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W. Henry Lambright, *Webb of NASA* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 271 pp.; \$35.95 cloth. New Series in NASA History.

The launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union in 1957 opened a new era in the administration of science and technology in the United States. The nation's shock at seeing the first artificial satellite successfully launched by its arch rival prompted the President and Congress to install official science advisers and to create new technology-intensive agencies. These actions were meant to deal with what was perceived as a grave threat to the nation's security and technological leadership.

To provide advice and to head the new efforts, the President and Congress chose respected administrators and scientists and gave them considerable scope in carrying out their responsibilities. Neither the President nor Congress had ever tackled the job of managing national science and technology policy, and both branches seemed to lack the confidence to oversee complex technology programs.

The result was the appointment of a breed of advisers and administrators who championed new initiatives.⁽¹⁾ The careers of two such techno-science administrators (to use the term coined by Dwight Waldo [1973]) are covered in these interesting and valuable books.

The Webb Biography

W. Henry Lambright is a professor of political science and public administration at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. In this biography, he focuses on Webb as administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) from 1961 to 1968, but also treats his subject's work before and after he led the space agency.

Webb is credited with budding NASA from a small, vulnerable agency to the dynamo that landed humans on the Moon. Webb fended off challenges to NASA from the U.S. Air Force and other agencies that wanted the lead role in space policy and key space projects. He worked with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and worked and fought with Defense Secretary McNamara to insure support for NASA.

During Truman's administration, Webb had been Director of the Bureau of the Budget (1946-49) and Under-secretary of State (1949-52). He was very effective at Budget but found the State post frustrating because he clashed with important State officials, even though he had the confidence of Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

Webb was born in North Carolina. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he moved to Washington, where he became a congressional aide. He was active in educational foundations and in affairs related to state and local government, including heading the Municipal Manpower Commission. He was president of American Society for Public Administration (1966-67) and a founder of the National Academy of Public Administration.

He aided the field of public administration through the NASA Sustaining University Program which funded research facilities on campuses during the 1960s and sought to replenish the supply of scientists and engineers (into which NASA had tapped deeply) through fellowships and training. Webb hoped to harness universities to public goals and general problem solving, reasoning that university presidents would take direction from him...

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