

## Budget Bureau: Reviewing Science in a New Context

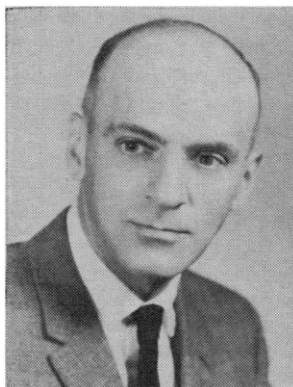
The federal bureaucracy has two kinds of wielders of power, the visible and the invisible. In the former category, of course, are the President's cabinet officers and agency heads and their principal deputies, while in the latter category are obscure functionaries who, because of the strategic positions they hold in the decision-making process, can strongly influence the make-up and dimensions of agency programs. Prime examples of the power-wielders who work exclusively behind the scenes are the Bureau of the Budget's "examiners," who review and analyze the money requests and programs submitted by the agencies for consideration as part of the President's budget. In fact, nowhere else within the government is so much responsibility placed in the hands of largely anonymous officials as in the Bureau of the Budget.

It is understandable, therefore, that the major reorganization just completed within the Bureau, which eventually may have significant implications for agency budgets, should arouse interest elsewhere within the bureaucracy. The Bureau groups its budget examiners in various program-area divisions, the work of each division being subject to review by the Bureau's director and his deputy. A principal effect of the recent reorganization is a reshuffling of program jurisdictions among the divisions, which changes the context in which some agency budgets will be reviewed.

A new Human Resources Programs Division has been established and given responsibility for five major agencies—the departments of Labor, of Health, Education, and Welfare, and of Housing and Urban Development; the Office of Economic Opportunity; and the Veterans Administration. It is, in short, the division encompassing the programs of the Great Society—programs which, for maximum impact, must be carried out in coordination with other programs as part of a national strategy aimed at such goals as eliminating poverty and improving the conditions of urban life.

The Human Resources Division draws its program jurisdictions from three former divisions which dealt, respectively, with health and welfare, housing and commerce, and education, manpower, and science. The new division will be the Bureau's largest, with 40 professional staff members; it will be headed by William D. Carey, an assistant director of the Bureau who in the past was deeply involved in science policy questions.

Another important new unit is the Science, Technology, and Economic Programs Division, responsible for the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Atomic Energy Commission, the departments of Commerce and Transportation, the regional commissions (such as the one for Appalachia), the Small Business Administration, and the regulatory agencies. This division, too, draws its program jurisdictions from several of the old divisions. Space and atomic energy, for example, have been separated from military affairs, and science has been separated from education and manpower. With a staff of about 20 professionals, the Science, Technology, and Economic Division will be the smallest (in terms of



William D. Carey



John D. Young

staff) of the Bureau's six divisions of budget examiners. It will be headed by John D. Young, a 48-year-old management specialist and career civil servant who was NASA's assistant administrator for administration until he joined the Bureau about 15 months ago. As assistant to Director Charles L. Schultz, Young headed the study which led to the Bureau's reorganization.

Other aspects of the reorganization include the creation of an Office of Executive Management, which will concentrate on such matters as interagency and intergovernmental problems in administering federal programs.

While much of its impetus came from a desire for better coordinated Great Society programs, the reorganization stemmed in part from the Bureau's need for better internal management and its need for a stronger effort toward extending the new planning, programming, budgeting system (PPBS) government-wide. It was realized, too, that the changes would permit the review of science and technology programs in a context where their economic impact could be more easily assessed.

On the whole, the reorganization seems to have stirred much more curiosity than alarm. The new problems of coordination created by the separation of NSF from education (done partly to keep the Human Resources Division from being any larger) should be manageable in a small organization like the Bureau. Some supporters of NASA and AEC are reported to fear that these agencies may suffer politically from being taken out from under the defense umbrella, but such fears scarcely seem justified.

In the short run, at least, the reorganization is not expected to lead to major changes in the allocation of resources among federal programs. It is significant, in this regard, that NSF, NASA, AEC, the National Institutes of Health, and the Office of Education will all be dealing with the same senior budget examiners assigned to them in the past. The Bureau plays a major support role to the White House staff in program development, and, ultimately, the fact that a number of agency budgets will be reviewed in altered contexts could contribute to the development of new programs and strategies. But this will be more likely in a post-Vietnam-war environment, when it again becomes possible to think big.—LUTHER J. CARTER