—**Constance Holden**

Court Gives Blessing To Hospital of Faith Healer

The Oklahoma Supreme Court has given its blessing to television faith healer Oral Roberts, who for the past 4 years has been wrestling with the state's medical establishment in his attempt to build in Tulsa a quarter-billion-dollar monument to the medical arts: the City of Faith and its 777-bed hospital.

In April, the Supreme Court overturned a 1978 lower court ruling that said the hospital was unneeded. Officials from Tulsa-area hospitals had successfully argued in the past that Tulsa already had a 1000-bed surplus (*Science*, 18 April 1980). The Roberts' forces sidestepped an injunction and went to the Supreme Court. They argued that the hospital would be a sort of Mayo Clinic for the faithful and would draw on Roberts' worldwide following of "prayer partners." The Oklahoma Supreme Court in April decided that the City of Faith would indeed not compete with the hospitals of Tulsa.

The Tulsa Area Hospital Council, which has steadfastly fought Roberts since 1977, originally planned to appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, but in the end decided that the cost would be prohibitive. In any event, time had been running out for the council. Roberts plans to put the finishing touches on the City of Faith by the end of the year.

—**William J. Broad**