

and areas where flak might be troublesome. They were unable to get into the hardwood forests on the ground, because battles were in progress, but they were taken into the mangrove forests to the southeast of Saigon by boat. They also flew over two areas where crop destruction missions had recently been carried out and were taken on a number of motor trips within a 100-mile radius of Saigon. Besides making visual surveys and collecting samples for later analysis, the team conducted interviews with local residents and officials, and also combed through medical and agricultural records.

Though Meselson has not yet come to any firm conclusions (most of his samples have not even been analyzed), his visual observations have already confirmed some of the findings of

earlier scientific missions by Fred Tschirley, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and by E. W. Pfeiffer and Gordon Orians, two scientists who visited Vietnam under private auspices. Meselson says his aerial observations have confirmed earlier findings that there has been a severe bamboo invasion of some defoliated hardwood forests and his ground explorations in the denuded mangrove swamps have confirmed previous aerial observations that there has been little or no regeneration. He has also come up with some leads as to why no regeneration has occurred. Meselson's research—which has been guided, in part, by the advice of dozens of experts who attended a special conference at Woods Hole last June—seems to have gone beyond earlier efforts by collecting medical

samples and by conducting in-depth interviews. Meselson says his report will probably not come to firm conclusions as to the impact of the herbicides but will “state the limits of likely effects and say that such-and-such an effort is required to find out what the actual magnitude of the effect is.”

Some Pentagon officials have suggested that no worthwhile study can be carried out until the cessation of hostilities, but Meselson is convinced that studies should start right away lest valuable samples and interviews be lost through delay. “A lot of things can be done now even with the war going on,” he said. “I think it's to the true self-interest of all concerned to get on with the job and stop trying to protect their own self-image.”

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY

Congress: Some Progress toward Putting House in Order

On 17 September, rather to the surprise of both friends and foes of the measure, the House of Representatives passed a legislative reorganization bill (H.R. 17654) which prescribes the first major overhaul of congressional organization and procedures since 1946. The background to the House action is the usual subtle tapestry of causes and effects. But some unusual factors seem to have counted. For example, campus critics, who descended on Washington in droves last spring at the time of the Cambodia incursion to lobby, effectively quoted chapter and verse on the inefficient and often devious way Congress goes about its business. According to several observers, the knowledgeability of the campus delegations contributed to creating the atmosphere in which the measure could be passed.

The House bill now goes to the Senate for action. There are some doubts that the Senate will complete work on the bill in the time available in the waning session. But on the House side there is a feeling that the 326 to 19 final vote in the House gives the bill such momentum that a failure to act would reflect embarrassingly on the Senate. If the bill does not emerge

from the Senate, the House is likely to follow the option open to it of putting the bill into effect on its side of Capitol Hill simply by passing a resolution.

To be sure, the House bill is hardly a reformer's dream incarnate. Untouched is the seniority system which, applied to committee structure of Congress, makes it a rigid gerontocracy. Power relations in the House would be essentially unaltered, and in this sense the measure is truly a reorganization bill rather than a reform bill. The bill does, however, extensively modernize the machinery of Congress and acts to dispel a good part of the secrecy and obfuscation behind which Congress has operated. Probably the most significant thing about the bill is that some of its strongest features were added during debate on the floor and that it was a bipartisan group of younger members who organized and successfully led the amendment drive.

Justifiably, press accounts of the reorganization bill have focused on its package of antise Secrecy provisions, notably the requirement that “teller” votes be record votes. The House customarily resolves itself into the com-

mittee of the whole when debating legislation because of the more relaxed parliamentary rules that then prevail. In votes on amendments under these rules, House members have customarily trooped down the aisle past “tellers.” Ayes and nays were counted, but no names were recorded. On the other hand, final votes on legislation are record votes.

Critics of Congress have noted that crucial decisions on the content of legislation often come on votes on amendments or other attempts to alter legislation in the committee of the whole rather than on the vote on final passage. Key votes on the ABM and on chemical and biological warfare issues, for example, were decided by the teller method. A member may vote one way on a teller vote and, in effect, the other way on final passage. Having voted to gut a bill, he may then appear to support it. Pressure groups, both liberal and conservative, which rate legislators according to their voting records, have realized that the record on final passage may be misleading, and some peace groups, for example, have put spotters in the galleries to monitor teller votes in which they have been interested.

Recording of teller votes is likely to have important effects other than simply requiring legislators to stand up and be counted. Teller votes are often decided by a relatively small portion of House membership. Chronic absenteeism from teller votes is proverbial among Democrats, particularly liberal

Democrats. The Republicans, with their long experience of being in the minority, have been better at mustering their forces. From now on, nonattendance at votes on amendments will show up on a congressman's voting record.

Parallel to the change on teller votes is the move to require recording of roll-call votes in committee. Legislation is usually given final form in "markup" sessions, which committees hold behind closed doors. It is at this stage that lobbyists are most active. And the legislator has had the same opportunity as on teller votes to vote to eviscerate a measure under conditions of relative anonymity.

Many provisions of the bill are intended to streamline House machinery, a lot of which is quaintly anachronistic. Radio and television broadcasting of committee meetings would be permitted in the House, which, unlike the Senate, has not allowed such coverage up to now. The way would also be opened to electronic voting to reduce the considerable time consumed in roll calls. There are a number of time-saving minor changes proposed, such as dispensing with the reading of the House journal upon the insistence of an individual member.

Better Information

A main theme of the bill sent to the floor from the Rules Committee was improving the quality of information and expertise available to Congress. The most notable change proposed would result in expansion in size and mission of the Legislative Reference Service (LRS), which would be renamed the Congressional Research Service (CRS).

The new CRS, which would serve both houses as the LRS now does, would remain within the structure of the Library of Congress, but the intention would be to enhance its autonomy and stature. The top professional grades would be reinforced by appointment of specialists and senior specialists in new fields such as national defense, science, technology, and urban affairs, and the way would be left open for the creation of additional posts in other fields deemed important.

During debate on the bill, Representative Emilio Q. Daddario (D-Conn.) proposed establishment of an Office of Technology Assessment as an adjunct to the CRS. This office would have had a high-powered board, authority to contract for technology-assessment studies, and subpoena power to elicit

information from federal agencies. The Daddario proposal died when the chair ruled, on a point of order, that the scheme went beyond the scope of the bill and was not germane.

The reorganization bill foresees a new dimension of activities for the CRS. Until now much of LRS's work has been compiling legislative histories and making searches of relevant literature in response to requests from committee chairmen and individual congressmen. The new bill asks that CRS undertake a new range of activities, notably analyzing the probable consequences of legislation under discussion and coming up with recommendations on whether it is advisable to enact a particular bill. The CRS would also be expected to work more closely with committee staffs in planning and doing research for hearings.

Congress clearly could use stronger research support. LRS has turned in an uneven performance in the past—in great measure because of the attitude of Congress itself. Probably more pernicious in effect than shortstaffing or underfinancing have been the tendency of congressional committees to hire away competent and experienced LRS employees and the widespread misuse of LRS facilities by individual legislators who ask LRS to write speeches for them or to fill requests of constituents. The framers of the reorganization bill see CRS tripling in size by 1975 but, if the quality of its performance is to be improved proportionately, Congress will also have to change its prevailing attitudes.

Some doubts have been expressed about the practicality of another provision of the reorganization bill aimed at improving the human resources available to Congress. One amendment gives the minority party members of a committee the right to appoint one-third of committee staff members. There has been a feeling that the minority lacked adequate staff support. The pattern varies among committees, but there is no doubt that committee staffs reflect the long Democratic monopoly on committee patronage. As legislation has grown steadily more complex, many committee staff members have been appointed mainly for their professional or technical competence rather than loyalty to a party or individual legislator. Congress has come some way since committee staffs were composed primarily of political hacks, but partisan considerations have hardly been banished. As it stands, the provision for

one-third minority staffing seems a retrograde step in the attempt to convert to a hiring system based on professional merit. Some observers see the provision as an incentive included to ensure the support of some Republicans. But a number of insiders feel that the provision is one that is likely never to be fully implemented.

One proposal heavily symbolic of modernization—a move toward computerizing congressional operations—was dropped from the bill after it became entangled in a jurisdictional thicket. The bill would have created a joint House-Senate committee on data processing to make policy on use of computers in the legislative branch.

A House Administration subcommittee has been looking into the subject of data processing for the House for 2 years, and its chairman, Joe D. Waggoner, Jr. (D-La.), objected strenuously to being preempted. In the discussion on the floor the fear was expressed that the Senate would monopolize computer services and that the House should therefore make its own arrangements.

Joint Computer Facilities

Except in handling its payroll, Congress remains essentially in the Bob Cratchit mode of data processing, and the arguments for developing computer services are strong. Proponents of a joint committee are willing to see what the House subcommittee comes up with but are convinced that only a central service established in coordination with the Senate can be satisfactory.

Any tidy explanation of how and why the reorganization bill passed would be oversimplified. There is really no potent clientele for congressional reform and little political capital to be gained by those who champion it. (The Senate's two leading proponents of reform, Mike Monroney of Oklahoma and Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania, both lost bids for reelection in 1968.)

Fervor for reorganization is cyclical, mounting when Congress is under fire for inefficiency or unresponsiveness, usually when Congress is at odds with the President. The last peak in the fever chart came in the early 1960's when the Kennedy legislative offensive bogged down in the House, particularly in the Rules Committee.

After President Kennedy's assassination the man who took office was a past grand master at making the existing system work, and Congress disgorged a record run of legislation. In

the liberal Congress elected in 1964, however, reform was not quite forgotten. A joint committee on legislative reorganization was created with Monroney as chairman. After hearings the committee wrote its bill in 1966, and in 1967 the Senate passed a bill—a relatively bland measure, although Clark had sought to strengthen it. That bill

found its final repose in the House Rules Committee.

The path to enactment of the House bill this month can be retraced to the activities in 1968 of a group of young but not uniformly liberal Republicans who reacted sharply to their discovery that the House was not a very democratic institution, particularly for jun-

ior Republicans. The group, led by Representative Donald Rumsfeld of Illinois, now director of the Office of Economic Opportunity and a White House adviser, took up the cudgels for reorganization and even mounted the House equivalent of a filibuster in behalf of the cause.

The ultimate outcome was heavily

Academic Protocol: From the G. Swinger Manual

With the start of another academic year, Science is pleased to present excerpts from the Grant Swinger Manual of Academic Protocol. Following are descriptions of typical academic situations and the responses that are recommended by Dr. Swinger, director of the Breakthrough Institute and the Center for the Absorption of Federal Funds.

SITUATION. You receive an invitation to present a paper, but no mention is made of an honorarium. Delicacy, however, forbids a direct inquiry.

RESPONSE. Send a letter expressing gratitude for the invitation. Add that you are trying to determine whether your schedule permits you to make a commitment. In the meantime, "for record-keeping purposes and in line with income tax regulations, it would be helpful to be advised as to the financial arrangements."

SITUATION. Having accepted the invitation, but having done little or no preparation, you are unable to honor the program chairman's request that papers be submitted beforehand for distribution to the participants.

RESPONSE. Open with remarks as follows, preferably in a modest mumble: "I fully realize that the organization of this program calls for a formal presentation, but in the interest of rapport and the free flow of ideas, I think it might perhaps be desirable for me to state a few points; and then, perhaps, we can move on to a discussion in which we can pursue promising lines of interest. Since all of us, myself, perhaps, most of all, are here to learn, I believe this might be a more fruitful approach. So, with the permission and understanding of the chairman . . ." (who, of course, is helpless). At this point, for protective purposes, it may be advisable to add: "First, so that we can focus as quickly as possible on what, after all, is an elusive subject, let me briefly delineate what it is I am *not* attempting to discuss."

SITUATION. A member of the audience, obviously well prepared, delivers a damaging critique of your remarks.

RESPONSE. "I think that Dr. ——— has sliced directly to the heart of the matter, and, incidentally, has vindicated my belief that we would cover more ground if we did not confine ourselves to a rigid programmatic framework. Nevertheless, and I hope we will have some comments on this, I don't think our analyses are mutually exclusive. In fact, my initial reaction is to regard them as perhaps complementing one another."

SITUATION. Inquiry is made concerning your frequent absences from your regular place of employment.

RESPONSE. Jocularly observe that (choose one: Fermi, Oppenheimer, Einstein, Edison—almost any Hall of Fame figure will do) once said, "A great scientist can never be found in his own lab, but a truly great scientist can't even be found in a lab that he's visiting."

SITUATION. Inquiry is made as to your limited, perhaps nonexistent, research output.

RESPONSE. "As ——— (select name as above) once said, 'A good scientist has a good idea once a year, a great one every decade, but a truly great one, only once in a lifetime. Now, I'm not so foolish as to suggest. . . .'"

SITUATION. You fear the results if a book you have written is assigned to certain reviewers.

RESPONSE. Mention them admiringly in the acknowledgements, even if only on the basis of reference to their own works, and make certain their names are included in the index. Review editors will assume they are friendly associates and will therefore consider them ineligible on grounds of partisanship.

SITUATION. As occasionally happens through the peculiarities of academic finance, you unexpectedly acquire control over a substantial sum of money, but can conceive of no useful way in which it might be spent.

RESPONSE. Convene a symposium. Solicit expressions of interest for attending, then seek to enlarge the sum by applying for foundation assistance.

SITUATION. A committee that you chair meets at great length and accomplishes nothing. Influential members appear annoyed.

RESPONSE. Conclude the meeting as follows: "I think we've cleared away a good deal of the underbrush, and from here on we can devote ourselves more closely to examining some constructive alternatives. For this purpose, I would like to ask certain members to draw up a few specific proposals that we can toss around at the next session."

SITUATION. Students show hostility because of your good relations with the administration.

RESPONSE. Depict yourself as one who has miraculously managed to maintain communications with the administration, despite your sympathy for the students.

SITUATION. The administration shows hostility because of your good relations with the students.

RESPONSE. Depict yourself as one who has miraculously managed to maintain communications with the students despite your sympathy for the administration.

—D. S. GREENBERG

influenced by the decision of the House leadership to give custody of the reorganization effort to the Rules Committee, the graveyard of other reform efforts, and by the choice of Rules Committee member Representative B. F. Sisk (D-Calif.) as chairman of the special subcommittee that handled the bill.

Sisk represents a Fresno district where agricultural interests predominate; he serves on the Agricultural Committee as well as Rules. Sisk was looked upon as an establishment man but at the same time was widely known to his colleagues as a conscientious member who has taken on a number of the unrewarding "housekeeping" jobs in the House. Furthermore, as one close observer put it, "Once [Sisk] takes responsibility for getting something accomplished he sees it through." His integrity was unquestioned and his patience proved almost inexhaustible.

After the subcommittee was appointed in early 1969, Sisk improvised a staff by borrowing two able men from the LRS and the Legislative Counsel's office and mustering other staff help from the Rules Committee and his own office. He began a careful study of other reorganization bills and, even before holding hearings, ran a series of seminars for congressmen and staff members on reorganization proposals.

Sisk's first big task was to convince skeptics that his subcommittee was not a burial detail. By last spring the Democratic Study Group (DSG), a self-help and research organization of younger Democrats in the House, began to believe that a reorganization bill could be passed. It assigned staff to the project and cranked up a press relations effort which Sisk had lacked.

The DSG and a smaller group of Democrats headed by Representative Thomas M. Rees (D-Calif.) made common cause with the Rumsfeld group and formed a coalition. It was this coalition that worked out an agreement on a series of amendments lining up cosponsors in depth and laying out alternatives in preparation for debate.

Allocating credit for the coalition's work is difficult, but in the debate Representative Sam M. Gibbons (D-Fla.) said the group "consisted of well over 100 members. However, those Republicans who worked most consistently in the preparation of the amendments were Barber Conable, John Dellenback, and William Steiger. The

Democrats included Don Fraser, Tom Rees, Jim Corman, John Brademas, Jim O'Hara, Joe Waggoner, and myself."

A member of the Sisk subcommittee, Representative Richard Bolling (D-Mo.), who learned his way around the labyrinth of House politics as a protégé of the late Speaker Sam Rayburn, is the leading proponent of congressional reform and author of two books on the subject. Bolling had good contacts inside the coalition, and so the subcommittee and the coalition were in communication.

Sisk's insistence on an open rule allowing amendments to be made on the floor was of central significance. The only exception was a prohibition on amendments affecting committee jurisdiction. This is a supersensitive subject in the House, and Sisk judged, no doubt correctly, that a refusal to exclude the jurisdictional question would probably doom the bill.

As manager of the bill on the floor, Sisk, with firm backing from Representative H. Allen Smith (R-Calif.), ranking minority member on the subcommittee, played a "permissive" role, seldom using his considerable powers to cut off debate and maintaining, through 11 days of discussion scattered over nearly 3 months, a climate of good will in which the bill was considerably strengthened.

In the debate this summer it was difficult of course to argue in favor of secrecy or archaic folkways. There are those who do suggest that now a congressman will always have to vote his "district" rather than his "conscience" and that Congress will have lost its insulation against radical or reactionary pressures. Some predict that the liberal proponents of the reorganization bill will suffer from it most.

The biggest veil of secrecy, that which conceals the workings of the Appropriations Committee even from other members of Congress, still remains firmly in place. The seniority system is unscathed, and there are thorny questions in congressional ethics, such as those about campaign contributions and expenditures, with which Congress seems incapable of coming to grips.

It is possible that the reorganization bill will lead nowhere. Much depends on conventional political factors such as what happens in the November election and in the Democratic leadership succession in the House. But there are new factors as well. For example, if the coalition of younger members maintains momentum and the peace groups pick their targets as astutely as they did on teller votes, it would be possible to believe that the House is really on the road to reform.—JOHN WALSH

White House Advisers: Nixon Cool to Plans for Health, Social Aides

The increasing visibility and influence of the President's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) during the past decade has made this body a highly attractive model. Many members of Congress interested in the problems of environmental protection, health care, and development of overall strategies for advancing the general welfare have called for the establishment of similar bodies in those policy areas. In 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) was established by act of Congress. Recently, bills were passed by the Senate to establish two more Presidential councils—one would be a National Council on Health Policy, the other a Council of Social Advisers. The sponsors of these measures believe that

present government programs in the fields of health and social policy are fragmented, poorly defined, and often beset by an appalling lack of information about the problems being addressed and the results being obtained.

Like the CEA and the CEQ, the health and social advisers councils—bodies which, as now conceived, would to some extent be duplicative—would each have three full-time members and the task of continuously defining and analyzing problems and policy alternatives in their respective fields. Also, each would prepare an annual report, analogous to the economic and environmental quality reports, which the President would submit to Congress. The health report would describe the health