

October, the profiles are based on personal interviews and a 633-item questionnaire submitted to each congressman, plus data gathered in the congressman's district or state.

► Separate, book-length studies of House and Senate committees, grouped according to 13 major areas of jurisdiction.

► Eleven book-length studies of particular topics relevant to the congressional process, such as campaign fundraising techniques, conflicts of interest, and the factors affecting incumbency. Both the committee studies and the

topics studies are the work of small research teams, most of them chaired by a political scientist or Nader associate, who spent 3 months this summer interviewing and gathering data. Both sets of studies are scheduled for release when Congress reconvenes in January.

► Two handbooks—one for the citizen, informing him how to find out about, influence, or electorally challenge his representative or senator, and one for the congressman, showing new members how to find their way about the legislative process.

► A collection of computer print-

outs listing such data as voting records, campaign contributors, and congressmen's corporate holdings.

This is no ordinary undertaking, nor is its methodology—a fact that has perturbed some political scientists both inside and outside the project. No one expects the Nader project to be a factory of academic monographs, yet by its scale alone—Nader has said it would be “probably the most comprehensive and detailed study of the Congress since its establishment”—the study has claims on academic attention and will be judged by academic

Briefing

U.K. Environment Minister Deplores Rule by Decree

A keen doctrinal difference is evident in the attitudes of the present British and U.S. administrations toward the problems of the environment. The breadth of the schism was apparent in remarks made by Peter Walker, British Minister for the Environment, during a visit to Washington last week. Walker does not believe in legislating arbitrary standards for polluters to meet. Rather, he says, his approach is to ensure that manufacturers are using the best antipollution devices currently available.

What did the minister think of the exhaust emission standards set by Congress for 1975 automobiles? “We haven't applied these standards in Britain because there is no certainty that they are feasible.” How were these things managed in Britain? A manufacturer would be asked to do the best he could and a schedule of improvements agreed with a government inspector. If the manufacturer failed to meet the schedule, he could, in theory, be sued. But in practice it almost never happened that prosecution was needed. “One does sometimes wonder,” said the minister, a trifle contentedly, “if some antipollution laws are not designed to make a country fit for lawyers to live in.” In Britain, persuasion, not law, was the way of doing business, and there was “no great struggle between government and industry.”

This hunky-dory state of affairs was too much for one reporter. “I fail to understand it in political terms,” he

muttered. Changing in a trice from Pangloss to Panjandrum, the Minister for the Environment explained the not inconsiderable powers invested in his office—he is the only court of appeals against his own decisions, and his ministry combines the functions equivalent to those of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Which prompted an inquiry as to what independent scrutiny there was over his department. Well, the minister said unblinkingly, national newspapers in Britain have full-time environmental correspondents. And there were conservation societies and things of that sort.

Walker's dislike of legislative solutions falls solidly within the pragmatic tradition of the Conservative party, to which he belongs, and is perhaps unsurprising in view of his business background. Until his appointment as Minister for the Environment 2 years ago, Walker was the latter half of Slater-Walker Securities, a highly successful investment firm that he cofounded. (Slater is better known among chess fans for the \$130,000 sweetener he put up to lure Bobby Fischer to Reykjavik.) EPA Administrator William D. Ruckelshaus, whom Walker is here to see on undisclosed business (airport landing certificates for the Anglo-French SST?), may find himself viewed as something of a Marxist by his guest. Asked last week what he thought of the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* report, Walker replied that the problems it cites could and were being solved, “in capitalist countries by penalties or incentives, in socialist systems by decree.”—N.W.

Weather Watch

Two developments of recent weeks may bring the issue of rainmaking in the Vietnam war again to the fore. One is a United Press International (UPI) report calling into question Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's claim that the United States has not engaged in weather modification “over North Vietnam.” The other is a lawsuit which may force the government to reveal in court the extent of alleged weather modification activities in the war.

An unofficial military newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, published a UPI listing of military capabilities at eight U.S. air bases in Thailand, which included the following description of C130 transport planes based in Korat. The planes, said UPI, “serve in a variety of roles, from airborne command posts, to cloud-seeding operations over North Vietnam, to dropping of reconnaissance drones, to weather reporting missions.” Although the report was published on 29 August, it was virtually overlooked until it was brought to the attention of Senator Gaylord Nelson (D-Wis.), who has been concerned with Vietnam environmental issues.

The UPI statement challenges previous claims by Laird that there have been no weather modification activities “over North Vietnam.” Asked to comment on the UPI statement, Pentagon spokesmen repeated Laird's denials. One spokesman said that the Laird statements meant that “obviously” the UPI report was “untrue.” Both the *Pentagon Papers* and the *New York*

standards. Although each part of the study can only be judged on its own merits, the apprehensions that are already being voiced by some political scientists suggest a mixed reception for the project in academe. That, maybe, is not unexpected; on the other hand, some participants say, it was not inevitable.

Attitudes of political scientists involved in the project vary considerably. "All things considered—the shortage of time, inexperienced people—it worked incredibly well," says Lester Salamon, a political scientist at Vanderbilt Uni-

versity who led the team studying the banking and urban affairs committees. Mark Nadel, a political science fellow at the Brookings Institution and team leader of the science and astronautics committee study, says of the project: "It came close to being optimal, but fell short in a very crucial area—the intellectual underpinning—and it needn't have, because they consulted the top people. The output may still salvage the project," he adds.

The reservations of Nadel and other team leaders center on the questionnaire to which congressmen were submitted,

the publication of *Who Runs Congress?*, and the effort invested in the profiles at the seeming expense of other parts of the project. Because of Nader's clout on Capitol Hill, the questionnaire offered a golden opportunity to gather information from members; instead, according to Nadel, the questions were so numerous and time-consuming that the response rate will probably be too low to be meaningful.

The questionnaire has also been criticized for including unnecessary or adversary-type questions. "The part-time committee team leaders were unanimous

Briefing

Times have made assertions of cloud-seeding over Laos and South Vietnam, but the UPI report is the first indicating that cloud-seeding has taken place over North Vietnam. (There have been rumors, however, that the unusually heavy flooding of North Vietnam's Red River in October 1971 was augmented by U.S. rainmaking.)

In addition, on 8 September a commercial weather modification firm, Weather Engineering Corporation of Canada, Ltd., filed a suit for \$95 million in Washington claiming that the government has used a cloud-seeding device called "weathercord" in Southeast Asia in violation of the firm's patent rights. Bernard A. Power, president of the firm, alleges that he and a colleague, in January 1967, unveiled the device to a defense department official, Col. Robert N. Ginsburgh, and discussed its possible application to muddy the infiltration routes in Indochina. Power has been quoted as saying, "Any government has the right to use a patent, with or without permission. But eventually they have to compensate you. That's why we're going to court."

The "weathercord" device causes silver iodide to be distributed upon release from airplanes, after a brief (10-second) delay. Powers has said that he was not told by military officials whether they had used his invention, and that he might not get any response officially "until after the war was over." If the case comes to a trial, the Department of Defense will have to reveal whether or not it used the devices in Indochina, and thus possibly indicate the actual scope of alleged weather modification missions there.—D.S.

COPEP to Rock RANN's Boat

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) has entered the debate over national priorities by undertaking a sweeping \$280,000 study of the National Science Foundation's program of Research Applied to National Needs (RANN). NAE's Committee on Public Engineering Policy (COPEP), which is making the review, already has a draft interim report ready to advise NSF on policy options for the fiscal 1974 RANN budget. Edward Wenk, Jr., an old government hand formerly with the Office of Science and Technology, who is chairman of both COPEP and the NAE study, has indicated that it will "not just legitimize what they are already doing" in RANN.

The COPEP study will include RANN past, present, and future, as well as the sensitive issue of the program's administration, which apparently NSF was eager to have examined. A steering committee of COPEP—and including the RANN advisory committee—will put the report together, aided by six panels, each with about 15 members, who are looking into individual priority areas: energy, human resources, community development, natural hazards and disasters, growth and environment, and something termed "targets of opportunity," which is billed as a "wild card" panel meant to cross-examine other possibilities and proffer fresh viewpoints. The panels' reports will be published separately, but they will also contribute to two major reports, one on long-term RANN

goals and one on administration. Both are due by September 1973.

The RANN program is less than 2 years old and hence somewhat young for a major academy review. Therefore NFS's initiation of the study could indicate that even the program's sponsors feel that RANN's growth rate may have been too precipitous.

There is also said to be "widespread dissatisfaction with RANN" in the academic community, and the COPEP study panels, in a most politic manner, include a number of prominent university figures. In fact, there is even disagreement about where RANN ought to be going among the 70-odd people taking part in the study. They apparently aired their disagreements last month when they sat in one room together for a week-long session at Port Ludlow, Washington, which one observer described as "lively as hell."

Among the participants are Raymond Bauer, of Harvard Business School, who is vice chairman of the study; Wilbur Cohen, former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare; James R. Killian, Jr., former science adviser to President Eisenhower; William D. Carey, of Arthur D. Little, Inc.; J. Herbert Holloman, former president of the University of Oklahoma; and William Stewart, former Surgeon General. One other reason suggested for NSF's hasty commissioning of a sweeping but fast review of RANN may be that the politically popular program, now with a budget of about \$70 million, may get significantly more funds during the coming budget cycle, and NSF needs advice on how to spend all that money.—D.S.