Research: As the Stakes Go Up, Idea of a Man in Washington Considered by More Universities

Since World War II the airlines have carried a heavy traffic of professors and university administrators in and out of Washington. They come to consult and advise and to attend the tribal meetings for which the capital city is a favored site. And because Washington has become the chief arena for decisions on scientific policy and the primary source of money for scientific research, university scientists have been the most conspicuous commuters. Now, after two decades, however, there are strong signs that a significant number of universities are deciding that commuting is not enough.

This is not to say that colleges and universities are rushing to open branch offices in Washington—although, in fact, a few offices have been established and others are likely to follow. But many institutions are looking for more permanent means of getting information in Washington and of making their views and needs known to federal agencies and Congress.

The typical university envoy is still the professor who flies in to consult or to sit on a research project selection panel and who may bring a copy of his own or a colleague's research proposal in his briefcase, along with an extra shirt.

But universities and colleges increasingly are turning to the staffs of their national associations, to "liaison" specialists, and to Washington lawyers—often alumni—for advice and help with the wide variety of problems that may develop in an institution's relations with the federal government. As these relations grow more extensive and more complex, it is not surprising that the institutions may wish to have their own pathfinders.

The universities with offices in Washington, in fact, are those with major involvements in federal research programs. The University of California, Cornell University, and the University of Pittsburgh have opened offices in the capital since the first of the year. The University of California stood at the top of a 1962 list of institutions in order of dollar expenditures for federal research programs, Cornell was 10th, and Pitt 22nd.

A more typical form of Washington representation among universities with major federal research programs seems to be a reliance on staff members who visit the capital often, even on a regular schedule, and thereby acquire a useful familiarity with the topography of official Washington. Observers here mention Harvard and Wisconsin as universities which make use of such shuttle systems.

Other colleges and universities without men in Washington, permanent or transient, have in many cases turned to Washington lawyers for counsel and succor on specific problems. A snarl in arrangements for a loan for a dormitory under the college housing act is the kind of problem a college remote from Washington might ask a local lawyer to help disentangle.

While colleges and universities, increasingly, are making their views known on legislative proposals which affect them, pushing for particular grants and contracts for themselves and actively seeking to keep themselves better informed about new federal rules and new research opportunities, there is undoubtedly a reticence inside most universities about embarking on large-scale Washington operations, since such operations involve what is generally construed as lobbying, and lobbying, for most institutions of higher education, is a pejorative term.

A Range of Intensity

Lobbying is the chief form of self-expression for organized special interests. The object of Washington lobbyists is to influence legislation or the administration of laws already on the books. Their target may be Congress or the executive branch, and their tactics vary greatly. When the stakes are high, as in the case of tax or tariff legislation, the pressures are intense and there is little question that the wheeling and dealing can descend to the sordid or worse. The current Senate investigation of the activities of the former secretary to the Senate majority, Bobby Baker, may or may not prove to be a classic study of inside lobbying.

Lobbying, like the political party, is not mentioned in the Constitution, but it has become an integral part of American politics at every level. It is hardly exaggerating to say that special interest groups have become a fourth branch of government. Economic groups—business, labor, farmers—lobby. Groups as diverse as physicians, postal employees, and veterans can deploy potent national lobbying forces.

Laws and agency regulations governing lobbying activities are in general not very rigorous. The Federal Lobbying Act, passed in 1946, is the best-known law on the subject. It defines lobbying as an attempt to influence legislation, and it requires that the individual lobbyist and his employer be registered with the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate and file detailed quarterly reports listing receipts and expenditures and specifying legislation they support or oppose.

A basic ambiguity is built into this registration and disclosure law with respect to who must register. The law appears to apply only to those whose primary activity is lobbying, and in practice it is difficult to distinguish between primary and secondary activities.

In fact, most lobbying in Washington is not only legal but decorous. Just as international intelligence operations have become less a business of spies than of clerks and analysts, lobbying is chiefly a matter of public relations and the furnishing of specialized information and expert services.

It seems highly improbable that universities and colleges by expanding their Washington operations would run afoul of the law through bribery or influence-mongering. Nor does there seem any real likelihood that such operations would jeopardize the tax-exempt status which a nonprofit organization may lose if it devotes a significant part of its efforts to political activity.

But a major deterrent to the broadening of Washington beachheads seems to have been deep-seated doubts within universities and colleges about the seemliness of their engaging in pressure politics or employing Washington "reps" in the way that space and defense contractors and the coal and textile industries, for example, do. Unworldliness is a traditional university attribute, and there has been a real reluctance to step out of character.

Many traditions, however, have been upset by the heavy flow of federal funds into university research and graduate education in the last two decades. An estimated $1.2 billion in government funds for research and development is currently funneled into university labs and university-managed research centers annually, roughly half of it for basic research on university campuses.

Formidable sums of money are available, but many agencies and programs are involved, procedures are not uncomplicated and competition is heavy. Many institutions feel that they have not shared in the surge of university science

according either to their abilities or to their needs, and they are looking for ways to participate more fully.

Nonprofit research institutes, such as the Rand Corporation and Battelle Memorial Institute, have perhaps anticipated the universities by setting up Washington outposts for information and representation. And other nonprofits, separate from universities but intimate with them both in terms of location and of personnel, such as the Stanford Research Institute and the I.I.T. Research Institute (the former Armour Research Institute) off campus at the Illinois Institute of Technology, also have Washington offices.

The University of California, the leading recipient of federal science funds, both carries out research and development for the government on its several campuses and manages federal laboratories. California has a Washington office and has provided one of the clearest and most straightforward statements available on what such an office is expected to do. In a September issue of the university *Bulletin*, the central functions of the office were described as follows:

"1. To serve the California Congressional Delegation by providing a point of local contact for information about the University and through which the University's position on national legislation and other matters may be communicated.

"2. To provide a point of coordination through which the University may participate more effectively in the efforts of national organizations representing all elements of higher education.

"3. To service and expedite the process of negotiation, acceptance and administration of University-Federal contracts and grants with Federal agencies for research, training and construction.

"4. To act as a source of information concerning new programs and changes to existing programs undertaken by the Federal Government which are of interest to the University.

"5. To provide a place at which University faculty and administration may, on a limited and emergency basis, secure secretarial assistance, including dictation, typing and duplication. Assistance on appointment setting and accommodations will also be provided. Small conference (accommodating up to 6 people) facilities can be made available upon request."

Many universities which share California's interest in legislation and its desire for information and expertise have turned, in recent years, to higher education's national associations headquartered in Washington, like the American Council on Education, the Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, the Association of American Colleges, and the American Association of Junior Colleges.

The ACE, which is perhaps the paramount group because it has the biggest and most heterogeneous membership and is regarded as a grand council of college and university presidents, reacted to these new pressures in a way that is fairly typical of other associations.

Until quite recently there was a strong feeling inside the council that the organization should remain aloof from debates over federal aid legislation and should take only general policy stands on issues affecting higher education. In the 1950's, however, as a result of a change in the views of a dominant majority of council members, the organization has taken a much more activist line in university-federal relations.

Not only does the council now take formal positions supporting or opposing education legislation and send representatives to Capitol Hill to testify vigorously in education hearings, but it has greatly expanded its legislative relations and information activities. The council now is a rallying point for joint legislative action by its members and a source of information on developments in Congress and the agencies which affect the university community. Other associations have undergone the same sea change.

As the associations moved into the arena of education politics they found potential allies both among associations representing other branches of education, like the National Education Association and the American Vocational Association, and among representatives of industries which have their own special interests in education legislation, such as the manufacturers of scientific apparatus or audio-visual aids. How and how much to cooperate with these other groups is one of the unresolved side issues for the higher education associations.

The associations, by nature, are restricted essentially to actions in behalf of their members in general and are sharply limited as to what they can do for the individual institution with a specific problem. This bears hardest on the smaller, poorer, institutions which are unsophisticated in the ways of researchmanship in Washington. What the institution which is a beginner or has only a small federal program needs most, said one association staff member, is a "broker" to act as a knowledgeable middleman between it and the agencies. In recognition of this gap, the ACE and other associations have recently sponsored meetings which have been essentially do-it-yourself schools for institutions interested in branching into federal research.

Perhaps the chief advantage of the big, rich universities in federal research is that they have Washington representatives of the most effective kind in the faculty members who sit on science agency policy committees and project selection panels. They know each other and they know the science agency bureaucrats, and there is no question that a kind of freemasonry prevails among scientists in the major research centers. Inside observers say that, while panelists strain for objectivity in judging research projects, applications from prestige institutions enjoy a subliminal advantage.

Relatively few scientists from small or obscure colleges and universities are invited to fill panel positions and thereby enter the charmed circle. Some agencies have made efforts to broaden representation on their panels and to make information more widely assimilable through bulletins and regional meetings. But the machinery of federal research still seems to operate, as many have observed, in a way that makes the rich, inevitably, get richer.

In the sphere of legislative relations the big institutions, particularly the public ones, cultivate close relations with their state delegations in Congress. Last month, for example, Indiana University president Elvis Stahr and Purdue president Frederick Hovde were hosts at a luncheon for the Indiana congressional delegation to discuss the general subject of their institutions' relations with the federal government and the specific matter of the efforts of the 15-institution Midwestern Universities Research Association (MURA) to get approval and financing for a $150 million, 12.5 Bev proton accelerator near Madison, Wisconsin (*Science*, 18 October).

The MURA incident is perhaps the best example, to date, of a university-congressional axis organized to influence federal decisions on science in behalf of a regional proposal.

College presidents in the past few

years have discovered that it does no harm to ask the aid of their legislators, whether the matter is a vote in behalf of a bill to aid higher education or an application for a federally financed summer institute. Congressional intercession in matters of research or education is generally in the form of a politely phrased letter expressing interest. If the writer happens, for example, to be on one of the committees responsible for the agency's fate, the letter may have a discernible effect.

Alliances between legislators and colleges and universities in their bailiwicks are likely to grow stronger, and the MURA affair is probably a harbinger. These alliances are sure to be based on direct working relationships between the congressman or senator and the president of the university or college, because a major incentive for the legislator in such an alliance is the political advantage which can be derived from public association with the university in his constituency. And the president is the chief symbol of his institution's prestige.

To put it baldly, the president or a distinguished researcher is a university's best lobbyist, but the size and complexity of the job for the institutions heavily engaged in federal research pushes them toward stationing auxiliaries in Washington.

Many universities have appointed directors of research on their campuses to handle the complications of bookkeeping and administration of federal research grants and contracts, and the Washington office seems to be a kind of logical extension of this apparatus.

For the university which has some federal research funds but wants more —the "upward mobile" institution, as one association staff member put it—a Washington branch may look like a competitive necessity.

For the small institution, looking for a broker, the possibilities are becoming clearer. Consortiums of institutions sharing a Washington staff are being discussed. Private enterprise in the form of numbers of knowledgeable lawyers and at least one consulting firm run by two former newspapermen now offer expertise in problems afflicting educational institutions. One nonprofit research institute in Washington is also considering setting up a consulting service.

Washington representation for colleges and universities in the future, it appears, is going to be a lot less an amateur's game.—JOHN WALSH

Mental Health: Slash in Funds for Staffing Raises Problems; House Begins Medicare Hearings

The official word on the new mental health legislation which became law on Hallowe'en is, in the words of the President and several Public Health Service officials, that "it signals a new era in the approach to this country's mental health problems."

In a theoretical sense, this is true enough. Over the next 3 years the federal government will contribute up to $150 million for construction of community-based public mental health centers that will link mental patients far more closely with their normal community environments than the traditional centralized state institutions have done. The centers, according to Robert Felix, head of the National Institute of Mental Health, will be "designed to provide preventive services, early diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness, both on an inpatient and outpatient basis, and to serve as a base for aftercare of discharged hospital patients."

The trouble is, however, that Congress failed to appropriate the money the President had intended for staffing the centers, thus raising the spectre of attractive new centers, theoretically sound, but inadequately or incompetently attended. Appropriating money for buildings, then refusing money to staff them, is a minor tradition in Congress—particularly in the House, which has always been reluctant to pay nonfederal employees with federal funds. Sometimes, for variety, Congress neglects to appropriate money even for staffing federal buildings with federal employees—a problem currently afflicting four laboratories the Department of Agriculture has built to use for insect and insect-control research.

In the case of the mental health program, the omission of salaries for staff workers, a provision opposed by the AMA, may be serious. States and communities have very limited budgets for health programs, and officials who were initially elated are now openly concerned lest the new centers simply fail to attract the first-rate people

New Science Head for Disarmament Agency

Herbert Scoville, Jr., a former deputy director for research at the Central Intelligence Agency, has been named head of the Bureau of Science and Technology in the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The nomination, made by President Kennedy, must be approved by the Senate, but Scoville is already serving the agency in a full-time consultative capacity.

In his new post at ACDA, Scoville succeeds Franklin A. Long, who headed the science bureau from February 1962 until his return this fall to Cornell University, where he is chairman of the chemistry department. The principal job of the science bureau is to conduct and sponsor research on the scientific and technical aspects of arms control and disarmament, but in practice the bureau has branched out into the study of political and social factors as well. Long was also head of ACDA's research council, an interbureau committee which determines the agency's overall research pursuits, and it is assumed that Scoville will take over that function too.

Scoville, 48, received a Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Rochester in 1942, following undergraduate work at Yale and graduate studies at Cambridge University, England. From 1948 to 1955 he was technical director of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project, responsible for planning and directing nuclear weapons tests for the Department of Defense, and from 1955 to 1963 he was with the CIA, where he handled disarmament affairs, first as assistant director for scientific intelligence, later as deputy director for research. Scoville has been on the nuclear and disarmament panels of the Air Force Science Advisory Board for about 5 years, and he was a U.S. delegate to the 1958 Geneva Conference on detecting violations of agreements to suspend nuclear testing. Since 1957 he has served as a consultant to the President's Science Advisory Committee on matters including disarmament.—E.L.