
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' out-

rage 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 "dilatatory 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

Judge Fullam now rules in favor of the plaintiff's request for summary judgment against Rorvik and his publisher, J. B. Lippincott Co. of Philadelphia, the next step will be a jury trial to assess damages. Says Arthur G. Raynes, attorney for the British geneticist, "This is a punitive damages case. The big thing is to set up a deterrent." —**William J. Broad**

Administration Filling Room at the Top

The Administration, which has hardly been hasty in naming subcabinet officials, has lately been moving faster to fill the gaps, including jobs with responsibility over science and technology, energy, and the environment.

The White House in mid-June announced President Reagan's intention to nominate **Alvin W. Trivelpiece** as director of DOE's office of energy research and **William Addison Vaughn** as assistant secretary for environmental protection, safety, and emergency preparedness.

Trivelpiece, 50, who will oversee DOE's nonmilitary, longer term research, spent the past 5 years in high technology industry; for 2 years before that he was assistant director in the division of controlled thermonuclear research at the Atomic Energy Commission. During the 15 previous years, he was, first, professor of electrical engineering at Berkeley and then of physics at Maryland.

Since 1976 Vaughn has been director of energy management on the manufacturing staff at the General Motors Corporation. Trained as a civil engineer and attorney, Vaughn, 46, joined General Motors in 1971. From 1960 to 1970 he taught civil engineering at Virginia Military Institute.

President Reagan's choice as chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), **Nunzio J. Palladino**, sailed through Senate confirmation hearings on 17 June and the next day won full Senate approval for a seat on the commission.

Palladino, 64, dean of the college of engineering at Pennsylvania State University since 1966, played a leading part in designing the first reactors for nuclear submarines and early nu-

clear power plants when he worked for Westinghouse in the 1950's. His nomination seems to have been acceptable in both pronuclear and environmental camps from the outset.

The same cannot be said for another NRC candidate, **Thomas Morgan Roberts**, whom the White House has indicated will be nominated as a commissioner. Environmental groups have criticized the choice on grounds that Roberts lacks the technical background for the job. A Memphis investor, Roberts was a former president of the Southern Boiler & Tank Works, Inc. He was treasurer of Vice President George Bush's campaign. Roberts was earlier rumored to be the White House choice for NRC chairman, but the Administration is said to have been dissuaded by objections from Republicans in Congress to his lack of technical qualifications.

Even stronger opposition from environmentalists seems in store for a White House choice for the Council on Environmental Quality, **James A. McAvoy**, 48, head of Ohio's Environmental Protection Agency. The Friends of the Earth reacted to news of Reagan's intention to nominate McAvoy with a free-swinging statement that "denounced" McAvoy for a "record of poor management, hostility to government concerns, and a failure to deal with some of the greatest health hazards in Ohio."

McAvoy, who holds a degree in marine engineering, had 15 years of experience in business when, in 1973, he joined Ohio state government to work in the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, becoming assistant director of the department. In 1979 he was appointed director of the state environmental agency, where he has been a vocal advocate of taking economic consequences into account in making environmental decisions.

Friends of the Earth are joining the Sierra Club and the National Clean Air Coalition in publicizing McAvoy's record and statements in the Ohio job in an effort to deflect confirmation. Alluding to the recent successful campaign of opposition to the proposed head of the State Department's human rights office, Friends of the Earth legislative liaison Geoffrey Webb said of McAvoy, "We are hoping he will become the Ernest Lefever of clean air."

—**John Walsh**

Pepper Wants "A" Out of NIADDK

Just when the National Institute of Arthritis, Metabolism, and Digestive Diseases has been renamed the National Institute of Arthritis, Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, a House legislator wants to take arthritis out and create a separate institute which would focus on this disease alone.

Claude Pepper (D-Fla.) says that too many people regard arthritis as "humdrum—nothing to make a fuss about." A new institute would give the disease, which afflicts 31 million Americans, important visibility, said Pepper, 80, chairman of the Select Committee on Aging at a hearing on 10 June.

A committee aide said that Pepper proposed the idea at the suggestion of philanthropist Mary Lasker. He said Pepper hopes to introduce the legislation before Congress recesses in August. The bill would first be considered by the health subcommittee, chaired by Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), of the Energy and Commerce Committee. A subcommittee aide said that it was much too early to predict if the bill would find favor among the subcommittee members.

At the hearing, the director of the arthritis center at the University of California at San Francisco, Ephraim Engleman, argued that a separate program would attract better leadership and result in higher quality research. He said arthritis research last year received less than 2 percent or \$54 million of the \$3.4 billion National Institutes of Health budget. It is "incongruous" to include "such disparate and basically unrelated diseases" in one institute, he said.

NIH director Donald S. Fredrickson disagrees. "It is inevitable to have some conglomeration of diseases," he said in an interview. Arthritis is not a big enough problem and related research "is not rich enough in ideas" to warrant a distinct program. In addition, a new institute would entail unnecessary and expensive overhead costs.

Arthritis "is not being neglected," Fredrickson said. Establishing a new institute "is not the cure for arthritis." —**Marjorie Sun**