

sents an even more radical change of fields. Gilbert says he finds running a business "fascinating," because of the chance to "create a structure in the external world."

Gilbert will continue to serve as chairman of Biogen's board of scientific advisers. His decision to join Biogen means that he will resign his American Cancer Society research professorship, which requires recipients to be full-time researchers.

—**Nicholas Wade**

## Selling the Public on Nuclear Power

Representative Richard L. Ottinger (D-N.Y.) is trying to start a scuffle with the Department of Energy over a proposed public relations drive on nuclear power. On 12 October Ottinger publicized the contents of a memo drafted for Assistant Secretary of DOE Shelby Brewer outlining a multifaceted program that would cost about \$2 million. Proposed are such activities as arranging public appearances and interviews with friendly journalists for DOE officials, hiring writers to prepare articles for popular magazines, arranging meetings with local government officials and private civic organizations, and holding seminars for the press. The memo notes that nuclear energy has an "essential role" because "solar will not be available in time, if ever," and coal has its own problems. No mention is made of the role of energy conservation.

Ottinger, chairman of the House subcommittee on energy conservation and power, blasted the plan as a "blatant propaganda campaign for the nuclear power industry" and announced plans to hold hearings on the matter.

A committee aide says the plan is "part of the Administration's selective free enterprise energy policy." He says DOE doesn't think nuclear energy has gotten a fair shake, and the proposed campaign appears to be a sort of "affirmative action" program to rectify a history of neglect. The aide says Ottinger finds it "particularly shocking" that this initiative is being considered in light of the Office of Management and Budget's order for a moratorium on the development of

any new information materials (which occurred early this year around the time that Energy Secretary James B. Edwards ordered confiscation of a DOE consumer publication because he thought it slighted nuclear power).

DOE's biases notwithstanding, others regard the proposed plan as a hopeful sign that more scientific sophistication may be injected into the debate over nuclear power, whose public image has been foundering since the Three Mile Island disaster 2½ years ago. One spokesman for a pronuclear group, Mark Mills, argues that one reason emotionalism has outpaced factual evidence is that the Carter DOE did not fulfill its obligation to inform the public about nuclear power. Mills anticipates that scientists will be getting more involved in countering antinuclear publicity. "People are confused," he says. Even if no new nuclear plants are built, "somebody should tell them what's really going on."

Mills' group, Scientists and Engineers for Secure Energy, which includes many Nobel laureates, recently sent a telegram to the President applauding his nuclear power approach as one that will "help to ensure the viability of commercial nuclear energy" while adhering to the goals of international nonproliferation.

—**Constance Holden**

## EPA Administrator Mum on Future Cuts

Anne M. Gorsuch, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), proved herself a smooth and elusive witness at her first appearance before EPA's main oversight committee, the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works.

The senators summoned Gorsuch to a special hearing on 15 October because of reports that she had proposed radical budget and personnel cuts for fiscal year 1983. Cries of alarm have been based on information contained in a document that she submitted to the Office of Management and Budget in mid-September and that was leaked to the press. It envisages a 20 percent cut in the 1983 budget. This, combined with the 12 percent cuts mandated by the

President for the current year would more than halve the resources of the agency when inflation is taken into account.

Gorsuch was asked by committee chairman Robert T. Stafford (R-Vt.) to explain the impact of further cuts at a time when EPA's duties are increasing. She said only that any discussion of the proposals for 1983 would be "speculation"; she would not acknowledge the authenticity of the leaked budget document.

Gorsuch generally dismissed criticisms of her performance. Asked about morale at the agency, reportedly at an all-time low, she replied that it was a "serious problem" but suggested that nervousness is inevitable when change is in the air. She said that reports that she was inaccessible to senior career staff members were untrue. To charges that she is divesting the agency of much of its seasoned talent, she replied that EPA is overburdened with high-level personnel, noting that 15 percent of EPA employees are grade 14 or higher, whereas the figure for the rest of the federal government is only 3.5 percent.

Gorsuch devoted her prepared testimony to a description of management reforms. She characterized the system that existed on her arrival as "chaos" and enumerated measures being taken to delegate more enforcement authority to states, to simplify various procedures, and to weed out unimportant cases of EPA-initiated enforcement litigation.

Gorsuch steadfastly resisted attempts by senators to learn how the staff might be cut if the alleged 1983 budget proposals materialize. She insisted that because of increased efficiency the agency will be able to improve its performance even with further reductions.

Gorsuch's condemnation of EPA's former management is at variance with a number of studies in which the agency has emerged as one of the most efficient in the government and as a leader in management and budget reform. Senator George Mitchell (D-Maine) observed that one of President Reagan's favorite books, *Fat City: How Washington Wastes Your Tax Dollars*, by Donald Lambro, identified the EPA as one of the three most efficient agencies in the government. —**Constance Holden**