Science in the News

The New Administration: A Report on Education; Taming the Rules Committee; Disarmament Activity

The report brought in by Senator Kennedy's task force on education called for an immediate increase in federal aid to education of $2.5 billion for the next fiscal year. Most of the money would go for public schools; special attention would be paid to the poorer states, mostly in the South, where the quality of the schools is low even when a higher percentage of tax money is being spent on schools than in the richer states, and to cities of over 300,000, which not only face special problems but which have been habitually short-changed on their share of state funds by the rural-dominated legislatures that exist in most states. The task force, which was chaired by President Frederick L. Hovde of Purdue, asked for nearly $1.5 billion a year, to be used primarily for classroom construction and raising teachers' salaries. The remaining billion dollars, for higher education, would be used mostly for construction and for an expanded student loan program.

Kennedy was noncommittal as to how much of this program he would ask Congress to enact. Few people think there is any realistic chance of his getting Congress to go along with all of it, although almost everyone agrees that, after 10 years of frustration, a substantial aid-to-education bill will be passed this year. The chances are that Kennedy will ask, at a minimum, for very prompt Congressional consideration of a school construction bill as a measure to alleviate the recession, which another task force warned is deepening.

The economic task force, chaired by Paul Samuelson of MIT, urged Kennedy in effect to push his full line of major spending programs. "Pledged expenditure programs that are desired for their own sake should be pushed hard. If 1961–62 had threatened to be years of over-full employment and excessive inflationary demand, caution might require going a little easy on them. The opposite is in prospect."

The task force recommended an increase over Eisenhower's proposals for the fiscal '62 budget of $3 to $5 billion, which, it said, "would not involve the inflationary risks of an all-out anti-recession blitzkreig." The task force's examples of "pledged programs desirable for their own sake" included school and college construction and more funds for medical research. Such recommendations, and those of other Kennedy task forces, show the sort of thing Kennedy has in mind, since their conclusions could have been predicted by anyone, including Kennedy of course, who was familiar with the views of the people chosen to study the problem. But Kennedy cannot possibly, during this session of Congress, ask for all the things his task forces have been recommending.

Program Undefined

The Kennedy legislative program at this point is in general almost completely undefined. The five-point program outlined a month ago, including unspecified aid to education, covered only items that were very nearly passed, and in one case, passed and vetoed, during the last Congress. It represented the absolute minimum for which Kennedy conceivably could ask. The rest of the program is not expected to be announced until after the inauguration, understandably, since the new Administration not only needs time to decide which of the many things it would like to do can be done during the present session, but also because presentation after or at the inauguration will not only have greater public impact but will give the opposition a little less time to get itself organized. For the present, Kennedy seems to be using the well-publicized, properly spaced reports of his task forces to create a feeling of urgency and activity without publicly committing himself to anything.

The Rules Committee

There were strong indications that a major block to any Kennedy legislative program, the House Rules Committee, which killed last year's school bill, would be effectively throttled before inauguration. Until Congress reconvened there was a good deal of talk that the six-to-six conservative versus moderate-to-liberal ratio of the committee would be broken by adding members to give the pro-Administration forces the majority needed to take action. It was supposed that this would be a more painless solution than the alternative of purging a conservative Democrat, and would be easier to put across than a rules change to deprive the committee of its power to block legislation.

This strategy, almost entirely in the hands of Speaker Rayburn, was changed, and there was no opening day effort either to add to the committee or change the rules. House liberals accepted, with noticeable apprehension, Rayburn's assurance that it would be better to purge Colmer of Mississippi and that Rayburn would see that this was done. His argument was that either the packing move or a rules change might conceivably be beaten by a Republican–conservative Democratic coalition, but that the Republicans would not dare oppose a purge of Colmer since this would mean breaking the long tradition that one party does not interfere with the other party's choice of its representatives on committees. Such a move would lay conservative Republicans open to unpleasant retaliation should the liberals increase their strength in the next election.

The formal justification for Colmer's purge would be that he opposed Kennedy's election, supporting instead that independent slate of electors which gave Mississippi's electoral votes to Senator Harry Byrd. The procedure would be for the Democrats on the Ways and Means Committee, who are responsible for choosing Democratic committee members, to replace Colmer with a more liberal Southern Democrat. Rayburn claimed to have a majority on the Ways and Means Committee to go along with this. It would then be confirmed by a caucus of House Democrats, where the liberals have a clear majority, and finally would be pushed through the full House. It was widely believed that a good many conservative Southerners who felt they had stuck their necks out to support Kennedy ac-

tively were not entirely averse to seeing Colmer humiliated.

Rayburn himself may have been motivated by something other than the tactical reasons he gave for this procedure. Two years ago he muted a liberal attack on the Rules Committee with assurances that he would use his influence with Colmer and Judge Smith, the conservative Democrats on the committee, to see that the committee did not block any legislation supported by a clear majority of the House. It became unmistakably clear during the last session that Rayburn lacked the power to keep this promise. It is a good deal less awkward for a politician to break an election pledge than a pledge made to his fellow politicians, and the old gentleman undoubtedly was planning to take some pleasure in reminding Mr. Colmer in the most forcible possible way that it does not pay to make Sam Rayburn look silly.

By last weekend there was not much doubt that Rayburn held the upper hand, for Judge Smith was distributing statements to the press announcing his readiness to accept "any honorable compromise," and specifically his readiness to agree not to block any of the five items on the announced Kennedy program, all of which the committee blocked or tried to block last session. Smith also hinted that he was willing to go along with a rules change to take away the committee's power to prevent a House-Senate conference to reach agreement on bills passed in differing forms by the two. (This power was used last summer to kill the aid-to-education bill.)

Early this week Smith went to Rayburn to offer his honorable compromise, but the Speaker offered, in return, only a choice between packing or purging the committee, which did not strike Smith as either honorable or a compromise.

Disarmament Appointment

The designation as head of the U.S. Disarmament Administration of John J. McCloy, former High Commissioner for Germany, former president of the World Bank, and lately chairman of the Ford Foundation, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Chase Manhattan Bank, demonstrates the new Administration's serious interest in disarmament more forcefully than Kennedy's repeated calls, during and preceding the presidential campaign, for a more determined effort in this area.

Eisenhower, too, appointed a well-known figure to head the American disarmament effort when he chose Harold Stassen in 1955, but the situation was quite different. Stassen was a man prominent enough in Republican politics to have a claim to a position in the Eisenhower Administration, but no one was particularly upset when Dulles largely ignored what Stassen was trying to do. There were complaints that the Administration was ignoring disarmament, but not that it was ignoring Harold Stassen, although people who worked under Stassen, most of whom are now in the Disarmament Administration, feel that he did quite a good job and that we would probably be better off today if he had been listened to.

McCloy and Stassen

McCloy, though, is in a very different position from Stassen. He is a Republican, and although most of his government service was under Truman, he had no automatic claim to a job. His personal prestige is great enough so that it would be simply stupid politics to appoint him to an important-sounding post and then ignore him. No one has ever accused Kennedy of stupid politics. And the choice of McCloy to head the Disarmament Administration is only one of several Kennedy moves that reflect a determination to do, or at least try to do, something about disarmament, as opposed to merely talking about doing something. He has appointed Paul Nitze, chief of the State Department policy planning board during the last Democratic Administration and a man with a strong interest in the problem of disarmament, to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for international affairs, which include disarmament. Two of his closest advisers of long standing, Walt Rostow and Jerome Weisner, attended the recent Pugwash (scientist-to-scientist) conference in Moscow. Both men are assumed to be in line for important posts in the new Administration if they want them.

None of these developments is in any way surprising. It would be shocking if a man who had talked as much as Kennedy has of the need for a major increase in effort on the disarmament problem did not move quickly to get things going, particularly since one aspect of the problem, the Geneva test-ban talks, will be something the new Administration must deal with as soon as it takes office.

The outlook at the moment for a test-ban agreement is not bad. The two major unresolved questions are the number of inspection stations to be set up within the Soviet Union and the number of inspections to be permitted. The two sides are close enough together on the number of stations to put a compromise within easy reach: the Russians are willing to accept 15; we want something over 20. On the number of inspections there is wider disagreement. We, again, want the right to make something over 20 per year; the Russians, on frankly political rather than scientific grounds, say they will accept only three and then with stricter limitations than we find acceptable. The possibility of compromise depends in large part on the Russian willingness to set aside a little farther their deep distaste for foreigners poking around in their country, and on the United States' willingness to accept a further increase in the already very substantial risk of evasion.

The problem is touchy for both sides, but there are grounds for restrained optimism. From the American point of view this is based on a certain amount of evidence that the Russians are beginning to take an increasingly serious interest in the problems relating to disarmament and the avoidance of war and that they may therefore gradually become more willing to relax their antipathy toward inspection, in turn the United States, encouraged by and to encourage this tendency in the Russians, may be willing to increase its risks by giving a little more on test-ban inspection now to lay a base for broader inspection agreements in the future.

Aside from some action on the test ban, no one expects any dramatic moves by the new Administration in its early months, partly because it will take some time for it to organize its policy; partly because the Administration, if it feels it can work out an acceptable test-ban agreement with the Russians, will probably want to overcome domestic opposition to that agreement before complicating the problem with other moves; and, most important, because the entire area of disarmament, stability, and arms control is so enormously difficult that it is unrealistic to expect, even assuming a genuine interest on both sides, that we and the Russians will be able to work out any major agreements overnight.

Nevertheless, with all the difficulties, in both the political and scientific communities there has been an accelerating increase, since about 1957, in the

amount of effort going into hard-headed, realistic studies of what can be done to diminish the chance of war aside from maximizing the power of the Western bloc as a deterrent. The effort has now been institutionalized at a very high level of the government in the Disarmament Administration, whose chief will hold a rank equivalent to Under Secretary of State.

Most Americans involved in this work feel that the Russians are being a good deal slower than we are in preparing to deal realistically with the problem, and there is a fairly sharp difference of opinion among the Americans who attended the latest Pugwash conference as to how far the Russians have come. The Russian delegates were well informed about the results of studies made by American students of the problem, but were slow to concede the validity of the studies, many of which point up the enormous difficulty of working out satisfactory agreements, even conceding a genuine desire to do so on all sides. The Russian reluctance to accept some of the less palatable American analyses is fairly understandable, considering the number of Americans who are quick to dismiss the difficulties thrown up by these analyses (such as, for example, those discussed in Fred Iklé's article in the current *Foreign Affairs*) as merely the work of people who don't believe in disarmament and who are interested only in trying to throw up roadblocks.

A basic point implicit in such analyses is the lack of any basis for an assumption that almost any disarmament agreement is better than none. Not only abstract analyses of what may happen in the future, but concrete analyses of the actual effects of such earlier disarmament efforts as the naval limitations treaty of the 1920's, show that what wishful thinking recommends as the road to peace, unpleasant realities may eventually demonstrate was a step toward war.

The restrained optimism that can be found among people working in this area today comes not from any expectation that great developments are on the horizon, but from the feeling that the mere fact that the two strongest powers are beginning to think more realistically and to talk more and more frankly about the steps that could lessen the chance of war is itself a step toward lessening the chance of war, and perhaps a more important step than any specific agreements that might result.—H.M.

News Notes

National and International Atomic Energy Groups Sign Cooperation Agreements

An agreement for cooperation between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Inter-American Nuclear Energy Commission became effective on 22 December when it was signed in Washington by Sterling Cole, IAEA director general, and Jesse Perkinson, executive secretary of IANEC. A few days later another international atomic agreement was concluded when the European Atomic Energy Community, the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, and the United States Atomic Energy Commission announced that they had decided to pool their efforts to collect and disseminate information concerning translations of literature in the field of nuclear physics, especially translations from languages unfamiliar to Western readers, such as Russian and Japanese.

IAEA-Latin American Terms

The first document signed was a relationship agreement that had previously received unanimous approval from the IAEA General Conference and from the Council of the Organization of American States. Under its terms, IAEA and IANEC "will act in close cooperation with each other and will consult each other regularly in regard to matters of common interest." Among the types of cooperation envisaged in the agreement are exchange of information and documents; close working relationships between the staffs of the two organizations; arrangements for the cooperative use of personnel, materials, services, equipment and facilities; and reciprocal representation at meetings.

The commission has already rendered valuable assistance to IAEA in its activities in Latin America—activities such as holding training courses and organizing assistance missions. The IAEA, for its part, has previously recognized the connection between the work of the two organizations by inviting IANEC to send observers to the IAEA General Conference.

The agreement with IANEC is the second of its kind to be concluded by IAEA with a regional organization. An agreement with the European Nuclear Energy Agency became effective in November 1960.

The Translation Agreement

Under the Euratom-UKAEA-USAEC agreement, a central information office, Transatom, has been established at Euratom's Brussels headquarters.

It will function in two ways. First, it is publishing a monthly *Transatom Bulletin* (the first issue was December 1960) which will list existing translations recently reported to the Brussels office, as well as new translations planned by international or national institutions and private firms in the European Community, the United States, the United Kingdom, and other areas.

Second, all data relating to translations, including translations made before the establishment of Transatom, are being collected and recorded in a master file in Brussels. Copies of this card file have been offered to appropriate institutions in countries with great interest in the nuclear field.

Efforts are being made to avoid duplication of work when the European Translation Centre, to be established at Delft (Holland), is set up. The scope of that institution is much wider: it will cover all scientific and technical material in the field of exact sciences.

The *Bulletin* is available on a subscription basis from: Transatom, c/o Euratom, 51 rue Belliard, Brussels, Belgium, at $8 a year, air mail $16.

Zoologists Speak Out on Birth Control and on Animal Use Law

Zoologists pioneered in taking a public stand on two major controversial issues when a resolution urging government support of birth control research and training and another opposing a Senate bill that would regulate the use of laboratory animals were passed by the American Society of Zoologists at its annual meeting in New York on 29 December. The birth control resolution says:

"The American Society of Zoologists views the mounting rate of population growth, especially in the world's poorest areas, as a principal factor contributing to global conditions of human misery, famine and under-education, and we urge our Government to adopt policies in keeping with this country's tradition of deep sympathy for human suffering.

"In many countries, officially adopted policies of voluntary fertility control are rendered ineffectual, and virtually in