

Notes

Mental Health in the House Rules Committee

The now well-known House Rules Committee performs two related but distant functions; one, which was the subject of the controversy at the opening of Congress, is that it writes a "rule" specifying the terms of debate for bills reported by other committees. A bill normally cannot be debated until the Rules Committee has reported a rule specifying such things as length of time for the debate and whether amendments will be allowed. This gives the committee the power to delay a bill indefinitely by simply never getting around to writing a rule. The "reform" or "packing" of the committee in January gave the Administration a majority on the committee, and thus assurance that its program would not die there waiting for a rule.

The committee also acts as committee of first jurisdiction on proposals to change the rules of the House or to set up special investigating committees.

Acting in this second role, the Rules Committee this week considered a resolution by Representative Hiestand, of California, a member of the John Birch Society, to set up a special committee to investigate mental health. If such a resolution were approved, Representative Hiestand, as its sponsor, would normally be made chairman of the special committee.

Representative Hiestand said that in the early 1930's Lavrenti Beria, the executed former chief of Soviet secret police, had told a group of American communists that the way to take over America was to push mental health, and use this as a pretext for locking anticommunists up in the insane asylums. Representative Hiestand noted that there is a great campaign in favor of mental health going on now; that, in his view, "commitment processes are very loose;" and that "a man can be picked up on the flimsiest sort of evidence and he'll never get out if they want to keep him in."

The purpose of his investigation, said Hiestand, is to find out "how much of this is controlled by the far-reaching fingers of the Communist conspiracy. . . . We have a lot of evidence."

Judge Smith, who lost most of his power in January but remains chairman of the committee, set the tone of the

committee's reaction, by telling about his college days, a great many years ago, when he had a professor who had a mentally defective son. One day, said the Judge, the professor decided he had to have the boy committed, and took him off to an asylum. But when they got to the asylum, the Judge said, "the boy spoke up first, and, well, that old gentleman had an awful tough time getting out of there."

Soon after, with everyone but Representative Hiestand in high spirits, the committee adjourned.

Announcements

Academy Elects New Officers and Members

During the 98th annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences, held 25 April, in Washington, **J. A. Stratton**, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, was elected to a 4-year term as vice president of the Academy. Also elected, to serve 3-year terms as members of the Council of the Academy, were **George B. Kistiakowsky**, professor of chemistry at Harvard, and **Kenneth B. Raper**, Abbott and James Lawrence professor of bacteriology and botany at the University of Wisconsin.

In addition, 35 new members were elected during the meeting, as follows:

Daniel I. Arnon, professor of plant physiology, University of California.

William O. Baker, vice president in charge of research, Bell Telephone Laboratories.

Seymour Benzer, professor of biophysics, Purdue University.

Harry A. Borthwick, principal plant physiologist, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Robert H. Burris, professor of biochemistry, University of Wisconsin.

Shiing-Shen Chern, professor of mathematics, University of California.

Preston E. Cloud, Jr., chief, paleontology and stratigraphy branch, U.S. Geological Survey.

Julius H. Comroe, Jr., director of Cardiovascular Research Institute and professor of physiology, University of California Medical Center.

Donald J. Cram, professor of chemistry, University of California.

James F. Crow, professor of zoology and genetics, University of Wisconsin.

Lawrence S. Darken, associate direc-

tor, research laboratory, United States Steel Corporation.

Carl Djerassi, professor of chemistry, Stanford University.

William V. E. Doering, professor of chemistry, Yale University.

Renato Dulbecco, professor of biology, California Institute of Technology.

Alfred I. Hallowell, professor of anthropology, University of Pennsylvania.

Bernard L. Horecker, professor of microbiology, New York University College of Medicine.

Rollin D. Hotchkiss, member and professor of cellular physiology, Rockefeller Institute.

Libbie H. Hyman, research associate, American Museum of Natural History.

Mark G. Inghram, professor of physics, University of Chicago.

William N. Lipscomb, Jr., professor of chemistry, Harvard University.

Herman F. Mark, director, Polymer Research Institute, Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn.

Hans Neurath, professor of biochemistry, University of Washington.

George E. Palade, member and professor of cytology, Rockefeller Institute.

Robert V. Pound, professor of physics, Harvard University.

Lorrin A. Riggs, professor of physiological psychology, Brown University.

Richard B. Roberts, Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution of Washington.

Per F. Scholander, professor of physiology, Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Charles D. Shane, astronomer, Lick Observatory.

Donald C. Spencer, professor of mathematics, Princeton University.

Henry M. Stommel, research associate in physical oceanography, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

Leo Szilard, professor of biophysics, University of Chicago.

John W. Tukey, professor of mathematics, Princeton University.

Frederick T. Wall, research professor of physical chemistry, University of Illinois.

Alvin M. Weinberg, director, Oak Ridge National Laboratory; and

John H. Williams, professor of physics, University of Minnesota.

A report on science in Communist China has been released by the National Science Foundation. In *Professional Manpower and Education in Communist China*, Leo A. Orleans,