Congress: Senator Anderson Brings Activist Record, Some Definite Views, To Space Committee Helm

The new chairman of the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, Senator Clinton P. Anderson of New Mexico, brings to the post a measure of experience which few of his colleagues can rival in that turbulent sector of public affairs where science and politics mingle.

Anderson has been a member of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy since 1951 and has twice held the JCAE chairmanship, which alternates every 2 years between senior members of the House and Senate.

He qualifies also as a charter member of the group of Senators who helped shape the national space program, for he served on the special Senate Committee on Astronautics and Space Exploration which in 1958 helped devise plans for a civilian space agency, and he was then named to the permanent Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee when it was established in the same year.

Earned Influence

Though seniority pure and simple brings rank and influence in Congress, Anderson has won a place of prominence for himself in the Senate as an activist who has fought effectively in the front ranks in many of the major political battles of the post-Truman period. The Democratic senior senator from New Mexico generally votes with the Senate liberals and in the past year has shared their travails. He acted as sponsor and chief advocate of the administration-backed legislation to provide medical care for the aged, which was narrowly defeated on the floor last session, and he was one of the leaders of the liberals' doomed attempt last month to change Senate rules in order to take the wind out of the filibuster.

Within Congress, however, Anderson has been best known for his activities as a member and sometime chairman of the atomic energy committee. Anderson's disagreements with Lewis L. Strauss when Strauss was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission led to clashes of policy and personality that were certainly among the most notable in Washington during the 1950's.

Over the years, Anderson has been influential in those areas where scientific and technical considerations influence policy decisions. He has been regarded as a strong proponent of federal action to develop nuclear power reactors, and as an advocate of research on nuclear propulsion for space vehicles. He has also interested himself in problems of science information and in technical aspects of detection of nuclear testing.

As a member of the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee since 1949, when he entered the Senate, Anderson has been closely concerned with such problems in applied science as weather modification and water desalination. He served as chairman of the committee during the 2 years of the 87th Congress and in that period gave new impetus to water resources research.

New Kind of Chairmanship

Anderson is expected to apply his JCAE experience in leading the space committee and dealing with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, an agency which, in size and tendency to go its own policy-way, resembles the AEC. In style, Anderson's chairmanship will probably differ markedly from that of his predecessor, the late Senator Robert Kerr of Oklahoma.

By the time of his death on 1 January, Kerr had consolidated a power outside the regular leadership structure of the Senate which won him recognition in the press as "king of the Senate." Kerr was a self-made multimillionaire with great natural ability and energy, and he was a master of Senate geopolitics. He was ranking majority member of the finance committee, and thus in a strategic position to help or hinder the administration on tax and tariff issues, and he served in the same penultimate post on the Public Works Committee, where he was able to incur debts of gratitude by assisting colleagues win the public works projects which would help them at home.

As space committee chairman, Kerr was regarded as solicitous over private industry's role in the space program, but he seems to have left no deep personal mark on space policy. In general he accepted the administration's program, and last year, when pointed questions were raised for the first time about the dimensions and effects of the space program, Senator Kerr proved a peerless helmsman in steering the authorization bill on an easy passage through the Senate.

Anderson was a friend of Kerr's, and the two frequently worked as close allies, particularly when pursuing common regional interests. Anderson also serves on the Finance Committee, and he is now fourth ranking Democrat. The Senator from New Mexico, however, is not seen as successor to the Oklahoman as an independent force in the Senate, with a decisive influence on the total legislative program. At the same time, Anderson, whose activities have a narrower focus, may well give the Senate greater influence on space policy.

Anderson comes to the space committee in a year when the budget request for NASA is $5.7 billion, an increase of 58 percent over the current year, and when misgivings are being expressed in and out of Congress over the money and manpower going into the space effort.

Chances of concerted congressional opposition, however, seem remote. Ever since President Kennedy, in the first spring of his administration, proposed putting a man on the moon in this decade and Congress resoundingly ratified the timetable by passing a supplementary space appropriation, Congress has accepted getting to the moon first as a national goal with cold war justifications. This consensus shows no real signs of disintegrating.

Anderson says, "I intend to support the program and assume that there will be beneficial results."

As an aside, he expresses another sentiment not uncommon in Congress when he adds, "If we started all over again, we might find better ways to spend the $20 billion."

From Interior to Space

Anderson's reasons for giving up the interior committee chairmanship and moving to the top of the space committee reflect the intricate calculus that governs committee politics in Congress.

Two years ago the chairmanships of both the interior and the space committees were open. Anderson was senior democrat on Interior but ranked behind senators Russell and Magnuson on the space committee. Both Magnuson and Russell, however, already held chairmanships of major committees and preferred not to relinquish them, as the rules required, to take over chairmanship of the space committee.

Anderson chose the Interior chairmanship, thus leaving the way open for Kerr, the next-ranked Democrat, to

assume the chairmanship of the space committee.

Unfinished business in behalf of his state was a compelling factor in his choice of Interior, says Anderson. Specifically, he wanted to remain where he could do most to pass two bills: a $135 million irrigation project to help the Navajos and an $85 million first stage for the San Juan-Chima project, which will divert water of the Colorado River from the western to the eastern slope of the Rockies and into New Mexico.

Both proposals were enacted into law last spring, and since these two projects represented the last two major natural water supplies available to New Mexico, Anderson was, in a sense, free to look to new horizons.

Anderson answers direct questions with a directness uncommon in United States senators, and he says one factor in his decision to assume chairmanship of the space committee was the pressure applied on him by the newspapers in his state, with the argument that the space budget was nearing $6 billion and was going higher and it was the duty of the senator from New Mexico to see to it that his state was not neglected when the money was spent.

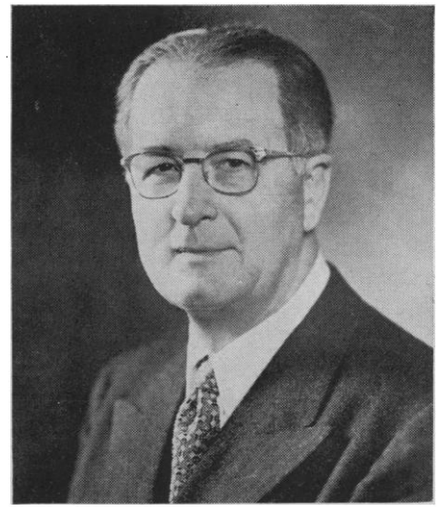
Regional Interests

The western states, with their relatively small populations, arid climates, and stretches of public lands, have historically looked to the federal government for development aid, and western senators may be judged at the polls according to what they bring home in the way of federal projects and payrolls.

Regional interests are personified in the makeup of many congressional committees. Farm-state senators congregate on the agriculture committee, and the Armed Services committee is a powerful magnet for senators from the South, where military installations are concentrated. Perhaps the clearest example is the interior committee, all of whose members hail from west of the Mississippi River, save for freshman Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, whose state borders the east bank of the Mississippi.

New Mexico has fared well, federally. Senator Anderson has been able to point out in speeches that in federal spending per capita in the states, only one state, Virginia, stands higher than New Mexico.

The federal budget in New Mexico



Senator Clinton P. Anderson

is about $1 billion a year, and about half—some $473,200 last year—is spent by the AEC. The first test atomic explosion occurred in New Mexico, and the Los Alamos laboratory and Almagordo testing grounds made the state a sort of nursery of the nuclear age.

New Mexico also has Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands Missile Range, and when NASA decided last year to test hardware for the moon mission at White Sands, New Mexicans eager to take a greater part in the space project were heartened. Although NASA spent only about $4 million in New Mexico last year, the trend has been steadily upward in the 1960's, and Anderson's accession to the space chairmanship should not depress that trend.

Anderson has never spared himself in working for the interests of New Mexico, but unlike some of his colleagues, he has had the energy and interest to till broader fields as well.

As a Congressman during World War II, as Secretary of Agriculture under Truman from 1945 to 1948, and as a senator ever since, Anderson has taken the traditional Western liberal political position that the federal government can do quite a lot of things for the public better than the public can do them for itself.

Facts and Legislation

His influence on policies that have scientific and technical aspects seems to be attributable to two main characteristics. (i) He is a formidable seeker of facts. One JCAE staff member who has observed Anderson in action over a long period says that Anderson questioning a witness at a hearing is "a pleasure to watch. He has an incisive mind and he is relentless." (ii) Anderson is effective in getting his ideas translated into legislation or agency policy in areas in which he is especially interested.

For example, Anderson feels strongly that patents on inventions financed by the government should revert to the government. He is regarded as having been instrumental in having AEC patent policy written so that patents on AEC-financed research would be licensed by the government without fee.

Says Anderson, "If the government spends $20 million to develop something, you shouldn't be able to capitalize on that investment and make the American public pay for it."

Agency patent policies vary, but NASA recently has been asking for a patent policy closer to that of the Department of Defense, which generally waives to contractors patent rights to developments under DOD research contracts.

NASA claims that this more liberal patent policy gives the Defense Department a decided competitive edge in attracting bidders for R&D work.

Last week Senator Russell B. Long, who sees eye-to-eye with Anderson on patent policy, opened hearings in his monopoly subcommittee of the Senate Small Business Committee on the question of patent rights on federally financed developments.

Anderson, whose new committee devotes itself exclusively to NASA's affairs, is watching with interest and says the space committee "may get into patent hearings."

Scientific Information Policy

Another long-standing interest Anderson is likely to pursue as space committee chairman is that of scientific information policy. The AEC is viewed in Congress as the most secrecy-minded of agencies, and Anderson has been critical of what he regards as the AEC tendency to "overclassify." He takes the view that research scientists working on similar problems in different countries will make roughly similar progress, and that retarding the flow of information will hinder American scientists more than it will help security.

On the other hand, Anderson shared Admiral Hyman Rickover's outrage at Navy clearance a couple of years ago

of plans for a plastic scale model of a nuclear submarine which gave model enthusiasts and Soviet intelligence a detailed idea of the design and dimensions of one of the nation's prime engineering secrets. Anderson, Senator Henry Jackson, and others have operated over a period of years as an informal senatorial task force to insure that Admiral Rickover be kept in the Navy and on the job as chief of the Bureau of Nuclear Propulsion.

Senator Anderson's interest in such matters as weather modification, with its obvious relevance for New Mexico, has not flagged—last week he led a group of western senators in introducing a bill (S. 1020) to direct the Secretary of the Interior to set up five projects to "increase usable precipitation." Since NASA operates weather satellite systems, Anderson could find new scope for his interest.

Anderson's performance in committee administration during the 2 years he has been chairman of the interior committee may well have significance for the space committee. Anderson felt that the interior committee was overstaffed when he assumed chairmanship in 1960. There were 21 on the staff when he took over and 11 when he left.

Anderson is accustomed to the JCAE, with its technically trained staff members to handle technical questions, and he says he will "try to find the most talented people possible" for his new committee.

The space committee was generally regarded on Capitol Hill as being staffed in the traditional manner, mainly with retainers of the chairman, which in this case meant Lyndon Johnson, the first space committee chairman, and Robert Kerr, the second.

There have been some departures.

On the broader congressional field, Anderson is likely to continue to march in the vanguard of attempts to reform the Senate rules, especially those that arm the filibuster.

Anderson says "the Senate has no ability to control debate or end it. The threat of the filibuster affects legislation. You have to alter the law so it meets the approval of a Senate bloc."

Anderson says he would like to get home to New Mexico more often to see his children and grandchildren, and he feels that the Senate rules needlessly prolong the sessions of Congress. "It's a waste of time," says Anderson, "and hate waste."—JOHN WALSH

Behavioral Sciences: Meeting Reflects Increased Interest in Issues of Public Policy

Though the physical scientists after World War II rapidly became the most active and best known public symbols of the new involvement of science in politics, other scientists too are bending their disciplines and their individual talents to the shape demanded by the nuclear age.

In part because the physical scientists had both a 2½-year lead time and a peculiarly intense burden of guilt imposed on them by their role in the Manhattan Project, their commitment to peace activities has been more direct and less equivocal than that of the behavioral scientists. Much of the growing commitment of the behavioral scientists (whose fields are newer, anyway) has focused on "peace research" within their own disciplines, and because their public pronouncements are therefore more closely related to their professional work than are those of the physicist, the behavioral scientists, even when vocal, have been somewhat less conspicuous. At the same time, the intimate connection between their work and their politics has raised its own problems and has left behavioral scientists vulnerable to attack for "biased research," whereas the physicist is generally immune.

Despite the problems, though, behavioral scientists are today much concerned with defining a role for themselves in maintaining peace, and they have begun to organize to perform one. The national associations for anthropology, orthopsychiatry, psychology, and sociology, together with more general organizations such as the AAAS and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, all now have activities in this field. The American Orthopsychiatric Association last week devoted a full day of its annual meeting to discussing the role of behavioral sciences in human survival, and listened both to researchers and to politicians telling them how to make their influence felt in higher places.

In mobilizing their national scholarly organizations, the behavioral sciences have taken a turn which the physical sciences did not. The physical and chemical societies have remained strictly aloof from politics, freeing themselves from the complicating tax problems that arise from lobbying activities and leaving their interested members to organize themselves extramurally into political action groups. This they have done most successfully in the Federation of American Scientists, and it is in part their success and their tendency to exclusiveness that has forced the behavioral scientists into other channels. FAS has lately been inviting membership from the behavioral and social sciences, but the bulk of its members are still physical scientists. Other groups which have faded and bloomed more recently—Scientists on Survival and the new Scientist's Institute of Public Information (Science, 22 Feb.)—have been organized jointly by scientists from several disciplines. But for the most part, communication between disciplines has been difficult, the efforts have been separate ones and the behavioral scientists have been relatively less effective.

One reason for this is that there are far fewer demands for behavioral scientists to serve in government, particularly in the high-level and critical areas of national security. This leaves them babes in the political woods and gives their pronouncements less authority. Behavioral scientists did serve in the government in large numbers during World War II, and their numbers in government are growing again, especially in new organizations such as the Peace Corps, but their influence does not extend to the higher levels of the government's scientific establishment.

Then, too, the behavioral scientists' knowledge seems only peripherally related to the central questions of nuclear testing, or of new weapons systems. Although their knowledge of human behavior may in fact be critical, they have found no way to infuse it into the crucial decisions of the government. In other words, though war may be made "in the minds of men," as the UNESCO charter maintains, the behavioral scientists have not been able to tell the politicians how it is made there, or what we can do to unmake it.

The political birth of the behavioral sciences thus faces many complications: they are seeking to contribute not only by separate political action but in their role as researchers, and they are seeking increasingly to contribute to the actual processes of government, as the physical scientists do, as well as to the political debate. The hazards they face in these efforts will be both professional and personal.—ELINOR LANGER