

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.