

Education: Nixon Nominates a Schoolman as Commissioner

Only a decade ago, the Office of Education (OE) was one of the more placid backwaters in the federal bureaucracy. All that was changed when the outpouring of education legislation during the Johnson years gave OE a \$4-billion-a-year budget and—even more out of character—cast OE in the role of an active agent of social change.

President Nixon's choice for the top education post in OE's parent agency, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), and the man to put the imprint of his administration on the federal education enterprise is James E. Allen, Jr., New York State's commissioner of education. If confirmed by the Senate, Allen will be Commissioner of Education, the traditional title of the head of OE, and will also hold the rank of Assistant Secretary for Education in HEW, which potentially gives him added departmental leverage.

Although the Senate still has not acted, reactions to Allen's appointment indicate he has passed the initial political tests. He is one of the country's foremost figures in public education administration. Acclaim for the appointment has been unanimous among the major education interest groups, although Allen is getting only two cheers from some who fear he may be less sensitive to the problems of higher education than to those of the schools.

His nomination has drawn no serious challenge from outside the education fraternity either. During the presidential campaign, some critics predicted that a Nixon administration would follow a laissez-faire line in enforcing antidiscrimination measures. Allen's record and statements on the subject and recent actions by HEW secretary Robert Finch seem to have quieted the critics, at least for the present. Furthermore, much of the pressure for civil rights enforcement is off Allen, since responsibility for enforcement was shifted out of OE by the last administration. At the same time, in his first press conference after his appointment was announced, Allen expressed sentiments that would be considered suitable by those who oppose any exten-

sion of "federal control" of education when he noted, "I think we must all keep clearly in mind that the states control education. The laws of education are generally made by the states, and unless we get their cooperation, they can defeat any ambitious plan we develop."

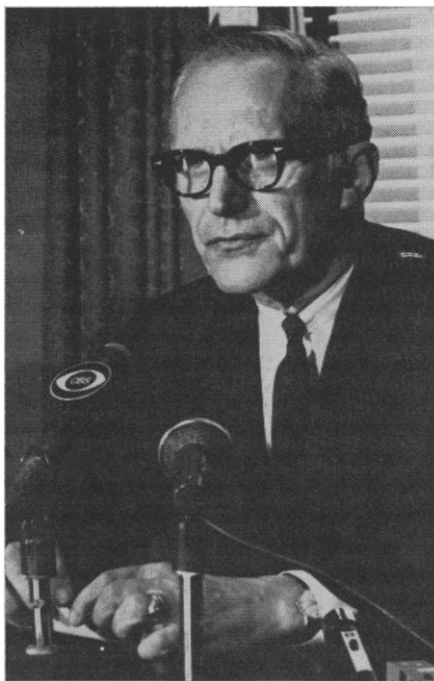
On the other hand, at the same press conference Allen said that his "No. 1 priority" would be to develop a massive federal program to aid urban education, "because if left to the states and localities, the problems of urban education will not be dealt with adequately." Allen sees the need for further major education legislation, but, whatever his priorities, he may find first call on his talents and energies imposed by the need for consolidation caused by the legislative exploits of the Kennedy-Johnson era.

When President Kennedy's first Commissioner of Education, Sterling McMurrin, took office in 1961, the Office of Education had changed little fundamentally since it was established at the end of the Civil War to gather statistics and offer technical assistance

to state and local school authorities. The sputnik-inspired National Defense Education Act of 1958 had provided OE its first opportunity to disburse major funds to improve the teaching of such "strategic" subjects as sciences, mathematics, and modern languages in schools and colleges and universities. For the first time, the OE staff was leavened with people from higher-education backgrounds who were interested primarily in the problems of higher education. OE, however, continued to be dominated by professional educators concerned with elementary and secondary education.

The OE bureaucracy was organized into groups of "specialists," each with strong links to its counterparts in the professional education establishment, whose members man the professional education associations, state departments of education, teacher training institutions, and local school administrations. OE never fit the image of power-hungry bureaucrats drawn in the 1950's by some opponents of federal aid to education, and in fact seemed rather to exhibit a congenital lack of dynamism.

President Kennedy's appointment, late in 1962, of Francis Keppel marked a turning point for education legislation and for OE. The Kennedy administration's efforts to promote federal aid programs for schools and higher education had been balked by suspicions of federal control and the eruption of the church-state issue. Keppel's mandate from Kennedy was to build and maintain a consensus among the diverse education interest groups in favor of federal aid programs. Keppel succeeded admirably in his task. The education coalition stuck together through the peak period of education lawmaking which began with the Higher Education Act of 1963, passed shortly after President Kennedy's assassination, and continued during the more than 2 years of President Johnson's legislative heyday. Keppel worked well with Johnson's prize HEW secretary appointee, John W. Gardner, and the great monument of the period is probably the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. Passed in the atmosphere created by Johnson's defeat of Barry Goldwater and the big push in the War on Poverty, ESEA appealed, outwardly at least, to congressional preference for aid for specific purposes rather than "general" aid. The massive Title I of ESEA provided aid for the education of under-



James E. Allen, Jr.

privileged children, but deprivation, as defined in the act, is so widespread that, in practice, funds were distributed much as if they were the block grants associated with general aid. Other titles of the ESEA-financed innovative programs which reflected the influence of a new group of educational policy makers based in the universities and backed by the foundations. These initiatives were received with mixed feelings within the education establishment.

Passage of ESEA was followed by a drastic reorganization of OE. Top administrative jobs outside civil service boundaries were taken away from old retainers, new people were brought in, and the OE hierarchy took on a different look. As the office expanded to take on heavy new responsibilities, there were plenty of administrative hitches. The reorganization resulted in improvements in some operations of OE; in other cases it backfired. Some of the traditional services of the office were adversely affected. Statistics in higher education, for example, are said, by those who use them, to be even less current and relevant now than they were before the reorganization.

After the battles on major education legislation were won, pressure was applied by state and local education authorities, and by their congressional allies, to change the laws and administrative regulations so as to increase state and local control. What put Keppel in an exposed spot in the firing line, however, was not an education law but the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This act provided for a cutoff of federal funds to programs where racial discrimination was found to persist. Southerners resented Keppel's having moved against old-style segregation in southern schools and criticized him for not having done the same thing in northern cities, where de facto segregation existed. In a famous test, Keppel came into direct conflict with Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago. Keppel ordered the withholding of federal funds for Chicago schools, but then released the funds after strong pressure was exerted on him by the White House.

Keppel resigned in 1965, and his combative successor, Harold Howe II, estimated that at one point he was spending three-quarters of his time on civil rights questions. The shift of responsibility for enforcement of Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act to another section of HEW took considerable heat off OE.

The surge of educational innovation

Foundations under Fire in Congress

Tax-exempt foundations have come under fire before on Capitol Hill, but hearings which opened last week before the House Ways and Means Committee could lead to the first extensive changes for a generation in the terms under which foundations operate. What is different this year is that foundations are being scrutinized by the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee in the context of proposals for major tax reforms and in an atmosphere created by an incipient "taxpayers' rebellion."

Foundations for years have had a dedicated congressional critic in Representative Wright Patman (D-Texas), chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee. Patman, last of the great plains states populists, argues that foundations increase the burden on ordinary taxpayers by diverting funds from the Treasury for uses which often yield little public benefit. Patman and his staff have charted the growth of foundation wealth and produced evidence of dubious practices by some foundations (*Science*, 7 Aug. 1964, p. 559), but these were principally small foundations with ties to family corporations. Patman's powers, however, have been limited because he pursued the foundations as chairman of the Select Committee on Small Business, which has only investigative authority. The Ways and Means Committee, on the other hand, has direct legislative power over the foundations' tax-exempt status.

Bundy Is Star Witness

What is also new this year is that not only are the business activities of foundations and the sharp practices of a few of them in question, but major foundations are also being criticized for political and social action. The dramatic high point of last week's hearings unquestionably came with the testimony of McGeorge Bundy, former White House aide and now president of the Ford Foundation, the richest foundation and one whose charter opens broad horizons of activity. Considerable press attention has been devoted to Ford grants in support of the decentralization program of the New York City schools, which figured centrally in the protracted teacher strike last fall, to a big grant to finance a pre-election voter registration drive in Cleveland, and, most recently, to grants totaling \$131,000 to eight former staff aides of Senator Robert F. Kennedy for travel and study.

Bundy proved a formidable, unapologetic witness, and although some sharp questions were directed at him by Representative Martha W. Griffiths (D-Mich.) and the committee's ranking Republican, John W. Byrnes (R-Wis.), Bundy was handled much more gently than foundation executives who appeared the previous days.

Ways and Means scrutiny of foundations is only the first phase of an examination of areas of possible tax reform, so attention will shift away from tax-exempt organizations. In any tax-reform program presented to Congress, however, Treasury recommendations are likely to be followed on tightening taxation of business earnings of foundations and rules on the interchange of stock between foundations and donors and similar matters. The era of what amounted to self-regulation for the foundations is probably ending. There has even been talk of creation of a federal regulatory agency to oversee tax-exempt organizations, although this activity is likelier to be left to the care of the Internal Revenue Service. Congress cannot be said to be hostile to the foundations at this point, and radical proposals to tax or restrict foundations severely do not appear to have much steam behind them. There is little doubt, however, that members of Congress are much more sensitive these days both to the way foundations operate and to the purposes for which they award their grants. This new awareness will probably produce demands, for example, for fuller disclosure by foundations of details on finances, grants, and officers and staff. And Congress won't be allowed to forget about the foundations as long as Patman is around.—J.W.

NEWS IN BRIEF

• NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD

REPORT: In its first annual report to Congress, the National Science Board recommends reform of the present federal research grant system. The Board criticized the present system because much graduate education and, in many cases, faculty salaries are financed through federal research grants. They urge changes in the present system which would separate the money spent for costs of research from that spent for salaries and other institutional expenses. The report, entitled "Toward a Public Policy for Graduate Education in the Sciences," puts emphasis on the need for broader forms of institutional sustaining grants. The National Science Board is the 25-member governing body of the National Science Foundation. The report required by an NSF reorganization law enacted last spring is accompanied by a background volume, "Graduate Education: Parameters for Public Policy." The reports may be obtained for \$1.25 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

• KENNEDY ORDERS HIS OWN

ABM REVIEW: Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), a sharp critic of Pentagon Antiballistic Missile (ABM) deployment plans, has asked nongovernment experts to undertake a political and technical review of the Sentinel System. M.I.T. Provost Jerome B. Wiesner and Harvard law professor Abram Chayes will conduct the review. They are expected to complete their report before 15 March, when the Pentagon plans to announce the result of the military's ABM review.

• **EMBO ACCORD SIGNED:** The European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), which until now has been an organization of distinguished individual biologists, now seems assured of support from Western European governments. An intergovernmental agreement was signed this month near Geneva by Austria, Denmark, Germany, France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. This agreement, when ratified, will provide for contributions from member countries for training, teaching, and research scholarships; also exchange programs, courses, and study meetings in biology.

and research generated during the Keppel-Gardner partnership had begun to be diverted or diluted even before Gardner resigned, in the declining months of Johnson's presidency. The Teacher Corps, designed to attract young people into service in ghetto or rural schools, for example, has been halfheartedly financed, despite some stout partisans in Congress. Perhaps more significant is the fate of two programs included in the ESEA. Gardner himself was an advocate of the creation of "supplementary educational centers" which would offer to students, in both public and private schools, programs and services not available in existing school systems in their areas, and which would draw on the resources of universities and educational and cultural institutions such as museums and libraries. Not all the returns are in, but critics claim that the centers are generally far less adventurous in their programs than the original planners hoped they would be. The same ESEA provided for the creation of regional centers for research in education. Research in education has produced results which have been rather less than brilliant despite substantial sums devoted to it since World War II (*Science*, 10 January 1969), and the regional labs were conceived as providing funds and a focus for research for a new breed of researchers. So far, neither organizationally nor in the quality of the research they are producing are the new labs living up to original hopes; like the supplementary education centers, they seem to have been captured by the regulars of the state departments of education and teacher-training institutions.

Facing Allen as he takes office, therefore, is the question of deciding how to foster innovation in a vast school complex which seems resistant to real change, in part because many of its units are so beset with basic problems of financing and staffing that resources required for successful innovation are simply not available.

It has been said that Allen's main job is to decide which New Frontier-Great Society programs to strengthen and which to kill or allow to wither. The job will be difficult, since almost all of the many new special-purpose programs have strong constituencies. But, even more to the point, it will be difficult to determine which programs are working and which are not, since many of the new programs are operating on a relative pittance; some

have received only planning funds. The Johnson educational revolution has been underfinanced. Appropriations for OE's educational programs amount to about half the sums authorized. For fiscal 1969, appropriations for OE amounted to about \$3.6 billion, while some \$6.8 billion was authorized. The largest single program, Title 1 of ESEA, designed to benefit disadvantaged children, got an authorization of \$2.2 billion but an appropriation of only \$1.1 billion. An even starker contrast is to be found in the funding of grants and loans for construction in the Higher Education Act. Nearly \$936 million was authorized, but only about \$216 million can be spent.

Older programs tend to be better financed. NDEA programs, for instance, do reasonably well. The Vietnam war squeeze doubtless helps to explain why Congress has shown itself willing to create new education programs almost casually, but then has shrunk from financing them adequately. Allen thus inherits a problem which only the early settlement of the Vietnam conflict is likely to solve.

Another limitation on Allen's power as chief wrangler in education is the fact that other federal agencies operate a multiplicity of education programs. The Atomic Energy Commission, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and National Science Foundation finance various programs, most of which affect higher education; the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) and Labor Department operate a number of education and manpower training programs. The OE budget has never amounted to more than half the total federal funds spent on programs defined as education programs. Some consolidation appears to be in progress. The Upward Bound program has been moved from OEO into the HEW section handling programs for disadvantaged college students. The Head Start program for disadvantaged preschoolers seems destined to make the same passage to HEW.

Pluralism, however, is likely to remain the federal formula in education. Proposals that all education programs be concentrated in a cabinet-level Department of Education or Department of Education and Science have developed little momentum. There is probably a better chance, however, that the three main branches of the huge HEW conglomerate may each be given enhanced separate status, rather on the model of the Defense Department and

the three military services. In HEW, such a reorganization might create undersecretaryships of Health, of Education, and of Welfare.

Whatever happens departmentally, Allen faces unsolved administrative problems in OE. The Office of Education is run by a phalanx of associate commissioners, each responsible for administering a particular program or for dealing with a particular sector of education. Rivalries flourish, coordination is difficult, and OE still sees itself much as its clients like it to be—a gatherer of statistics and a mailer of money.

Secretary Finch has had an "education review team" looking at several aspects of OE's operations. This group includes insiders and outsiders, old-timers and new hands. Recommendations of the team made public this week deal with budget and program matters, but it is a good bet that Finch and Allen will be urged privately to push on with an OE reorganization.

The key to a reorganization of the 3000-member OE staff would be the filling of about 30 policy-level jobs at the top with people capable of carry-

ing out Allen's intentions. In exerting control of the agency now, Allen would appear to have several things in his favor. There are vacancies in several top jobs, so bloodletting will be reduced. Allen has at his disposal several appointive jobs that go with the assistant secretaryship, and these raise his management impact. Increases in federal salaries, particularly at upper levels, will allow him to offer a number of jobs in the \$20,000- and \$30,000-a-year range which should be competitively attractive. And Allen's 13 years as New York State school chief should have acquainted him with able potential recruits outside the federal government.

A reorganized OE could profitably direct its attention to correcting a glaring weakness in the administration of education legislation. Neither Congress nor OE has done much about seriously evaluating the multitude of programs on the books and making improvements where necessary. Drafting and passing a law to create a new program is in many ways much easier and politically more profitable than finding out how the program actually works

and correcting flaws or abuses. Now that the legislation mill seems to have slowed, this would seem an excellent time for Congress to exercise its "oversight" powers on education legislation and for OE to overcome its old habits of letting sleeping dogs lie.

It is risky to predict which problems will prove biggest for Allen. The effects of rising militancy among students and teachers and the demand for "local control" of schools will affect, if indirectly, the job of the chief federal education official. Campus unrest shows no signs of abating, and Allen and his colleagues are almost certain to be faced with the awkward job of administering "antiriot" provisions which call for the cutoff of federal assistance to persons seriously implicated in campus disorders. Allen has had big-league experience in today's confrontation politics, having mediated New York City's recent teachers' strike and emerged with what little praise was accorded anyone. And, as he comes to Washington, he probably is aware that educators today, wherever they serve, are best advised to expect the unexpected.—JOHN WALSH

NATO: Scientific Affairs Division a Miniature NSF for the Alliance

Brussels. NATO is a wobbly military organization, but it does contain a small and inconspicuous branch that functions well as a sort of miniature National Science Foundation for the 15-nation alliance. This is NATO's Scientific Affairs Division, which, since its creation in 1958, has evolved into one of the more unusual scientific offshoots of the cold war. Though the Warsaw Pact countries routinely wish damnation on NATO, Eastern European as well as Soviet scientists not infrequently take part in scientific conferences sponsored by the division. And though France has pulled out of the military side of NATO, forcing relocation of its headquarters from Paris to Brussels, she still participates in its scientific branch. If any further examples be needed of basic science's indifference to ideology and to the source of support for research, it is to be

found in the NATO Scientific Affairs Division. Furthermore, the genesis and history of the division at least hint at some universality in the American pattern of military organizations' generally having a freer hand than their civilian counterparts in supporting academic science. Such was the experience with the Office of Naval Research at the end of World War II, and it is being repeated today in the Defense Department's Project Themis for building up research in lesser institutions. Asked why NATO should be a source of support for basic research mainly associated with academic institutions, Rudi Schall, a German physicist who has been acting head of the division for the past 2 years, frankly replied, "Because it's much easier for a military organization to get the money." Actually, it is not very much money as scientific budgets go, but the division has so arranged

its activities that, per dollar spent, it probably can match any organization for the number of people it draws into its programs.

Not at all secret, but generally unnoticed among the mightier affairs of NATO, the Scientific Affairs Division has an annual budget of only \$4.4 million. Nevertheless, by following a strategy aimed at getting the widest possible effect from its relatively limited resources, it ranks high in the world as a source of support for postgraduate scientific training and scientific conferences. In addition, it has a modest program of project support, and at present it is looking into new activities, with particular attention directed toward computer technology and oceanography. The postgraduate training program currently provides funds for more than 1000 scientists to train in universities and research institutes throughout the alliance. About half study chemistry and physics; the remainder are distributed among virtually all other fields of science, with a small number in the social sciences. Since 1959, when the fellowship program was established, it has provided support for more than 8000 scientists; this validates the division's claim to being the