

News and Comment

The Capital's "Funny Season" Is Blooming This Year Ominously Ahead of Usual Schedule

Curious behavior normally associated with Washington's deplorable summer weather has arrived early this year. Students of government regard this as an ominous event, for it raises the question of what can be expected when the dog days move in. Prudence calls for adding extra pages to the record book. For those who find the scene bewildering, there is a bit of comfort in realizing that somewhere in Moscow there must be an analyst of the American political scene who is coming to the conclusion that it would be in the interest of his career to switch to something easy, like the French section.

One of the more bizarre occurrences of the season involves two octogenarian lords of the legislature, Rep. Cannon, of Missouri, and Sen. Hayden, of Arizona, who are chairmen of their houses' appropriations committees. Pending settlement of a dispute between these members, some \$55 billion worth of appropriations bills remain in limbo. Because these bills have not been acted upon, a number of federal agencies are at, or near, the bottom of their bank accounts. The Secret Service, charged with protecting the President and, ironically, the nation's currency, ran out of funds on 17 June. Its 700 or so agents have since been working without pay on a "voluntary" basis, since federal employees must be compensated unless they volunteer their services. Another agency afflicted by the tieup is the Small Business Administration, which ceased making loans on 9 March.

The nature of the dispute between Cannon and Hayden? Initially, it involved the question of whether House members should continue the tradition of traveling to the Senate—a few blocks at the most—for conferences that resolve the differences between the bills passed by each house. This matter was

settled when the two chairmen agreed that their committees would henceforth meet about half way between the two chambers, in a room almost under the capitol dome. However, there still remains to be settled the question of who is to chair the conferences. Traditionally, again, a Senator has served as chairman, but the House members want to divide the chairmanships. The Senators say they will yield on this point if the House will agree to permit the Senate to initiate appropriations bills. The House members consider this demand excessive.

It might be thought that Cannon at age 83 and Hayden at age 84 are reflecting the effects of long and arduous years of service, but it is generally agreed that time has not impaired their intellectual abilities. They are just fighting for principles they hold dear. Underlying their dispute is the fact that the Senate tends to be far more generous than the House in handling money bills. The rights of initiating these bills and chairing the conferences are not crucial to the outcome, but they constitute something of a tactical advantage and are therefore coveted.

Paychecks in Doubt

The federal government is not going to go out of business as a result of this hassle, but the current fiscal year ends Saturday at midnight, and if the money bills are not speeded through the legislative mill, the consequences will be painful for a lot of government workers, who will not receive their paychecks. Payments to government contractors will also be delayed. Otherwise, the Cannon-Hayden dispute will have no effects.

The White House, though heavily outnumbered by Congress, has held up its end in the production of curious behavior. Most notable, perhaps, is the President's vendetta with the New York *Herald Tribune*, which had the temerity to engage in what appeared to be a partisan handling of the news, a prac-

tice which most politicians accept as one of the unpleasanties of their profession. Specifically, the *Tribune* aroused the President's ire through its failure to have a timely, prominent story about the implication of Eisenhower administration officials in questionable stockpiling practices. The White House, which felt that the *Tribune* was belaboring it with the Billy Sol Estes case while playing down possible misdeeds of the past Administration, acknowledged that it had cancelled its subscription. It was explained that the *Tribune* was free to handle the news as it pleased and the White House was free to read what it pleased. This was a concise statement of the legal situation, but it carried the implication that the President is ready to take countermeasures when he feels the press does not share his evaluation of events.

Press Responsibility

Kennedy's sensitivity to what he considers to be mishandling by the press has probably been fostered by the press itself, which, with few exceptions, has permitted itself to be bedazzled by his expertise in public relations. The record is no source of joy to responsible elements of the press. Last week, for example, the *Washington Post*, in a note of chastisement that did not exclude its own performance, stated editorially: "Looking back on the Pacific test series, we wish that all of us covering the news had sought more energetically for access to all the pictorial and written coverage that could have been permitted without endangering military security so that the American people might have kept before them more conspicuously the great public issues involved in atmospheric thermonuclear testing."

The President's current difficulties with the business community have also led to a number of strange developments. The source of these difficulties would seem to rest in the different concepts that the two sides bring to their relationship: business insists upon marriage, while the Administration thinks an occasional display of affection will suffice.

The President, while professing puzzlement over business hostility, acknowledged at a press conference that in the heat of the steel price dispute he did, indeed, utter "S.O.B.'s" and "businessmen" in the same breath. "But that is past," Kennedy explained in reply to his questioner. "Now we are working together, I hope."

New Editor Appointed

The AAAS Board of Directors have announced the appointment of Philip H. Abelson as editor of *Science*. He will succeed Graham DuShane, whose resignation to accept appointment as professor and chairman of the department of biology and dean of graduate sciences at Vanderbilt University was announced in April.

Dr. Abelson, a member of the National Academy of Sciences, received the doctorate in nuclear phys-

ics from the University of California in 1939 and in that year joined the staff of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. From 1941 to 1946 he was with the Naval Research Laboratory, returning to Carnegie at the end of World War II as chairman of the biophysics section in the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism. In 1953 he became director of the Geophysical Laboratory, a post that he will retain while serving as editor of *Science*.

His explanation, understandably, did not convince businessmen that he really likes them. They point out that if Eisenhower, for example, had acknowledged a similar remark about labor leaders or college professors, he could not dispel its effects simply by admitting the indiscretion and hoping it would be forgotten.

For its part the Administration can show that it has gone a long way toward earning the support of business by promoting measures that are distinctly in the interest of business, including tax revision and private ownership of the communications satellite program. But the forthright acknowledgment of the "S.O.B." remark, while it may some day rank with George Washington's cherry tree confession, has contributed enormously to the business animosity which is said to puzzle the President.

The reasoned discussion of economic problems proposed by Kennedy in his Yale commencement address may develop some day, but the immediate effect of his speech was to touch off a raucous debate of a thoroughly traditional variety. It was in that address that the President said: "The central domestic problems of our time . . . relate not to basic clashes of philosophy or ideology, but to ways and means of reaching common goals. . . ." He added: "Too often we hold fast to the clichés of our forebears. We enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought," and he then went on to suggest that the economic problems facing the country demand "technical answers—not political answers." In drawing to his conclusion, he expressed the hope "the debate of recent weeks [on the government's role in the econ-

omy], though up to now somewhat barren, may represent the start of a serious dialog of the kind which has led in Europe to such fruitful collaboration among all the elements of an economic society and to a decade of unrivaled economic progress."

The immediate response of some businessmen was to suggest that President Kennedy was equating his views with reason and theirs with mythology. Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, the apostle of traditional fiscal policies who heads the Senate Finance Committee, declared that Kennedy was talking nonsense when he said that budgetary deficits are not necessarily evil. And former President Eisenhower, addressing a Republican fund-raising dinner in Washington, said only times of emergency could justify a deficit; Eisenhower made it clear that he did not think these were such times. He also tossed in the view that defense expenditures were excessive, but acknowledged that this heretical notion was a "personal belief" that would find "very little company in either party."

In addition to firing up those who felt they were labeled economic mythologists, Kennedy's speech elicited curiosity because of its downgrading of politics as the principal device for settling economic issues. The distinction between "technical" and "political" answers is easily blurred, for both words are often used without very much effort at precision, but the endorsement of a "technical" approach by John F. Kennedy, journeyman politician, inevitably stirred the suspicions of people who felt they might be on the short end of the Administration's "technical" solutions.

According to columnist Roscoe

Drummond, the President "is inclined to have second thoughts about his Yale speech." Drummond explains that Kennedy's doubts apply not to substance, but to "timing and terminology," which, if correct, would suggest that Kennedy realizes what he should have known all along: summer is not the time to initiate serious business in Washington.—D. S. GREENBERG

Civil Defense: Fallout Shelter Plan Cut Out by House Committee

The major feature of the Administration's civil defense program appears to be bound for a quiet burial on Capitol Hill.

Earlier this month the House Independent Offices Appropriations Subcommittee deleted a request to provide \$460 million for the proposed community fallout shelter program. The money was denied on a technicality—that the House Armed Services Committee had not yet authorized the program for which the money was sought. But the refusal to provide the money reflected widespread congressional indifference and hostility toward the Administration's shelter program. The Armed Services hearings have not been scheduled, nor has the chairman, Carl Vinson, Democrat of Georgia, made an announcement on when he proposes to take up the civil defense bill. The delay has an immediate impact, because the fiscal year for which the money was requested starts Sunday. If anything is salvaged from the money bill it is not likely to be available to the Administration until the fiscal year is several months old.

The action by the appropriations subcommittee does not withhold all funds from civil defense. Its effect extends only to the matching-fund program under which the government would pay 60 percent of the cost of constructing community shelters. The subcommittee made only minor cuts in a request for an additional \$230 million which would be used for civil defense planning, maintenance, and general operations, including the adaptation of existing structures for shelters. This latter fund came under earlier civil defense legislation and did not require a new authorization.

Administration Reaction

The surgery performed on the civil defense program has not produced any