Congress: Productive Year Is Seen Despite Vietnam

The 89th Congress reconvened last week amid signs that, while the coming session hardly can be as productive as last year's, more will be accomplished than one might have expected in view of the war in Vietnam.

It appears that, generally, established programs will not suffer cutbacks and some may enjoy gains. In his State of the Union address, President Johnson gave an optimistic report on the nation's fiscal health and sought to create a hospitable climate for further steps toward the Great Society.

Congress will be taking some initiatives of its own, both legislatively and in the exercise of its role as overseer of the executive branch. For example, the House Science and Astronautics Committee's subcommittee on science, research, and development, which is chaired by Representative Emilio Q. Daddario of Connecticut, will propose legislation (*Science*, 14 January 1966) to encourage the National Science Foundation to assume a leading, activist role in the field of science policy.

A number of congressional inquiries are planned, into such matters as whether or not the U.S. Office of Education is bearing up well under its growing burden of administrative duties and how federal laboratories can best be deployed for new assignments once their original missions have been completed.

One or more congressional committees which long have had an important influence on science and technology will be under new leadership. Research and development—an increasingly popular field for congressional inquiry—will have an ambitious new overseer: a Senate Government Operations Subcommittee headed by Senator Fred R. Harris, a 35-year-old Oklahoman who is running for reelection.

President Johnson's new plans for the Great Society will become clearer when the fiscal 1966 budget is presented to Congress next week. However, already it seems clear that the war on poverty will be pressed harder. A recommendation for an expanded effort to combat environmental pollution also seems assured. The President will ask for the establishment of a cabinet-level Department of Transportation. And he will seek some new departures in foreign aid, with new programs in health, education, and population control.

In attacking pollution, Johnson will have a willing ally in Senator Edmund S. Muskie of Maine, chairman of the Senate Public Works Committee's special subcommittee on air and water pollution. In a report to be issued within a few weeks, the Muskie subcommittee will define a need for a $20-billion program of water pollution control, to be undertaken by industry and by government at all levels and completed by 1972. The federal share of the cost would be $6 billion, with perhaps an appropriation of $500 million the first year—more than three times the $150 million a year now authorized for treatment works.

In a recent speech, a Commerce Department official also cited a need for a $20-billion program. The President, in his State of the Union address, mentioned no figures but said a cooperative effort to end pollution in several river basins is necessary. In any event, Senator Muskie is thinking big, and, even though the current authorizations do not expire until 1967, he may sponsor new water and air pollution bills this year.

Major substantive changes in the air pollution program appear unlikely, although modest increases in grant-in-aid funds for states and localities may be sought. As for water pollution, in addition to a vastly expanded grant-in-aid program, the Muskie subcommittee is thinking of establishing a demonstration program in which a municipality would operate a plant for industrial effluents, either with industry participation or on its own.

Congress will review such presidential proposals as those for the building and testing of a supersonic transport aircraft and for a highway safety act. The latter would not involve the establishment of safety standards for automobile manufacturers, such as some students of the problem have advocated, but apparently would be concerned largely with research into the causes of accidents and the relation of the structural design of vehicles to injuries.

Senator Abraham A. Ribicoff of Connecticut announced last week that his Senate Government Operations subcommittee will resume, on 1 February, the automobile safety hearings begun last summer. One of the witnesses will be Ralph Nader, a Hartford lawyer who wrote *Unsafe at Any Speed*, a book which severely criticized the automobile industry and traffic safety organizations for not doing more to incorporate better safety features into cars (*Science*, 26 November 1965). Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin is sponsoring a bill for development of a car with features which he believes would reduce fatalities dramatically.

In education, Congress will be asked to renew several major programs whose authorizations will expire this year. Education legislation which requires extension includes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; the Library Services and Construction Act of 1964; the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963; the school construction act for federally "impacted" areas (Public Law 815); the part of the Higher Education Act of 1965 which provides for strengthening developing institutions; and those provisions of antipoverty legislation which pertain to education programs such as "Headstart" and adult basic education.

Representative Olin E. Teague of Texas, chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, has introduced legislation prepared by the administration for a "G.I. Bill of Rights" program. Servicemen who have served in Vietnam or in "crisis areas," such as the Dominican Republic, would get full benefits—including 36 months of college assistance. The program would cost about $150 million a year once it is in full operation. Teague favors a program more liberal than this, but perhaps a bit more modest than the $400-million-a-year program approved last year by the Senate with little opposition.

Education proposals by others in Congress, such as the one by Representative Sam Gibbons of Florida for

the training and support of early childhood development specialists, also will be considered. Representative Edith Green of Oregon, chairman of the Subcommittee on Higher Education, plans to make a thorough inquiry into the Office of Education, which is having to adjust to enormous new program responsibilities. To judge from Mrs. Green's attitudes in the past, the inquiry is likely to be searching and critical.

The details of President Johnson's proposal for a program of international education are still awaited. The President has indicated that the program would seek to increase student and teacher exchanges; increase the free flow of books, art, and "works of science"; assist the education effort of developing nations; and help American schools and universities increase their knowledge of the world.

This program, together with the programs of international health and population control also mentioned in the President's State of the Union message, would give important new responsibilities to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In touching on the health program, Johnson described it as an effort "to bring modern skills and knowledge to the uncared-for," and, within a decade, to wipe out smallpox and malaria in most of the world and control yellow fever.

Members of Congress are becoming more aware of the difficulty of assuring sufficient focus and program coordination for oceanography—a field in which the Navy, the Commerce and Interior departments, and other agencies all have an interest. The House and Senate last year each passed a bill dealing with this problem, and the question now is which, if either, of the two measures will prevail.

The House bill would have the President name a temporary commission to advise him in developing a national oceanographic program and an effective plan of government organization for executing it. The Senate bill would establish a Cabinet-level council, chaired by the Vice President, to advise the President and help him fix agency responsibilities. It would, in addition, authorize the President to appoint a temporary study commission.

Proponents of the House bill would prefer the Senate measure if it could be enacted without risk of a presidential veto. The White House has opposed the Senate bill, saying, in effect, that the machinery for planning a well-

Scientists Protest Viet Crop Destruction

The use of crop-destroying chemicals by American forces in Vietnam was condemned this week in a statement by 29 scientists and physicians from Harvard, M.I.T., and several nearby institutions.

The statement made reference to a New York *Times* dispatch which reported that, as part of a "large program of 'food denial' to the Vietcong," U.S. aircraft have been spraying rice crops with a "commercial weedkiller, identical with a popular brand that many Americans spray on their lawns." The *Times* report added that "it is not poisonous, and officials say that any food that survives its deadening touch will not be toxic or unpalatable."

The areas involved, according to the report, cover only a "small fraction—50,000 to 75,000 acres—of the more than eight million acres of cultivated land in South Vietnam." The program was reported "aimed only at relatively small areas of major military importance where the guerrillas grow their own food or where the population is willingly committed to their cause." "Experience has shown," the *Times* stated, "that when the chemical is applied during the growing season, before rice and other food plants are ripe, it will destroy 60 to 90 percent of the crop."

John Edsall, Harvard professor of biochemistry, served as spokesman for the protesting group. The statement follows.

"We emphatically condemn the use of chemical agents for the destruction of crops, by United States forces in Vietnam as recently reported in the New York *Times* of Tuesday, 21 December 1965. Even if it can be shown that the chemicals are not toxic to man, such tactics are barbarous because they are indiscriminate; they represent an attack on the entire population of the region where the crops are destroyed, combatants and non-combatants alike. In the crisis of World War II, in which the direct threat to our country was far greater than any arising in Vietnam today, our government firmly resisted any proposals to employ chemical or biological warfare against our enemies. The fact that we are now resorting to such methods shows a shocking deterioration of our moral standards. These attacks are also abhorrent to the general standards of civilized mankind, and their use will earn us hatred throughout Asia and elsewhere.

"Such attacks serve moreover as a precedent for the use of similar but even more dangerous chemical agents against our allies and ourselves. Chemical warfare is cheap; small countries can practice it effectively against us and will probably do so if we lead the way. In the long run the use of such weapons by the United States is thus a threat, not an asset, to our national security.

"We urge the President to proclaim publicly that the use of such chemical weapons by our armed forces is forbidden, and to oppose their use by the South Vietnamese or any of our allies."

The signers of the statement were as follows.

Harvard: John Edsall, Bernard Davis, Keith R. Porter, George Gaylord Simpson, Matthew S. Meselson, George Wald, Stephen Kuffler, Mahlon B. Hoagland, Eugene P. Kennedy, David H. Hubel, Warren Gold, Sanford Gifford, Peter Reich, Robert Goldwyn, Jack Clark, and Bernard Lown.

Massachusetts General Hospital: Victor W. Sidel, Stanley Cobb, and Herbert M. Kalckar.

M.I.T.: Alexander Rich, Patrick D. Wall, and Charles D. Coryell.

Brandeis: Nathan O. Kapland and William P. Jencks.

Amherst: Henry T. Yost.

Dartmouth: Peter H. von Hippel.

Tufts: Charles E. Magraw.

Also, Albert Szent-Györgyi, director of the Institute for Muscle Research, Woods Hole, and Hudson Hoagland, director of the Worcester Institute of Experimental Biology.

coordinated oceanographic program already exists in the Federal Council for Science and Technology, the Council's Inter-Agency Committee on Oceanography, and the President's Science Advisory Committee. An effort to persuade the White House to accede to the creation of the proposed oceanographic council may be made before the House-Senate conferees try to reach agreement.

The House Armed Services Committee is unlikely to repeat its performance of last year by seeking a wholesale reduction in the military research and development budget. In 1965 the committee at first cut R&D by more than a half billion dollars, but it later thought better of its action and finally settled on a reduction of about $114 million. The increasing severity of the Vietnam conflict undoubtedly helped produce the more generous mood.

The Armed Services Committee's R&D subcommittee, chaired by Representative Melvin Price of Illinois, had had no time to review the R&D budget when the initial cut was made. This year, however, the Price subcommittee will have several weeks in which to hear Pentagon witnesses and consider R&D needs.

The House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee expressed the belief last year that too much money was being requested for basic research. But Representative Price, in an interview last week with *Science*, indicated that, in general, the place to look for savings was not in the area of basic research. "I think it's always dangerous to cut basic research," he said. "That's where you get new ideas and develop knowledge that leads to useful weapons."

Price admires John S. Foster, Jr., who was sworn in as director of Defense Research and Engineering on 1 October, and expresses confidence in the work of Foster's predecessors—although some decisions, such as the cancellation of the nuclear airplane project a few years ago, he has not agreed with.

Price is also chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy's R&D subcommittee. Although he doesn't know what the new AEC budget will contain, Price foresees no large cut in the commission's overall R&D program. "By saving on things that haven't been going so well, such as the gas-cooled reactor [a program now canceled], we hope that we can get by without any critical programs' suffering," he said.

Senator Fred R. Harris

The session may not produce much new legislation affecting science and technology, but a number of congressional committees will examine existing programs. For example, the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Operations, headed by Representative L. H. Fountain of North Carolina, expects to soon complete its investigation of the Food and Drug Administration's performance in regulating new drugs. Some "wrap-up" hearings are to be held, and a report on drug safety will be issued. The Fountain subcommittee also will report on the performance of the Public Health Service and PHS's National Institutes of Health in administering grants. The report may be issued in February or March.

The new Government Operations Subcommittee on research and technical programs, chaired by Representative Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin, is expected to hold hearings on the problem of redeploying federal research facilities for new tasks once their original missions have been completed. The special Senate Subcommittee on Scientific Manpower Utilization, headed by Wisconsin's Senator Nelson, will conduct hearings on the use of systems analysis techniques in manpower conversion, such as reorienting military aerospace scientists and engineers to civilian technology.

Next Monday and Tuesday, 25 and 26 January, the Senate Aeronautical and Space Science Committee will hold hearings on the communication satellites programs conducted by NASA and the Defense Department and on the relationship of these programs to the work done by other agencies and the Communications Satellite Corporation. Sometime in April, hearings will be held on research and development in aeronautics, and goals in this field for the next 10 to 15 years will be reviewed. From 25 to 27 January the House Committee on Science and Astronautics will meet with its science and technology panel of distinguished scientists and engineers. Lord Snow will be a guest panelist. The moderator will be Don K. Price, dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Public Administration and president-elect of AAAS.

The foregoing is by no means an exhaustive survey of congressional plans for legislation and inquiries of interest to science and technology. Post-Apollo space planning, the prevention of power blackouts, the level and distribution of federal support for research, weather modification, and other matters will engage the attention of congressional committees. Moreover, entirely new questions and endeavors always develop as a session progresses. It will be unusual if the year offers no surprises.

The House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, whose jurisdiction extends to hospitals and public health, air pollution, power transmission and communications, the Weather Bureau, and other matters, will be under a new chairman. Representative Oren Harris of Arkansas is resigning to accept a federal judgeship. He will be succeeded by Representative Harley O. Staggers, a 58-year-old West Virginian who on most issues is expected to support the Johnson administration.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Independent Offices—which handles appropriations measures for NASA, the National Science Foundation, and a number of other agencies—has long been dominated by its chairman, Representative Albert Thomas of Texas. Thomas, whose shrewdness and legislative abilities are legendary, underwent major surgery for cancer last summer, and hospital treatment continued into the fall. He has returned to Washington, but the major burden of directing the committee is likely to fall on the second-ranking Democrat, Representative Joe L. Evins of Tennessee. Politically, Evins is said to fall somewhere between a down-the-line supporter of the Great Society and an old-

school Southern conservative. He and Thomas have worked together harmoniously.

In August Senator John L. McClellan of Arkansas, chairman of the Government Operations Committee, appointed a special subcommittee on government research, to be headed by Fred Harris, a freshman senator from Oklahoma elected in 1964 to finish out the term of the late Robert Kerr. Other senators on the subcommittee are McClellan, Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut, Joseph M. Montoya of New Mexico—all Democrats—and Karl E. Mundt of South Dakota and Milward L. Simpson of Wyoming, Republicans.

Harris, a lawyer, served 8 years in the Oklahoma State Senate before coming to Washington. He seems to have impressed his new colleagues as a serious, workmanlike legislator. Harris is given an excellent chance of reelection this fall, and he can be expected to use his subcommittee chairmanship as a means of making his chances better still.

His staff, headed by a young Oklahoman who has a Ph.D. in rhetoric and mass communications from the University of Illinois, is canvassing the work of other Senate and House committees on research, in an effort to define a fruitful area for exploration. Senator Harris has said he will seek a "total overview" of the government's involvement in research. The subcommittee does not propose any "sensational exposé," but it will look for ways to eliminate duplications and overlapping in research projects handled by federal agencies, according to Harris.

Harris has complained of a lack of "overall national policy" on research and on the proper use of research manpower resources. He has joined in the clamor for wider distribution of research contracts, and has complained of the difficulty in getting a comprehensive view of contracting activities.

"There is no centralized oversight or review of research contracts let by the various departments and agencies," he has said. "Research results are not readily accessible to government agencies or the general public, because there is no centralized filing, indexing, or reporting of them." Harris is only the newest entrant in a field in which other investigators, such as Senator Nelson and Representative Reuss, will be busy as the congressional session gets under way.—LUTHER J. CARTER

Announcements

Duke University has been selected as the site of a regional **nuclear structure laboratory**, which it will operate in conjunction with the Consolidated University of North Carolina. The AEC will provide $2.5 million toward the cost of the facility, and Duke, with support from other agencies, will provide the building. Construction is to begin next year and is expected to take about 2 years. Plans call for the laboratory to adjoin the Duke physics building. The regional facility will absorb Duke's own nuclear structure laboratory, which the school has operated since 1951 with AEC support.

The laboratory will house a tandem Van de Graaf accelerator with a 15-Mev cyclotron injector. Henry W. Newson, physics professor at Duke, will be director of the laboratory.

Purdue University next fall will combine the efforts of its biological sciences and chemistry departments to offer a doctoral program in **biochemistry**. Plans are being implemented by a 13-member interdepartmental committee headed by chemistry professor Joseph F. Foster. Besides providing courses to remedy any deficiencies in undergraduate preparation, the program will offer research opportunities in either of the participating departments. Applicants should have a bachelors degree in biology, chemistry, or biochemistry. Fellowships and assistantships are available, with stipends for academic-year appointments starting at $2400, and $400 for summer appointments. Additional information is available from J. F. Foster, Department of Chemistry, Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana 47907.

Fred H. Harrington, president of the University of Wisconsin, has been elected chairman of the board of trustees for **Argonne Universities Association**. The association was incorporated recently by 26 midwestern universities to participate in a three-way agreement for the management of Argonne National Laboratory; the other participants are the University of Chicago and the AEC. The new management plan calls for AUA to formulate, approve, and review the laboratory's policies and programs. The University of Chicago will continue to operate the lab, and AEC will continue to furnish financial support.

Meeting Notes

More than 30 midwestern sections of the American Chemical Society will sponsor their first Great Lakes regional meeting in Chicago 16–17 June. Papers are invited on analytical, organic, inorganic, and physical **chemistry** and biochemistry; but not on applied spectroscopy and gas chromatography. At least one author of each paper must be a member of ACS. Deadline for receipt of titles and abstracts: *15 March*. (Great Lakes Regional Meeting, ACS, 86 East Randolph Street, Chicago, Illinois 60601)

A research program in **fertilization mechanisms and gamete physiology** will be offered by the Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, Massachusetts, 13 June to 25 August. Emphasis will be on current research problems in marine plants and animals. Applications will be accepted from pre- and postdoctoral students in the biological, biochemical, biomedical, and agricultural sciences. Stipends will be provided, and prorated at standard NIH fellowship rates. Deadline: *15 February*. (Charles B. Metz, Institute of Molecular Evolution, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida 33134)

An international symposium on **mathematical and computational methods in the social sciences** is scheduled for 4–8 July, under the auspices of the International Computation Center, Rome, and the Centre de Calcul, Paris. Papers are being accepted on the application of computation methods in sociology, psychology, anthropology, and archeology. Summaries: up to two pages, French or English; deadline: *1 March*. (Bernard Jaulin, Centre de Calcul de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 14 rue Monsieur le Prince, Paris 5, France)

A conference on **exobiology** is scheduled for 4–6 April at NASA's Ames Research Center, Moffett Field, California. The University of California Extension, Berkeley, is sponsor. The program is designed to provide the chemical, physical, and biological background for study of the origin of life and to cover such topics as the scientific basis for belief in the existence of extraterrestrial life, major problems in the search for it, and the instrumentation for life-detection missions. The