

The Science Watching Ten

Following are the names of the ten members of Science Watch, who between them put up \$2500 to fund the survey on House voting records:

Roland Schmitt, chairman; former chairman of the National Science Board, former senior vice president for research at General Electric and former president of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; now chairman of the governing board of the American Institute of Physics;

James Duderstadt, former president of the University of Michigan and past chairman of the National Science Board;

D. Allan Bromley, dean of engineering at Yale University and science and technology adviser to President Bush as well as director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Bush Administration;

Erich Bloch, distinguished fellow at the Council on Competitiveness, former director of the National Science Foundation and former vice president of the IBM Corp;

Maxine Singer, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington;

Nobel laureates: **Kenneth Wilson** of Ohio State University; **F. Sherwood Rowland** of the University of California, Irvine; **Herbert Simon** of Carnegie Mellon University; **Gertrude Elion** of Glaxo Wellcome Laboratories and **Leon Lederman** of the Illinois Institute of Technology and former director of Fermilab.

senting Texas—Ken Bentsen, Eddie Bernice Johnson and Sheila Jackson Lee, each with 97%. Only slightly below them were Texans Ronald Coleman, Martin Frost and E. “Kiki” de la Garza. Tom Bevill of Alabama, senior Democrat on the Appropriations subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and George E. Brown Jr of California, senior Democrat on the Committee on Science, both received a score of 93%. Among Republicans, Robert Walker, of Pennsylvania, who chairs the science committee, got a grade of only 40%, lower than Amo Houghton of New York with 67%, Sherwood Boehlert of New York with 60%, Connie Morella of Maryland with 57% and Vernon Ehlers of Michigan with 52%. Ranked last in the survey was Jim Ramstad, a Minnesota Republican who received 4%.

A day after the ScoreBoard results were issued, Walker declared that the ratings were misleading and contaminated by “overt subjectivity” in an attempt to “politicize” science. In a po-

lemical letter to Apple, Walker wrote that Science Watch’s choice of floor votes was wrong, because it equated preserving the scientific status quo with support for science and excluded many unrecorded voice votes in which members demonstrated their support for science. Those voice votes, Walker argued, indicated that “there was broad, bipartisan support for these measures aimed at ensuring that the basic science base of this nation remains strong and healthy.” As for using votes on science funding as a meaningful measure of support for science, Walker declared, “the science community needs to recognize that a vote against increased spending or for termination of a program doesn’t mean a member is anti-science; it means that [the member] had to make a decision in the context of a larger picture.”

Walker’s evaluation of ScoreBoard: “The bottom line of this survey is that if you’re a big spender you get an ‘A.’”

Attacks on the survey came from some circles that sought to insulate

science from politics.

Cornelius Pings, president of the Association of American Universities, which represents 64 major research universities in the US and Canada, warned that assigning grades to lawmakers “is a serious mistake and may anger members of Congress who have been among the best friends of scientific research.” Washington representatives of leading universities criticized the ScoreBoard concept as “wrongheaded” and “politically naive.” And David Goldston, legislative director for Congressman Boehlert, who is a longtime member of the science committee and recognized as an advocate of science, characterizes the survey as “a silly way to start an argument with Congress. Ratings are done by lobbyists to defeat people—to say in effect, ‘Let’s get rid of the guys who don’t support us.’ By circulating the ratings the people behind Science Watch, no matter how many of them have Nobel Prizes, are taking a big risk of a backlash in Congress.”

In defense of the survey, Schmitt says, “We decided this was the right thing to do for two reasons: to increase the sensitivity of members of Congress to the well-being of science and to stimulate the interest of the scientific community to what’s happening on Capitol Hill.” Science Watch was created, he says, “because a lot of us are convinced that the health of science cannot be maintained by a few of us walking the marble corridors of Congress to plead for support of a certain program or a costly facility.”

That tactic is still necessary, Schmitt observes, “but it’s not enough. Members of Congress still say ‘We don’t hear from your people in my district.’ Our aim with this survey is to stir up the grassroots. Well, it’s making quite a stir already.”

IRWIN GOODWIN

Washington Ins & Outs

Departures and Changes at NSF and OSTP and New Science Board Members Are Nominated

A wave of resignations and retirements has hit Washington’s science bureaucracy this fall, suggesting perhaps that the old order is making way for the new.

Several top-level changes have occurred at the National Science Foundation. In mid-September **Anne Petersen** left NSF, where she was deputy director, to fill the new post of senior vice president for programs at the W. K. Kellogg Foundation in Battle

Creek, Michigan. With \$6 billion in assets, the Kellogg Foundation ranks second only to the Ford Foundation. Founded on cornflakes profits in 1930, the Kellogg Foundation awards “seed money” and other grants for programs that apply existing knowledge, rather than research, to advance education, health and community development. Petersen, a statistician, was vice president for research and dean of the graduate school at the University of

Minnesota before joining NSF. As NSF’s deputy director, she was given the additional job of chief operating officer by Neal Lane, the agency’s director. The post of deputy director requires Presidential nomination and Senate confirmation, which means it will be months before her successor is cleared by the White House and by security agencies.

Meanwhile, Lane has designated **Joseph Bordogna**, assistant director