PHYSICS AND GOVERNMENT

RESONANCES

The US will drop all tariffs on educational materials following the signing by President Johnson of a bill to implement the Florence agreement. The President also signed a proclamation of acceptance by the US of the Beirut audio-visual agreement. The two signings represent the culmination of more than a decade of effort by AIP, AAPT and other groups to bring duty-free educational materials to this country.

Tuition expenses will be tax deductible for any faculty member working for his MS or PhD, according to proposed Internal Revenue Service rules. Previous regulations disallowed deductions for faculty who intended to use their degrees for higher posts elsewhere. Now it will make no difference to IRS what plans a student makes so long as he is a bona fide faculty member.

Civil rights is a key factor delaying a site decision for the 200-BeV accelerator, said Atomic Energy Commission chairman Glenn Seaborg. The AEC is now checking with local officials and federal agencies for civil rights information on each site. Following a racial incident involving a Negro physicist near Brookhaven, the commission noted that all the areas under consideration have similar problems.

The National Bureau of Standards has been alloted $30.5 million by Congress for its 1967 basic appropriations. The amount is some $1.5 million less than the bureau asked for but $1.8 million over last year. NBS sources indicated that the bureau this year came off better than they had expected, considering the depressed climate for science funding now prevailing in Washington. The appropriations will allow over $1 million for expanding NBS programs, an amount somewhat better than in previous years when increases provided for little more than the rising cost of living.

Fragmented congressional jurisdiction over science could be resolved by forming science and technology study groups within Congress, says the House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Development. Such groups would consist of delegates from each committee concerned with a complex science program. Delegates would meet and survey an entire program to provide a comprehensive view prior to considering any legislation.

Physicists and the elections

Republican and Democratic national committeemen agree that if the physics community by itself had to elect the 90th Congress, it would choose a House and Senate somewhat more Democratic than would the general population. There would be no approach to consensus on any national issue. From California to Illinois to New York, reports that PHYSICS TODAY has gathered from political observers among scientists indicate that physicists of both Republican and Democratic stripe are offering strong support to individual candidates, that the Johnson-Humphrey supporters of 1964 have largely repudiated the administration and that several physicists are taking the perilous jump into political life. At the national level the Republicans are making a vigorous bid to gain support from scientists. Meanwhile the Council for a Livable World, a political action group formed by Leo Szilard in 1962 and directed mainly by scientists, is mounting its biggest nonpresidential-year effort to elect key senatorial candidates.

Only in recent years have scientists taken political action along party lines. In 1959 the Democrats, then out of power, organized an advisory committee on science and technology; the Republicans later followed suit with a comparable science and engineering group that joined forces with the party's arts and sciences division. In the 1964 election, large numbers of scientists ranged themselves behind either Johnson or Goldwater and a PhD scientist, Weston Vivian (D-Mich.) won a seat in the House. This year, though a presidential off year, shows physicists surprisingly active in politics.

In California Willard Libby is campaigning on radio and TV for Republican gubernatorial candidate Ronald Reagan. Edward Condon in Colorado is making speeches for Democratic senatorial candidate Roy Romer; Condon is himself running as a Democrat for a post on the University of Colorado board of regents. In Illinois John Bardeen, Edwin Goldwasser and other University of Illinois physicists are working for the election of Cameron Satterthwaite to the House. In New Jersey Harry Lustig, Martin Karplus, Seymour Koenig and others are helping the campaigns of Democratic insurgent candidates.

Johnson-Humphrey supporters. Meanwhile many of the physicists who campaigned for the Johnson-Humphrey ticket in 1964 and welcomed the accomplishments of the first session of the 89th Congress have withdrawn

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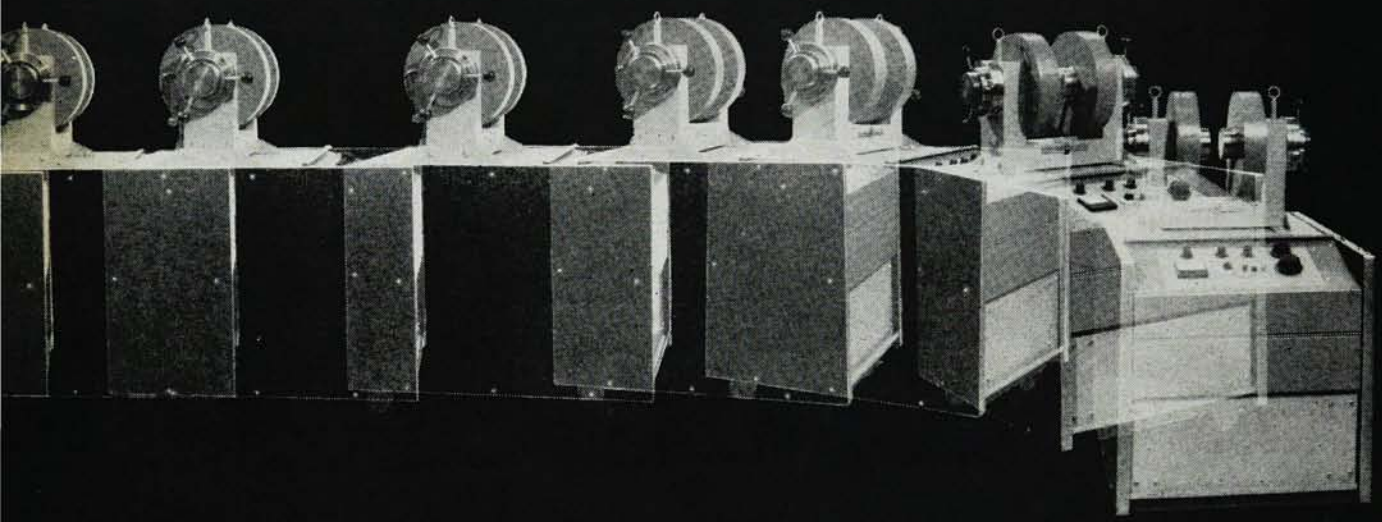

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their support; several are among Johnson's sharpest critics. Quite a few point out that they were never Johnson partisans in the first place but only joined forces with the Democrats to prevent a Goldwater victory in 1964. The overriding reason these physicists give for their alienation from the President is the conduct of the war in Vietnam, its continued escalation and use of antipersonnel and anticrop chemical weapons.

Many expressed surprise when asked if they were still as enthusiastic about Johnson as they were in 1964. "Are you kidding," exclaimed one department head. "I didn't want to see the trees defoliated in Vietnam so I supported Johnson in 1964. And look what happened!" Other reasons that erstwhile Johnson supporters offer for their disaffection are the President's recent pronouncement stressing practical research and his failure to allow scientists a greater role in creating science policy rather than merely approving it. A stronger criticism involves Johnson himself. One Nobel laureate epitomized the comments of many colleagues when he said, "There is something about his style of extreme pragmatism that offends me, the 'let's-do-it-by-the-seat-of-our-pants phenomenon.' He does not give the appearance of judiciousness and tolerance for divergent viewpoints. All of this makes us increasingly restive."

Restiveness is also apparent in the response of the Johnson administration to its intellectual critics. Eric P. Goldman has quit in dudgeon as the President's liaison man with the academic community and has returned to Princeton. His successor, John P. Roche of Brandeis University, has been given very little chance by Washington observers of patching things up with the scholars.

Meanwhile the President, in a recent speech at the Brookings Institution, attacked the negative attitude of academic critics. Said Johnson, "He [the intellectual] does not accept, in his laboratory or seminar, the notion that the best way to solve a problem is to walk away from it, or to flood it with a sea of dollars, or to smother it with an emotional slogan. Should he adopt a different set of critical standards when the problem is city slums or foreign policy. . . . Obviously not."

Where have the former scientist supporters of Johnson gone? Many have grouped themselves around issues rather than candidates. Several have put their names to various pleas to the President, such as asking him to bar chemical weapons in Vietnam or the spread of atomic weapons among nonnuclear powers. Other former Johnson supporters are still found in the Democratic ranks but are either running for office themselves or campaigning for insurgent and peace candidates in local elections.

Politicians and candidates. A new breed of physicist-politician can be seen in George Yevick, assistant professor of physics at Stevens Institute of Technology. Yevick is chairman of the New Jersey Democratic Council, a liberal insurgent group that is attempting to reform the party at grass roots.

This year Yevick's Democratic Council entered four candidates in the New Jersey primaries, including two physicists and a biologist. David Frost ran as a peace candidate for the Senate and was defeated handily by the regular Democratic candidate Warren Wilentz. William J. Nicholson, a physicist with IBM, ran in the 7th House district and also lost. Nicholson, who is considered the best campaigner the council has, was supported by several of his IBM colleagues, including Martin Gutzwiller, John Lentz, Allen Lurio and Peter Price. The best showing of any council candidate was made by Winston Bostick, head of the physics department at Stevens. Bostick, who received 41% of the Democratic party vote in running for a House seat, had organized a strong organization in Morris and Somerset Counties. As part of his campaign, he sent out letters of solicitation to hundreds of physicists around the country. He received contributions from 51 of them, totaling $604. Yevick, in his analysis of election results, reports that council candidates did well wherever the council had effective organization. For the future he will try to expand the council throughout the state and elect his insurgent partisans to the NJ Democratic county committees, the spokes of the state's political wheel.

On election day the scientist with the best chance of representing his district in the House, close observers say, is Weston Vivian, who currently holds the seat from Michigan's second district. Vivian, who won by only 1500 votes in the 1964 Johnson landslide, is being challenged by another PhD, Marvin Esch, who has a doctorate in speech and education.

Though Esch is seeking the conservative vote in a normally Republican district and is portraying Vivian as a big-spending, big-government liberal, Vivian is expected to come out on top in a very tight race. Another scientist running for the House, but against heavy odds, is Donald Feder. Feder, who is an optical scientist for Eastman-Kodak, is running on both the Liberal party and Voters for Peace party tickets.

The campaign that is attracting perhaps the greatest interest among the physics community is that of Cameron B. Satterthwaite, professor of physics at the University of Illinois in Urbana. Satterthwaite is running as the regular Democratic candidate in the 22nd congressional district of Illinois. "I'm trying to convince the people here," he told PHYSICS TODAY, "that there's a great need for scientists in Congress. I believe that as much as a billion dollars a year could be saved from our R&D expenses without sacrificing any of our objectives. I'm also campaigning on a lot of local issues and I support administration policies in most areas."

One irony of Satterthwaite's campaign is his stand on the Vietnam war. Satterthwaite has been active in the Federation of American Scientists and other groups interested in control of nuclear weapons and a more rational foreign policy. "Many of my colleagues," he says, "expect me to be a severe critic of the administration and its handling of the war. But such criticism would be politically unrealistic. I'm in a very delicate position. The bulk of my constituents are farm or labor voters."

With the help of other physicists at Illinois, Satterthwaite culled some 4000 names from the American Physical Society directory and FAS lists and sent out letters of solicitation. He received about a 10% return, amounting to approximately $3000.

Though Satterthwaite admits his chances for victory are small in his normally Republican district, he has already committed himself to running again in 1968. "Campaigning is quite different from the classroom," he says. "It's taken me the better part of my campaign merely learning how to be a good campaigner. We had to start from scratch since there was no depth

of Democratic political roots before. Next time I ought to have a very good chance; in fact an excellent one if somebody like Reagan runs for President on the Republican side."

Republicans mobilize scholars. Ferment among the Democrats has made the Republicans quite hopeful of capitalizing on the disillusionment of many scientists with the administration. The Democrats have long taken the support of the scientific community for granted while the Republicans have remained more or less passive in the face of dominant Democratic sentiment on the campuses.

Some six years ago the Republican national committee launched an arts and sciences division to seek support among scientists and other academic people. The division started slowly at first; the Republican party was itself in transition. The liberal wing, exemplified by the Ripon Society, Gov. Rockefeller, Gov. Hatfield and others, had been urging that the party seek out support among the Negroes, the urban voters and the academic community.

Following the Goldwater debacle in 1964, and the slow reshaping of the party, the Republican arts and sciences division began to grow rapidly until today it numbers several thousand professors and researchers. About one third of the membership are physical scientists, the remainder largely political scientists. These academicians work as volunteers for the national committee and local candidates, writing speeches, doing research, appearing on radio and TV and preparing position papers on major issues. At the national level, the division acts as a service organization, identifying Republican-leaning professors and offering names of volunteers to local Republican candidates.

John M. Hunger, former professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin and director of the division, admits there is not much likelihood of attracting to the Republican side those scientists who have defected from the Democrats. He does believe there is an untapped reservoir of Republican strength on the campuses and in the laboratories, on which his party is determined to draw in future political battles.

Independent political action. One of the most efficient independent political and lobbying groups, the Council for a Livable World, is headed by Bernard T. Feld, professor of physics at MIT. Its board of directors includes such scientists as William Doering of Yale, Maurice Fox of MIT, Matthew Meselson of Harvard and Charles Price of Pennsylvania. The council seeks to "reduce the risk of a nuclear war and to bring about arms control, disarmament and world order."

Working on strict cost-effectiveness bases, the council generally chooses to help those candidates who have a fairly good opportunity of winning elections. Ideally, it tries to apply its extra financial leverage in close races between candidates of highly disparate views. The council also sponsors meetings between scientists and members of the administration and Congress, and prepares testimony and research for congressional hearings.

In 1962 council supporters contributed over $58,000 to help elect six senators; in 1964 $124,000 helped to elect nine senators. This year its contributors will provide the council with over $100,000 for political action; the funds will go largely for the support of three senatorial candidates, Republican Mark Hatfield of Oregon, and Democrats Lee Metcalf of Montana and Roy Romer of Colorado.

The Air Force will sponsor a $131-000 study of unidentified flying objects (UFO's) at the University of Colorado. Edward U. Condon, professor of physics at Colorado and UFO agnostic, will head the 15-month program. Assisting him will be a group of physical and behavioral scientists that already includes psychiatrist Stuart Cook, airglow specialist Franklin Roach and Colorado Dean Robert Low. This group will work closely with all other interested scientific agencies as well as with the public. Though Air Force supported, the program will be completely free of AF control. Said Condon about his new post, "I raise a little hell when I run things. That's why we're going to have a little fun when we get into flying saucers." □