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SENT TO: Doug Bingham

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Remarks:

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If you have a problem getting meeting with Rollwagen call me back before accepting a meeting with a subordinate.
Norm L.

CLINTON AND GORE BUILD THEIR TECHNOLOGY TEAM

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By Brett Berlin

The list of early appointees reveals the vice president's hand and a commitment to action

If the first round of technology appointees are an indication, President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore may be succeeding in putting political "business as usual" to the test.

This team could effectively transcend agency boundaries, yielding a degree of unity that will help federal and corporate technology.

Taken as a group, the current appointees reveal some of the inner dynamics of Clinton's strategy for managing the federal science and technology enterprise. Three things particularly stand out.

• The vice president is playing a substantial role in technology and competitiveness matters, including recruitment of key personnel.

• Senior White House economic and technology policy staff and relevant agency principals are being shaped into a

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Democratic candidates Bill Clinton and Al Gore visit a steel mill during the 1992 campaign.

Defense Secretary Les Aspin believes strongly in making defense technologies work in the commercial marketplace.

Labor Secretary Robert Reich must prepare the country to cope with the change that technology brings to the workplace.

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pragmatic, consensus-driven team.

• Early sub-cabinet appointments in the departments of Defense and Commerce signal a commitment to visionary action, as opposed to political patronage.

THE GORE CONNECTION: ACTIVE ROLE FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT

The vice president is clearly dedicated to recruiting major technology operatives.

John Gibbons, former director of Congress' Office of Technology Assessment and a veteran of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, was selected as assistant to the president for science and director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Carol Browner, formerly a Gore aide and Florida environmental regulation secretary, was chosen as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Former Cray Research Chairman and CEO John Rollwagen, a Gore intimate, was tapped to be deputy secretary of Commerce.

With the elimination of the Space and Competitiveness Councils in the Office of the Vice President and concentration of all White House science and technology staff, Gore is expected to be a major unifying force for cohesive technology policy.

A system-wide team concept, with the vice president at point, becomes a new template for technology and competitiveness coordination. The team effort gives initiatives such as the embryonic manufacturing technology program a chance of rising above interagency turf.

"In the previous administration, the lack of an effective consensus-forcing mechanism in the White House often stood in the way of even simple proposals," said Denise Michele, director of Technology and Manufacturing Policy for the American Electronics Association. With Gore fully engaged and a consensus-driven senior team, "many bureaucratic impediments could simply evaporate, and any problem will at least be workable."

CONSENSUS IN THE WHITE HOUSE

Successful technology policy and action are completely dependent on the president's ability to create a working consensus. Clinton made progress in that direction by creating a White House technology policy team with three success-oriented characteristics: consensus, moderate activism and effective outreach.

Consensus is a hallmark of the Clinton leadership style. Particularly important in setting this tone will be National Economic Council Chairman Robert E. Rubin. Rubin's role as policy integrator is expected to impact technology and competitiveness initiatives.

When given Rubin's assignment, the typical White House powerbroker would consolidate turf. But Rubin moved in the opposite direction, even to the point of sharing a staff group with the National Security Council to ensure closer coordination. He will also rely on Gibbons' Office of Science and Technology Policy concerning such issues. Petty infighting is obviously not part of Rubin's agenda.

The president has set a decidedly moderate, though activist, tone. "This team is not extremist in either direction." said Craig Fields, former Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, chief and now CEO with Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corp. Fields is a key technology adviser to the new administration. Rather than ideology, Fields said, this team stands out for its "depth and breadth [of understanding]. This team has a willingness to act."

Laura d'Andrea Tyson, the new chairwoman of the Council of Economic Advisers, is known as a thoughtful advocate of government exercising an "appropriate" role. She refers to herself as a "cautious activist." She is expected to be a stark contrast to her predecessor. One economist familiar with Tyson said: "To the extent that any of these [technology policy matters] are discussed, the [council's] role will be to facilitate and encourage, rather than to block action."

Tyson can be expected to be a strong supporter of key technology initiatives such as those in high-performance computing, manufacturing technology and

materials. She advocates an active technology policy approach to both trade and internal competitiveness challenges such as defense conversion.

"Laura brings a special measure of creativity" to her responsibility for characterizing the economy, according to Skip Johns, former associate director of the Office of Technology Assessment and now top aide to science adviser Gibbons. By applying that creativity to her understanding of the state of industry and the economy, Tyson is "a high detector of change with an open-mindedness about how one deals with change and gets to goals," Johns said.

Clinton's selection of Gibbons to the senior technology position in the White House emphasizes a commitment to effective outreach in technology policy. "The President wants to see more partnership and wants to facilitate more outside involvement," Johns said. And for that task, "when it comes to science and technology policy, John Gibbons would be at the top of anyone's short list."

A top scientist in his own right, Gibbons spent the last 13 years building the Office of Technology Assessment into a bipartisan organization with a specialty in reaching out to all sides of issues in order to present Congress with non-ideological policy options. During that tenure, Gibbons demonstrated an ability to listen, and to integrate highly diverse points of view. A key Gibbons strength is to ensure the interests and view of the public are not overruled by the experts, even while absorbing what the experts are saying, Johns said.

In his new role as the White House fulcrum for technology initiatives, Gibbons will reach outside of Washington and to agencies not traditionally involved in technology. Known for his low tolerance for turf warfare, Gibbons is a problem-solver with a zeal for fostering effective inter-agency cooperation.

While reorganizing the Office of Science and Technology Policy to accommodate cuts and consolidation already announced, Gibbons will reinforce effective broadband mechanisms such as the Federal Coordinating Committee for Science, Engineering, and Technology.

ACTION AT THE FRONT LINES

When Clinton took office, there was immediate public concern that he would not be able to attract the talent necessary to address technology competitiveness. The Department of Commerce, where the bulk of new initiatives will be implemented, was of particular concern.

According to a number of media reports, Hewlett-Packard's John Young refused the secretary position partly because he did not believe that Commerce could be turned into the lead agency required to accomplish many of the emerging initiatives.

While many applauded Ron Brown's managerial and consensus-building talents, questions were raised about his ability to lead the department into its new role.

Enter John Rollwagen, the bright, energetic former chairman and CEO of Cray Research Inc., as the person to be the Commerce deputy secretary. The picture at Commerce changed. Rollwagen is a potentially potent combination of an effective manager and political powerhouse, and an action-oriented technology CEO who has been in the trenches fighting all of the battles highlighted in the campaign, and probably hand-picked by the vice president.

This team gives Commerce its strength to become the major technology and competitiveness player, with near direct access to both the president and vice president, strong support from the Congress, and, via Rollwagen, the potential for a well-tuned policy consensus with Tyson, Gibbons and Rubin.

DEFENSE INTO THE MAINSTREAM

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin is a strong advocate of technology transfer. He also believes strongly in defense conversion — not only the transition to a post-Cold War defensive posture but also making defense technologies work in the commercial marketplace.

Part of his enthusiasm flows in support of the White House commitment to

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Commerce Secretary Ron Brown leads a department that has been given a much larger role to play in technology policy.

As science adviser to Clinton, John Gibbons will likely reach out to agencies not traditionally involved in technology.

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elevate economic security on a par with the traditional view of national security.

With the important realization that Pentagon programs are now dependent on commercial technologies, cooperative technology development with commercial objectives and a corresponding emphasis on technology transfer will become the norm rather than the exception.

In order to help lead these transitions, Clinton and Aspin have pulled their own top guns into the fold.

William E. Perry, the expected deputy secretary, is one of the nation's most respected visionaries in the area of defense research and development, acquisition, transfer, and conversion.

In a Carnegie Commission report, Perry essentially proposed redefinition of the entire relationship between the Pentagon and commercial technology.

He urged inter-departmental cooperation within the White House via the National Economics Council, now the domestic counterpart to the National Security Council, and Office of Science and Technology Policy.

He also advocated, in the face of overall cuts, a robust early stage research and development program to acquire and inventory advanced technologies without necessarily fielding them.

Perry can be expected to be a major contributor to inter-agency cooperation, particularly as an excellent partner with Rollwagen, with whom he shares an unusual mix of visionary leadership and pragmatic, definitive action.

Working closely with Perry will be former Massachusetts Institute of Technology Provost John Deutch as undersecretary for weapons acquisition. Deutch is a contributor to many proposals for defense consolidation, acquisition reform and technology base development and utilization.

Defense conversion efforts may well include inter-agency cooperation in environmental and climate research, manufacturing technology programs and other priorities such as advanced transportation that will unite, rather than segregate defense and civil programs.

John Rollwagen: The One Outsider on Team Technology

The inherent strength of the Rollwagen appointment is obvious to anyone familiar with his record at Cray Research.

Simply put, Rollwagen has done the things that technology policy "experts" are trying to make possible.

Rollwagen personally pushed successful negotiation of the first industry-wide "model CRADA" for the computer industry, and then went on to sign CRADAs with a number of laboratories, a $70 million deal involving Livermore and Los Alamos National Laboratories.

John Rollwagen's lack of Washington experience may be a plus.

While Washington was planning the High Performance Computing and Communications Initiative, Cray Research was working with the world's top scientists on solving problems, thus demonstrating the rationale for the emphasis.

In trade and export with Japan, Rollwagen was the lead in a 10-year effort to gain access for American supercomputers and was appointed to the Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations by both Presidents Reagan and Bush.

More than 40 percent of Cray business was seriously affected by export controls, resulting in Rollwagen's becoming a reluctant expert on that set of issues. Cray Research was recently listed as one of the most desirable companies in America to work, a tribute to its management.

With optimism, of course, also comes risk and Rollwagen's lack of Washington insider experience is a factor. Friends point out that while Rollwagen may need some mentoring by Brown and others, part of his success—and therefore risk—may depend on his ability to fit in without adapting too much.

Several individuals interviewed for this article questioned, for example, whether Rollwagen and Brown would see eye-to-eye on the matter of Japan, in light of Brown's experience as a lobbyist for foreign interests and Rollwagen's trench warfare with the Japanese over trade inequities.

The fact is that this contrast says little about either's opinions and lots about their perspectives.

Brown, as a Washington policy insider, has principally focused on case-by-case issues in the somewhat theoretical, even surreal environment of the Federal Triangle.

Rollwagen, on the other hand, is the stuff of case studies: there simply is no theory in losing a $10 million procurement due to unfair trade barriers.

Together, and closely nurtured by the White House consensus builders, this relationship could result in forward looking policy and leadership. In any other situation, and with less committed partners, it might never work. But here it just might be magic.

—Brett Berlin

NASA: INTEGRATING SPACE

While key appointees have yet to be named, it is already certain that this agency — to the dismay of manned space exploration advocates — will feel the effects of a unified administration with a definite science and technology policy.

Gore has already asserted that NASA's core effort will be the Mission to Planet Earth, including global observation and analysis programs.

Its highly successful aeronautics research program is expected to continue with substantial support.

Hans Mark, former deputy administrator of NASA and Air Force Secretary, said, "[The NASA aeronautics program] is certainly the best example we have of how a long term, stable relationship" between industry, the civil sector and the defense community can has a "major continued impact on our national competitiveness."

CROSSING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

A new face in the science and technology coalition will be the secretary of labor.

Robert Reich will have an interagency leadership role on perhaps the most important technology policy challenge of all: preparing the country to cope with the implications and opportunities of technology as a driving force in the workplace and in all services.

And a holdover, National Institutes of Health Director Bernadine Healey, has forced different priorities, new structures and close collaboration for competitiveness that could serve as a primer for government change.

And the secretary of education has a mandate for performance improvements that cut across the spectrum of research and workforce issues.

But Energy's cabinet-level leadership on cooperative technology transfer programs, given the lack of research and technology credentials of Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary and her deputy is likely to pass to other departments.

CLEAR PRIORITIES

The die is now cast: technology and competitiveness programs have moved from the thematic agenda to the action list.

New structures and new appointees with track records for teamwork will promote a level of shared vision and cohesiveness that the Bush administration was unable to attain. Establishing unity and direction in science and technology this early in a new administration is no small task. Once considered the most apolitical jobs, key technology positions have become highly politicized as the role of technology and competitiveness emerges on the forefront of the national agenda.

Despite these natural impediments, the word is getting out — shared vision is now officially "in."

There will be some early challenges, such as the remake of the Commerce Department into the focal point of competitiveness and civilian technology programs. "The challenges facing Commerce are almost overwhelming if the department is to be taken seriously by both business and other agencies as the lead agency in the economic resurgence," said Ed Istvan, former associate director of the NIST Institute for Computer Science and currently a senior associate with the Arlington, Va.-based Pymatuning Group.

"For an agency that has always played second fiddle, this transformation will be a huge task stretching the limits of even the consensus-oriented group that President Clinton is putting in place," he said. The only question that remains is how the private sector will respond, taking advantage of the programs and helping to ensure that the programs are properly conceived and implemented.

"Government, however emboldened and unified, is impotent by itself," said George Deskin, chairman of DRG, a Santa Clara, Calif.-based electronics firm and a veteran of federal government service. "But it can be a powerful catalyst, when all parties come to the table."

This is ultimately the real challenge facing the labs, the administration, and the Congress — as well as their private sector partners.

William E. Perry, the expected deputy secretary of defense, has proposed a new approach to commercial technology.

In weapons acquisition, John Deutch will work toward uniting, rather than segregating, defense and civil programs.