Washington Ins & Outs

Moler Leaves DOE; Staffin Moves Up; McTague Retires

As a Department of Energy official for the past decade, the last 16 months in the number two post, **Elizabeth Anne (Betsy) Moler** earned great respect in the agency and in Congress. But when she left DOE on 19 October, she couldn't help being disappointed. Moler, who served as acting Energy secretary last summer during the interregnum following the departure of **Federico Peña**, had been passed over for the top spot in favor of former UN Ambassador **Bill Richardson**—a replay of the last-minuute appointment of Peña in 1996. Both times, Moler appeared to have the position locked up, and lost out in the end to a rival who had the advantage of meeting President Clinton's need for a Cabinet member with Hispanic credentials.

Moler also had been frustrated last fall when Congress failed to act on wide-reaching legislation to restructure the nation's electric power industry and deregulate electricity markets. The legislation bogged down when Congress became perplexed about the roles the Tennessee Valley Authority and DOE's Bonneville Power Authority should play in a deregulated system.

In her new job as a partner in the Washington office of the Houston-based law firm of Vinson and Elkins, Moler will use the experience gained during eight years as a member and then chairman of DOE's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. As deputy secretary and chief operating officer of DOE, Moler successfully reorganized the agency's fusty contract management and budget review practices. Recent contracts awarded by DOE include those for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, which has been managed by the nonprofit Midwest Research Institute since the lab's inception in 1977, and the Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory, awarded to Bechtel National Inc, which replaced the facility's long-time manager, Westinghouse Electric Co. Midwest Research won the competition "fair and square," said Moler, but not before the company was forced to look critically at the way it was running the lab and "respond to the solicitation with a much improved management structure." Moler also instituted tougher management requirements in new contracts. DOE recently awarded Lockheed Martin Corp an extension of its contract to run Sandia National Laboratories but denied the company a renewed contract for Idaho National Engineering Laboratory.

"It's an incredibly difficult job," Moler said, "because of the inherent mix of policy and management. Charlie Curtis [her predecessor] told me it was the hardest job he ever held, and now I understand how right he was."

A graduate of George Washington University Law School, Moler had been a staffer in Congress for 20 years, rising to senior counsel on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the 1980s.

Months before Moler departed DOE, Clinton nominated her successor: **T. J. Glauthier**, associate director for natural resources, energy and science at the White House Office of Management and Budget. But Congress adjourned in October without confirming Glauthier. The White House plans to resubmit the nomination when the 106th Congress convenes in January. Glauthier resigned from OMB in November and was replaced there by **Elwood (Elgie) Holstein Jr**, who had been chief of staff to former Energy Secretary Peña.

Meanwhile, on 9 November, Richardson gave **Ernest Moniz**, a former MIT nuclear physicist and the department's undersecretary, the additional job of acting deputy secretary and chief operating officer.

On 1 December, Energy Secretary Richardson named **Robin Staffin**, deputy assistant secretary for R&D in DOE's Office of Defense Programs, to be his senior policy adviser for science and technology. Richardson said in a statement that he appointed Staffin to the new position because "he is committed to the Clinton Administration's policy of science in service to society." Until he chose Staffin, Richardson had usually introduced Ernie Moniz as his science expert. Moniz's job at the agency has widened and deepened in the past six months as he plunged into policies and programs involving operations of the national labs as well as the dismantlement of Russia's nuclear weapons and the displacement of its weapons activities by profitable commercial businesses. Nonetheless, Moniz is still cast in the leading role as Richardson's chief scientist.

At DOE, Staffin was primarily responsible for the science base of the stockpile stewardship program, the effort to ensure the safety, security and reliability of the nation's nuclear weapons, without testing. Prior to joining DOE in 1996, he had spent 12 years in laser physics, optics and fusion research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and one year on the staff of the now defunct Office of Technology Assessment. He earned a BS degree in physics at MIT and a PhD in theoretical particle physics at Stanford University, under the guidance of Sidney Drell. Staffin did a postdoc at the Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, where he worked with Richard Garwin. Before joining DOE, Staffin served for a year and a half as an aide to Ash Carter, then Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy.

After 12 years with Ford Motor Co, the first four as vice president for research and the last eight as vice president for technical affairs, **John P. McTague** retired on 1 January and moved from his home in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to Santa Barbara, California. Before joining Ford in 1986, McTague, a physical chemist, had been active in Washington's political circles, serving as deputy director to George (Jay) Keyworth III at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in 1983–85, and on Keyworth's departure in 1985, as acting director of OSTP and science adviser to President Reagan.

"John raised the technical consciousness of the company to a new and higher level," said Alex Trotman, Ford chairman and CEO. "He became the great connector and integrator between research and operations of the company and 'joined the dots' so that research activities are now an integral part of the company's operating processes." McTague was known among Ford officials as "Dr. Science," according to Trotman, "because he always discussed the automobile business as a committed scientist—often laced with his hearty humor." McTague earned a PhD from Brown University in 1965 and then joined the staff at North American Rockwell Science Center in Thousand Oaks, California. Five years later, he moved to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was a chemistry professor and a member of its Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics. In 1982–83, he was chairman of the National Synchrotron Light Source department at Brookhaven National Laboratory and adjunct professor of chemistry at Columbia University.

McTague has been a long-standing member of the Secretary of Energy Advisory Board, cochairman of DOE's National Laboratories Operations Board and chairman of Fermilab's Board of Overseers—and he plans to continue those activities in retirement.

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