

gic arms limitations (SALT), but not until the new Administration has set in motion its plan for rebuilding U.S. defenses. The period of reorganization, he suggested, would last perhaps 6 months. Helms found this "incredible," for the time allowed seemed scarcely adequate for gaining what he thought would be a sufficient technological advantage over

the Soviets. The senator was distressed as well to learn that Weinberger thinks the SALT talks are valuable in themselves, and not, as Helms sees them, "a calculated strategy by the Soviets to relieve us of our remaining advantages." The nominee opposed a peacetime draft, arguing instead that the volunteer approach should be tried a bit longer. He

did not want to end draft registration, however. Lastly, Weinberger said he supported the principle of the Carter Doctrine, which declares the Persian Gulf to be a zone of strategic importance for the United States, but he thinks that at present the United States does not have the wherewithal to wage war in the area.—ELIOT MARSHALL

## Former Carolina Governor to Head DOE

The next secretary of the Department of Energy (DOE), James B. Edwards, is an oral surgeon who served as governor of South Carolina from 1975 to 1978. He is an enthusiastic supporter of nuclear energy and, while governor, created the South Carolina Energy Research Institute, a privately funded body that does studies related to the state's energy needs.

Prior to his Senate confirmation hearings, Edwards was widely quoted as being eager to preside over the demise of the DOE. However, the senators on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee set him straight, saying that was not what they expected from him, and he readily agreed that for the present, anyway, the government needs a "focus" for its energy activities. He did, however, express a desire to "streamline" the department, an activity that could include divesting it of its regulatory functions.

Edwards is as strong an advocate of nuclear energy as anyone could wish. He wants to do whatever is necessary to revive the country's sagging uranium industry (all the signs are that Reagan intends to reverse the Carter policy related to nuclear nonproliferation and allow freer trade in nuclear materials). He wants to move ahead on breeder technology. He indicated that he wants the nation to get back into the reprocessing business—"We should recycle everything including spent fuel rods" (the country's only nuclear reprocessing plant was located in Barnwell, South Carolina). Asked what he would do about the nuclear waste problem, Edwards expressed confidence that glassification of wastes and their deposit in retrievable form in storage facilities would be adequate until permanent geologic disposal sites are found.

Edwards tends to look at energy from the standpoint of suppliers. Asked by Senator Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.) if he approved of the fact that 40 percent of all manufacturing profits in this country go to oil companies, Edwards said that what bothered him more was how much of these profits went out in taxes. Asked why there was no consumer representation on the board of the Energy Research Institute, which is almost entirely composed of industry representatives, Edwards said "the best thing I can do for consumers is be sure when they turn on the switch the light goes on. . . ." Asked by Bumpers, "What does 'Three Mile Island' conjure up in your mind?" Edwards replied, "It conjures up a company that's in trouble and needs some help."

Edwards, who favors a strategic petroleum reserve, expressed optimism about the future oil supply. Bumpers protested that even Exxon and the American Petroleum Institute had predicted that no matter what policies the coun-

try follows, it will be producing less oil in 1990 than it is now. But Edwards replied, "Once we deregulated, people came up with an awful lot of natural gas. The same thing will happen with oil." Like many observers across the political spectrum, Edwards thinks the United States should be allowed to export oil to Japan in exchange for taking over their purchase contracts for Venezuelan oil.

Edwards, like other states' righters Reagan has appointed, found his philosophy sometimes at odds with his goals. He does not, for example, favor government subsidies for commercialization of new technologies, but he made an exception for nuclear power. If the nuclear industry had not been subsidized, he said, "we would be in Siberia now rather than the free world." He seemed to have only a fuzzy idea of the purpose of the Synfuels Corp., which is to



**James B. Edwards**

subsidize commercialization; however, he did not appear to favor withdrawal of the \$20 billion already earmarked for that purpose.

Edwards made only fleeting reference to the value of alternative, nonrenewable energy sources. And, despite the fact that a half-dozen major studies have shown that energy conservation would be the quickest way to reduce oil imports, Edwards did not seem much interested. "It certainly does make sense to conserve," he said, but "I wish we would conserve ourselves into full employment but we can't. We have just got to produce, produce, produce and put conservation on top of that."—CONSTANCE HOLDEN