

The document, "America's Economic Future: environmentalists enter the industrial policy debate," opposes protectionism. But it asserts that free-market forces have their limits when it comes to reflecting the social and environmental costs of economic decisions, or assuring equitable distribution of wealth. It therefore calls for a variety of government actions (or undoing of past actions) offering incentives for conservation of resources, promotion of renewable energy, introduction of more durable and recyclable products, and the slowing of agricultural land degradation.

As for industry, the report supports modernization of smokestack industries and urges that those that are relocated be kept in "brownfield" areas where they will do less environmental damage and supply jobs in already industrialized regions. With regard to growth industries, the report suggests that the government not try to copy Japan by "picking winners" but supply assistance "where growth will have environmental or national security benefits not taken account of by the market."

The authors propose creation of two new federal bodies to survey the big picture and attempt to forge a policy consensus. They also strongly urge the establishment of a national foresight capability like that envisaged in the Critical Trends Assessment Act that is now before Congress.

—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

Fight Over Ag Research Continues

Representative George Brown (D-Calif.) is trying a variety of tactics to beef up basic biotechnology research in agriculture in an effort to counteract opposition by Representative Jamie Whitten (D-Miss.), but he has had mixed results.

In June, the House Appropriations Committee, which Whitten chairs, sliced a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposal for a competitive grants program in biotechnology from \$28.5 million to \$10 million. In addition, Whitten also tacked on provisions for several applied research projects (*Science*, 15 June, p. 1222).

Brown wants the funds restored. In one attempt, Brown tried to amend the USDA budget on the House floor, but failed. His amendment would have restored a majority of the funds shaved by Whitten. Brown said in support of his amendment, "We are giving [OMB and the Administration] a slap in the face when we take their request for \$28.5 million for an important new initiative and cut it back. . . ." Whitten responded by saying that current problems facing U.S. farmers require applied research instead of basic, which is "where you try to find answers for answers' sake in the hope that sooner or later it might relieve our problem." Brown's amendment failed, as he expected it would. "On the floor, no one wants to get involved in this debate—it's not the most earth-shaking issue," Brown told *Science*.

Brown has taken another tack to improve the prospects for a stronger federal initiative in agricultural biotechnology. He introduced a bill (H.R. 5780) to amend the NSF act so that funding for agricultural research programs would be handled by NSF. Although Brown calls this something of a "hare-brained idea," he says it might be a way for NSF "to pick up the slack . . . in an exploding area of science. The question is, are we serious about keeping up with its agricultural impacts?" However, Brown's proposal has not been warmly embraced.

Right now, a persuasive effort to restore the program is being directed toward the Senate where USDA's budget must be dealt with next. For example, National Academy of Sciences president Frank Press has been urging key figures, including Senator Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) and Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.), who are the ranking members on the agriculture appropriations subcommittee, to reinstate the USDA research budget items.

Meanwhile, USDA is getting some confusing, "mixed signals" from Congress, Brown says, when the department deserves a clearer message. "We have been pushing USDA to look at its long-term plans and identify directions to take. They have come up with some very good work." The risk right now is that these budget impediments will have a "chilling effect on that whole process USDA has spent several years developing," Brown concludes.—JEFFREY L. FOX

Tennessee Luring Scientists for High-Tech Development

The University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory have launched a joint "distinguished scientist program" that is offering \$100,000-a-year salaries to attract 30 top scientists to the area.

The first two appointments, announced by Senator Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), a prime mover behind the program, are physicists George F. Bertsch from Michigan State University and Gerald D. Mahan of Indiana University. The total annual support for each position will be \$200,000, supplied by the state and the Department of Energy.

Additional scientists will be appointed to tenured professorships over the next 5 years. The purpose of the program is to strengthen science and technology in East Tennessee and contribute to the state's goal of making the Knoxville-Oak Ridge corridor a center for high-technology industrial development.—CONSTANCE HOLDEN

Comings and Goings

There have been of late a number of changes within the biomedical community. **Donald S. Fredrickson**, former director of the National Institutes of Health, was promoted from vice president of Howard Hughes Medical Institute to president and chief executive officer. He succeeds **George W. Thorn**, formerly of Harvard, who becomes the institute's chairman of the board.

At the University of California at San Francisco and Johns Hopkins University, the chairmen of the departments of medicine have announced their intention to resign. **Lloyd H. Smith, Jr.**, has held the post at San Francisco for 20 years and **Victor McKusick** at Hopkins has headed the department for 11 years. Both men plan to remain on the faculty. At Stanford's medical school, **Dominick Purpura**, who has been dean for the past 2 years, has asked to be relieved of his administrative responsibilities but will continue research and teaching. Stanford hopes to have a new dean by 1 September.—MARJORIE SUN