The Congressional Process—A Complicated Mystery

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The Congress of the United States is a fascinating phenomenon, so immense, intricate, mysterious, powerful that no truly scientific technique as yet exists by which its behavior can be measured, analyzed, cataloged.

Nevertheless, there is a crucial need for the scientific community to comprehend the Congress as best it can. Whether they like it or not, scientists are increasingly dependent on Washington for money and direction. Congress holds the purse strings and sets the overriding policies and priorities that determine where and how the taxpayers' billions shall be spent for scientific education and research and development to achieve national goals.

I suggest there is no more interesting way for anyone to begin learning about the Congress than by reading Charles L. Clapp's **The Congressman, His Work as He Sees It** (Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1963. 452 pp. $6).

The Congress is process, dynamic, tensional, and very human, involving much more than is apparent, more than any or all of its 535 members, their staffs and organizational structure, more than is reported by the news media or recorded in the *Congressional Record*. But the stereotyped views of Congress held by the general public, and undoubtedly by many scientists, are woefully superficial.

Clapp's study of the Congress is limited, as the title clearly indicates. He concentrates on the House, referring to the Senate only for significant comparisons or when it is necessary to consider important House-Senate relationships. And he portrays the House only as its members see it, from the inside. His book is a remarkably inclusive, perceptive distillation from a series of 16 carefully planned round table discussions held in the spring of 1959 with two separate groups of U.S. Representatives—19 Democrats and 17 Republicans. There was one session with the two groups combined and another in which their wives participated. (The book also considers the special problems of a congressman's family life.) Clapp augmented his findings from these group sessions by 50 personal interviews with the individual members, plus other extensive research.

The round table discussion technique is being perfected and used by Brookings Institution for several of its projects in the social sciences. During the series of congressional round tables, Clapp, a political scientist with previous experience in teaching and government, was a member of the Brookings staff. He is now legislative assistant to Senator Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts. The 1959 Round Table Conference on Congress was financed by a grant from the McKinsey Foundation for Management Research.

The Clapp book is absorbingly interesting for its illuminating description of the genre detail of a congressman's life and duties as well as for the very significant conclusions stated. As a congressman, I have gained valuable new insights from it, and I am confident that many a noncongressman will read it with nearly equal interest and even more enlightenment. The accuracy of Clapp's reporting is attested by several of the Representatives who were participants in the Brookings round tables (and by two now in the Senate) when they spoke recently in praise of his book (*Congressional Record*, 12 December 1963, pages 23,132 to 23,134 and 23,259 to 23,261).

The breadth of the subject matter that Clapp includes is indicated by these chapter titles: "The member and his colleagues," "The congressman and his constituents," "The congressman as legislator," "Pressure groups and legislation," "Committee assignments," "The committee system," "The leadership," "The problem of being returned," "Congressional wives and congressional life," "Is it worth while?" (Not without some doubts and exceptions, most of the 36 congressmen agreed that it was worthwhile.)

The round table interview has its obvious limitations as a method of research. Participating with Clapp were only 36 of the then 437 (now 435) House members. The group he chose to interview included several of the younger, most alert, concerned, and articulate members. Notably missing were any of the senior group, especially the committee chairmen, who "rule" the House. Would his (or some other reseacher's) conclusions be different if he repeated the discussions, using another very different group of 36? I doubt that they would differ much. On the basis of my own observations, I believe Clapp's interpretation of the Congressman is valid and very useful.

The book is dated, however, in at least one respect. Today's 88th Congress is very actively concerned about the increasingly important relationships between government and science, the skyrocketing appropriations for research and development, the necessity to develop more effective techniques for obtaining information and advice from wise and knowledgeable men of science, a better flow of information between the Congress and the scientific community, and a better flow of such information within the Congress and the executive agencies—and to the public. Several House and Senate committees are now busy considering these questions. But evidently the questions were not subjects of prime interest during Clapp's discussions with members of the 86th Congress only 5 years ago.

Clapp does touch lightly on the potentially more valuable relationships that might be developed between congressmen and academicians. He includes interesting comments concerning the relatively new development of professional staffing for House committees, and on the need for even better staffing for committees and for the individual congressmen. (In his one reference to the House Committee on Science and Astronautics, Clapp misnames it "Space and Astronautics." That is the only such bit of carelessness I noted in his book.)

Heraclitus had a phrase for it—"There is nothing permanent except change." The Congress and the congressman's job change. Politics is kalei-

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doscopic. Government is an evolving process of power relationships in tension. Every day the sciences are becoming more absorbed in the governmental process and scientists are participants in it. In another series of congressional interviews conducted five years from now, Clapp undoubtedly would obtain significantly different results, including more evidence of that new involvement with science in the congressman's job.

Today not a single member of Congress is a scientist. Inevitably there will be scientists in Congress. But even those who never expect to run for public office and that rare one whose work is not already subsidized (directly or indirectly) by the government, they too, as citizens and taxpayers, have a vital interest in the congressional process. Clapp's report is must reading for anyone who would try to understand that complicated mystery—a mystery that is of increasingly crucial concern for scientists.

Conservation

The Quiet Crisis. Stewart L. Udall. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1963. 209 pp. Illus. $5.

Although to many of us it is fairly apparent that the United States is approaching a point at which our stewardship of the land and its uses needs realistic reassessment, far too many citizens do not think about the question one way or the other. And there are those who, inspired by the progressive optimism of the 19th and the early 20th centuries, hopefully expect that the efforts of others, particularly the representatives of urban communities, will pull all of us out of our mounting difficulties into an era of natural resource prosperity that transcends anything we have known in the past. Stewart Udall's brief, sharply focused exposition of what is right and what is wrong with present trends in conservation policies should be read by the members of both groups. In the foreword Udall says that his book "is an attempt to outline the land-and-people story of our continent," and that it is "dedicated to the proposition that men must grasp completely the relationship between human stewardship and the fullness of the American earth." He treats both objectives superbly: this is an excellently outlined book; one that is clearly, coherently, and artistically written.

Udall's position together with his previous personal experience in various areas of natural-resource management lend particular emphasis, in point of public policy, to his thesis, and his statements have given heart to and gained additional respect from the growing army of informed conservationists. He points out that "America today stands poised on a pinnacle of wealth and power, yet we live in a land of vanishing beauty, of increasing ugliness, of shrinking open space, and of an over-all environment that is diminished daily by pollution and noise and blight. This, in brief, is the quiet conservation crisis of the 1960's."

Udall's approach is purposefully historical. His account of the long relationship between man and the land in this country starts with a consideration of early Indian ideas and continues through an appraisal of Jeffersonian policies, an exposition of the attitudes of the early scouts, explorers, and naturalists from John Bartram to Thoreau, a critical discussion of the early miners, lumbermen, ranchers, and farmers, a complimentary digest of the contributions made by George Perkins Marsh, Carl Schurz, and John Wesley Powell, and a balanced account of the conservation careers of Gifford Pinchot, John Muir, and S. T. Mather. The political side of conservation is treated with tribute to the accomplishments of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt; modern developments are discussed with reference to the work of F. L. Olmstead, the contributions made by the National Wildlife Federation and other top-notch conservation organizations, and the current investigations into problems of urban development. This history is sound, eloquent, vigorous, and excellently written.

In the final chapter Udall discusses "conservation and the future," and he concludes with the premise that a proper ecological relationship can exist between man and his environment no matter how complicated civilization becomes. From the dictum "city planning should put people first," he deals with the costs and problems created by human and industrial wastes, air and water and land pollution, and the erosion and misuse of our natural assets in general. But, unfortunately, equally emphatic consideration is not given to various current conservation issues concerned with both fish and wildlife problems.

The book is well illustrated, both in color and in black and white. The format is pleasing and the price reasonable. *The Quiet Crisis* should be required reading for all conservationists.

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Neuroanatomy

Textbook of Neuroanatomy. H. Chandler Elliott. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1963. xviii + 542 pp. Illus. $11.

This book covers essentially the same topics as its predecessor, *Textbook of the Nervous System* (Lippincott, ed. 2, 1954), but with changes in chapter headings and rearrangement of the sequence of topics. The first of the six subdivisions of the text deals with neurohistology and includes a chapter on conduction. Subsequent parts consider segmental structures, sensory systems, motor systems, cerebral hemispheres, and accessory systems and structures. This sequence seems a perfectly useful one, but at times the results are awkward—the hypothalamus, which is considered with the autonomic system, is included in the section on accessory systems.

As in the earlier book, the text is frequently illustrated by a diagrammatic, three-dimensional, "basic brain," upon which nuclei and fiber tracts are superimposed when appropriate, and which can be "exploded" when cross-sectional views are required. This very useful lecture device gives the student a simple model to visualize as he concentrates on local detail, but it is not invariably effective in the absence of the lecturer's explanation of relationships (for example, Fig. 13–10, optic radiation).

The atlas of 50 plates, most of which are photographs of brain sections (each accompanied by a labeled key), is unchanged. Although preference in the method of illustration is highly individual, perhaps a case may be made here for the use of laboratory material that will provide the ultimate in realism, supplemented by an atlas of clear, accurate, and well-labeled artist's drawings for the student's guidance.

The new material includes a few electron micrographs (some of remarkably poor quality) and drawings that illustrate features of ultrastructure. Some questionable concepts are pre-