

HILLARY CLINTON'S SPEECH AT THE CARNEGIE INSTITUTION of Washington on 4 October, the 50th anniversary of the launch of Sputnik, was the most detailed examination of science policy that any presidential candidate has offered to date. That's not surprising, however, given the extensive network of former advisers to her husband that the Democratic front-runner has tapped.

Their voices could be heard in Clinton's emphasis on innovation to drive economic growth, a bottom line that is as much a creature of the 1990s as grunge music. And the senator from New York linked her call for Americans to better "compete and innovate" in science to a post-Sputnik plea by President Dwight Eisenhower for "heroism, sacrifice, and accomplishment when the chips are down."

But campaign adviser Thomas Kalil, formerly a technology official in the Clinton Administration and now an administrator at the University of California, Berkeley, insists that the candidate's science platform is not stuck in the past. "2008 is not 1992," he says. "There are a new set of challenges."

Those new challenges include reducing the country's dependence on foreign oil, responding to climate change, and reversing what Clinton calls the Bush Administration's "assault on science." To address the first two, Clinton has proposed a \$50 billion research and deployment fund for green energy that she'd pay for by increasing federal taxes and royalties on oil companies. She would also establish a national energy council to oversee federal climate and greentech research and deployment programs. Both steps, she says, would help achieve the goal of an 80% reduction in carbon emissions from 1990 levels by 2050 and use tax credits, regulations, and carbon caps to create "5 million new jobs in clean energy over the next decade." Last month, as a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, she voted for a bill almost as aggressive that passed along party lines, although the panel failed to adopt several amendments she offered (*Science*, 14 December, p. 1708).

To end what she calls President George W. Bush's "open season on open inquiry," the 60-year-old lawyer and former first lady says that her science adviser would report directly to her rather than be "filtered through political advisers." Government advisory committees must not be hamstrung by political considerations, she adds, which she insists has happened repeatedly since Bush took office. In her Carnegie speech, she also promised an executive order that would "ban political appointees from altering or removing scientific conclusions in government publications without any legitimate basis ... and prohibit unwarranted suppression of public statements by government scientists."

DEMOCRAT HILLARY CLINTON

Home State: **New York** Web site: hillaryclinton.com
Current Job: **U.S. Senator** Age: **60**

But science policy expert Roger Pielke Jr. of the University of Colorado, Boulder, says her efforts to stop political meddling are poorly defined and won't work. "What is 'legitimate' and 'unwarranted'?" he asks. "As written, [the proposal] is a political Rorschach test."

Clinton Administration-era official Ellis Mottur helped the campaign prepare her package of proposals, and Kalil and former White House science officials Neal Lane and Henry Kelly, who is now head of the Federation of American Scientists, were among a crew of unpaid advisers who offered input. Mottur says that he expects "the science-technology issues will come more to the fore in the general election."

In the meantime, Clinton has called for another doubling of the \$30-billion-a-year National Institutes of Health budget during the next decade, the preservation of the NASA

team involved in the shuttle program even as the agency shifts to new exploration missions, and the augmentation of NASA's earth science and aeronautics programs. But finding the money won't be any easier than mustering the political will to tax energy companies, Pielke predicts. "Good luck finding room in the R&D budget for all of that," he says.

However, supporting good research isn't just about money, says physicist David Moncton, director of the Nuclear Reactor Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a former administrator at two national laboratories. Just as important as any budget, says Moncton, who is not advising the campaign, are "competent individuals managing [science policy]." And Moncton thinks "that might be more likely to happen with a Hillary Clinton [presidency]."

—ELI KINTISCH



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