

## House Leadership: Changes Portend Increased Difficulties for the President's Program

The Administration found little to cheer this week in the probable leadership succession resulting from the death of House Speaker Sam Rayburn. In a sense, it was in the position of a football coach prevented from putting his best players in the backfield.

The question of intervening in the succession presents the President with a "damned-if-you-do-and-damned-if-you-don't" dilemma. He has made it clear that he intends to stay out and thereby avoid the rancor that would inevitably result from an intrusion into the House's prerogatives. There is nothing to indicate that Kennedy has moved from this intention. But there is substantial evidence that he is not happy with the likely changes, while the conservative Democrats who repeatedly helped thwart him in the past session will have a hard time concealing their delight if these changes come about. For one vital piece of the Administration's program—broad federal aid to education—the probable succession changes the future from merely gloomy to black.

### McCormack Favored

The succession will be formally determined when House Democrats caucus early in January, just prior to the opening of the 1962 Congress. But on the basis of tradition, reward for loyal service, and the absence of any broadly supported alternative, Majority Leader John McCormack, of Massachusetts, appears certain to succeed Rayburn. The only suggestion of opposition has come from Albert Rains, of Alabama, who has been sending aloft trial balloons in his own behalf without any noticeable results.

Those urging the President to put his power and prestige into a succession fight have virtually conceded McCormack's elevation and are concentrating on the issue of who is to succeed him as majority leader. Well in the lead at present is Carl Albert, of Oklahoma, currently the majority whip. Challenging him is Richard Bolling, of Missouri, a Rayburn protégé and leader among House liberals. If the power to determine House leadership rested with the White House, there is little doubt that Bolling's elevation to one of the top two spots would be assured.

At issue, in the view of those who

favor the Administration's legislative program, is the question of which leaders are best equipped to steer it along the difficult political terrain of the House. In the past session, McCormack's adamant and influential stand for federal aid to private schools left wounds which are still festering. Although the school bill was undermined through a variety of political motives, McCormack has been credited with some of the more rigorously applied death blows; and as Speaker Pro Tempore during Rayburn's fatal illness, his ability at legislative infighting in behalf of the Administration was seriously put in doubt when he came out on the short end of dealings with Otto Passman, who led the fight to maintain reductions in the foreign aid appropriation.

Albert, for whom most Democrats feel only affection—which cannot be said of McCormack—has operated the whip system in a fashion that leaves doubts as to whether he is temperamentally suited for an aggressive performance as majority leader. The whip is supposedly the trumpeteer who sounds the call for the party to rally to a cause. Under Albert's reign, the call has never been a vigorous one, and in the close voting which marked the first congressional session of the Kennedy Administration, the whip system came to be regarded as suffering from leadership that was far too courteous and undemanding.

### House Conservatism

The likelihood of a McCormack-Albert leadership takes on especial significance when viewed against the political arithmetic of the House. While the Senate, with its 64-36 Democratic majority, almost consistently gave the President what he requested, the House showed an inclination to steer a course that reflected the more conservative orientation of its members. In that chamber, the Democratic majority looks sizable on paper—263 to 174. Of these 263, however, some 110 are southerners, and an analysis by the *Congressional Quarterly* shows that in 33 percent of roll-call votes in the past session, a majority of the southerners lined up with the Republicans in opposition to a majority of the northerners. The "hard core" southerners number close to 50, and no leadership effort, however skillfully applied, is going to swing them to a Kennedy-Democrat line. The remainder, however, have

demonstrated sufficient political mobility to warrant emphasis on missionary efforts from the leadership. Of utmost concern for the Administration is whether the leadership can apply these efforts in competition with the skillful counterefforts of the southern conservative leadership.

The question of just what the speaker and majority leader do in the performance of their duties is an extremely difficult one. Specific duties, such as presiding over the House and scheduling the flow of legislation, are formally spelled out. But of far more importance is their function of simply talking to other members and exuding an aura of leadership in a huge and contentious body of ambitious men dedicated to a variety of goals. That Rayburn did this, and in a superlative manner, is generally agreed. That McCormack will fall far short of Rayburn's performance is extremely likely, and is of considerable concern to the Administration, which hopes to see some progress on "hard" issues, such as medical care for the aged and broad federal aid to education. Even under Rayburn's astute leadership, the conservative sentiments of the House prevailed on these issues. The succession that is most likely to result from his death does not bode well for their success.

### Relations with Kennedy

The rift that developed between Kennedy and McCormack when they were both in Massachusetts politics nourished the belief, for a time, that the President would intervene to keep McCormack from rising to the post of speaker. However, Kennedy, who has no little ability to enlist individuals with a variety of political sentiments in his behalf, has made it clear that, at least as far as the speakership is concerned, he is staying away. Though his relations with McCormack have been poor for a long time, he has no desire to worsen them, regardless of how effective his efforts might be. If he thwarted McCormack's ambitions for the speakership, McCormack would remain in the majority leadership, where, with the exception of his stand on education, he has been a loyal, if not altogether effective, supporter of the Administration. In the course of his 21 years as majority leader or minority whip (the party post he filled when the Republicans controlled the 80th and 83rd congresses) McCormack has forged many bonds of loyalty and affection with in-

fluent members who would not take well to White House influence keeping him from the speakership. Were an effort made to deprive him of both leadership posts, the reaction among those who revere party loyalty would far outweigh any benefit the Administration could derive from the success of a choice of its own.

Most disturbing to the Administration's consistent supporters in the House is the likelihood that the successor to McCormack, who is close to 70, would almost certainly be Albert, who at 53 has a long career ahead of him. Except for an occasional departure on civil rights, Albert has compiled a voting record that compares well with those of most Kennedy Democrats. What is at issue is not political sympathy or personal affection but the question of who is best suited to lead the President's program through difficult and hostile territory.—D.S.G.

### **Science Education: Additional Federal Funds Appear Likely**

The emphasis that the Soviet Union places on science education has caused widespread concern for this country to improve its own efforts. Last week it was announced that a panel of the House Education and Labor Committee would shortly open a series of meetings with scientists and educators across the country. The purpose is to obtain their views on where and how much federal money could be usefully applied to improving university science teaching. The meetings will be held privately, according to a member of the panel, to "create the best possible atmosphere for a frank discussion."

Four of the panel's five members recently returned from a trip to the Soviet Union, where they toured Soviet science teaching facilities. The members of the panel, headed by Rep. John Brademas, of Indiana, have in the past demonstrated a sympathy for expanded aid to higher education. Their present thinking is that the most expeditious course would be an expansion of existing programs under the National Defense Education Act, possibly along with the establishment of additional programs under that act.

Administration supporters on the Committee generally regard broad federal aid to education as beyond attainment in the coming session and are concentrating their efforts on exploiting

the more favorable reception accorded science training, which even foes of federal aid concede to be in the national interest.—D.S.G.

### **Spy in the Sky: The Air Force Would Rather Keep It Quiet**

In sharp contrast to the Soviet Union, the United States has followed a remarkably wide open information policy in its space efforts. At the very least, the U.S. has always announced each launch in advance, and usually has released considerable detail. The more spectacular shots are televised. Last week, the Air Force departed sharply from this policy. For the first time in the U.S. space program, a shot was not announced in advance, and the information released afterwards was uniquely skimpy.

The unannounced launch, from the naval missile facility at Point Arguello, California, was followed by a statement announcing success and adding that "the satellite is carrying a number of classified (secret) test components."

Though no more was said, there were indications that the launching was in connection with the Air Force's satellite reconnaissance program, which gives great promise of succeeding and surpassing the U-2 as a watchful eye over the Soviet Union. Under development in the program are the Samos satellite, which is intended to produce detailed photographs of the earth's terrain, and the Midas, which is designed to detect infrared radiations from missile launches and to produce a rapid warning.

The reconnaissance potential of these satellites has stimulated some of the more vituperous Soviet propaganda of recent months, and as development of the satellites progresses, the publicity-oriented Air Force thinks, in this case, the less said the better.—D.S.G.

### **Educational TV: New York Sale Upheld in Last-Minute Decision**

At a last-minute hearing this week, the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., reversed a 3-week-old decision by one of its three-judge panels, clearing the way for Educational Television for the Metropolitan Area, Inc., to purchase WNTA-TV, channel 13. The court's decision, by a 5-3 vote, came shortly before the

expiration hour of the sales contract between the educational television group and the owners of WNTA. The latter had warned that if the sale was not consummated before the deadline, they would drop plans to sell the station and would carry on commercial broadcasting.

The decision opening the way for the sale did not, however, remove all legal obstacles to ETV's New York operation. It removed the stay issued by the three-judge panel, but still left open the question of whether the Federal Communications Commission had acted properly in authorizing the sale without a public hearing.

Contesting the transaction from the outset has been Governor Robert Meyner, of New Jersey, who bases his opposition on the fact that WNTA is the state's only commercial TV station. WNTA, however, has not built a reputation for service to New Jersey, and its connection with that state is limited to the presence of its studios in Newark. Its transmitter is atop the Empire State Building, and its audience is throughout the metropolitan area.

Meyner, whose opposition to the sale has never slackened throughout the long struggle, will have an opportunity on 10 January for another effort to block the transaction. On that date, the court will hear oral arguments in the case. Should Meyner prevail, educational television will be excluded from the New York area for a long time to come.

Channel 13 is the only Very High Frequency channel up for sale in New York. The rest of the VHF band, which is the only band that most sets can receive, is occupied by stations that are not up for sale. Ample space is available on the Ultra High Frequency band, but few sets are equipped to receive UHF, and broadcasters, commercial as well as educational, are reluctant to broadcast to a nonexistent audience.

Meanwhile, the educational television group is proceeding with plans to go on the air early next year. If the sale is upheld in the forthcoming legal test, the station will join a small but thriving nationwide network of non-commercial educational TV. The resources and prestige available to a New York station will greatly enhance the position of this network and provide encouragement for its expansion.—D.S.G.