New Heads of NASA at Confirmation Hearing

There has never been any doubt that James M. Beggs will be confirmed as administrator of NASA, or Hans M. Mark as deputy administrator. Both Beggs, vice president for aerospace at General Dynamics, and especially Mark, Secretary of the Air Force under Jimmy Carter and a former director of NASA's Ames Research Center, enjoy strong support on the Senate's Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

Nonetheless, their confirmation hearing was well attended last week. Beggs has had little contact with the space agency since 1969, when he finished a brief stint as head of its Office of Advanced Research and Technology. For many in the space community, both inside and outside NASA, it was their first chance to see and hear the man.

Beggs had clearly been doing his homework and, under questioning from Senator Harrison Schmitt (R–N.M.), he said all the things to be expected from an incoming NASA head: that the next step in space should be the construction of a permanent manned space station (on a schedule that, of course, would depend on the pace of space shuttle development); that NASA has to fight bureaucratic hardening of the arteries by doing more to attract creative young engineers and scientists; and that he hopes to rejuvenate space science and planetary exploration, which have been hurt by the high cost of the shuttle.

(Beggs may be put to the test on the latter point very soon. Time is rapidly running out for the United States to start work on a mission to Halley's comet in 1986; a number of space scientists, pointing out both the scientific and national prestige value of such a mission, have privately been urging Beggs to take the case to Reagan as soon as possible.)

Shortly before the hearings Beggs had attended the Paris Air Show, where he met with members of the European Space Community. He found a continuing eagerness to engage in cooperative space ventures with the United States—quite surprising considering the Europeans' outrage over the recent cancellation of the American half of the International Solar Polar Mission and the stretch-out of missions for the European-built Spacelab on board the space shuttle. "The European Space Agency still feels very let down and unhappy," says Beggs. "They'll want stronger assurances in the future—but the nation's reputation is not damaged beyond repair."

Questions about military activity in space were handled by Mark. In the beginning of shuttle operations, with only the four vehicles currently planned, he foresaw problems in adjudicating priorities between military and civilian missions. He and Beggs have already begun meeting with Richard Allen, head of the National Security Council, to try to clarify policy on the matter. Going to a larger number might eventually allow the deployment of two fleets, one military and one civilian. ***—M. Mitchell Waldrop***

Giacconi Named Director of Space Telescope Institute

The first director of the Space Telescope Science Institute will be Riccardo Giacconi, currently the associate director of the high-energy astrophysics division at the Harvard–Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics and a professor of astronomy at Harvard University. The 15-member Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, which will run the institute, announced last week that Giacconi will take over in September from acting director Arthur Code of the University of Wisconsin.

The institute, to be located on the Homewood campus of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, will manage the scientific activities of NASA's 94-inch space telescope after its launch aboard the space shuttle in 1985. Ironically, considering that the space telescope will be an optical device, the institute's new director has thus far spent his professional life as an x-ray astronomer. In 1963, Giacconi proposed the x-ray astronomy satellite that was eventually launched in 1970 as UHURU. In the late 1970's he was a principal investigator on UHURU's descendant, EINSTEIN (HEAO-2), and he is currently acting director of that project. He has also been very active in trying to get funds for an Advanced X-ray Astronomy Facility (AXAF) in the late 1980's.

On the other hand, the 49-year-old Giacconi is highly regarded among his colleagues for his abilities as a scientist and as a manager, for his experience in dealing with NASA and coping with the vagaries of federal funding of science, and for his experience in working with astronomical observations that happen to be in orbit.

—M. Mitchell Waldrop

Court Affirms: Boy Clone Saga Is a Hoax

In what may mark the beginning of the end in a 3-year-old legal wrangle over the existence of a purported human clone, a U.S. district court in Philadelphia has affirmed its finding that the book *In His Image: The Cloning of a Man* is a "fraud and a hoax." Author David M. Rorvik had asked the court to overturn its 2 February finding of fact, promising that blood from the purported clone and its father would be made available so that the existence of the child could be established once and for all (*Science*, 27 February, p. 902). On 15 June, however, Judge John P. Fullam denied the request. An attorney for the plaintiff in the case now says he will ask for a summary judgment against Rorvik and his publisher.

The book stirred considerable controversy when published in 1978. It alleged that Rorvik helped an aged millionaire to sire a cloned son at an unidentified spot in the tropics. Soon, a British geneticist cited in the book, J. Derek Bromhall, filed a $7 million suit, saying the book was a hoax and that Rorvik had cited him and his cloning work on rabbits without permission.

In February 1981 Judge Fullam ruled the book a hoax because Rorvik and his attorney had given "dilatory and evasive" answers for nearly 3 years to questions put forward by Bromhall. In appealing the ruling, Rorvik proposed a blood test under elaborate conditions that would have left some room for doubt as to the actual source of the blood. In denying the appeal, Judge Fullam did not comment on the merits of the blood test. If

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