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3. What's New? 2002 S&T Policies and Program Developments in the United States

S&T Bush Administration Appointments 2001 and 2002

John Marburger

Bush nominated physicist John Marburger III, director of the US Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory, to be Science Advisor and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) on June 25, 2001. Marburger's position also involves coordinating the R&D needs of the Office of Homeland Security. This nomination was confirmed by the Senate on October 29, 2001. As of December 10, 2001, President Bush had not even sworn Marburger in, signalling for many his reluctance to put science and technology funding at the forefront. As a result, anxiety increased among the US science and technology communities. Some frustration was expressed at Marburger's own reinforcement of this decreased ability to influence the President: One of Marburger's early decisions was eliminating the position of associate director for national security and international affairs, which broke the traditional link of OSTP to the National Security Council. This decision seemed odd, considering the US was conducting a war against terrorism. Marburger's decision to nominate Richard Russell to serve as Chief of the Technology Directorate was also questioned, as Russell does not have an advanced science degree or extensive industry experience. However, Marburger writes his own speeches, the tenor of which has significantly influenced the S&T community in his favour.

Leon Kass

Bush by executive order created the President's Council on Bioethics on November 28, 2001. Leon Kass, a biomedical ethicist from the University of Chicago, was appointed chair of an 18 member Council on January 16, 2002. This body's core function will be to monitor stem cell research, by considering all medical and ethical consequences of this research and advising the President appropriately. Kass's position however is not a neutral one, as he is an outspoken opponent of human cloning (consistent with the Bush administration's view) and even openly questions the ethics of in-vitro fertilization technology. The Council composition is severely slanted to the political right, as supporters of scientific progress are under-represented, while the majority hold sceptical public views of scientific and medical advances.

Floyd Kvamme

Bush signed Executive Order 13226 on September 30, 2001, which established the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). President Bush originally named Floyd Kvamme PCAST's Co-Chair on March 28, 2001. In 1982 Kvamme was named Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Apple Computer and was also part of the original team that started National Semiconductor, where he served as General Manager of Semiconductor Operations.