

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE ON  
"FOREIGN RELATIONS"

*Each year the State Department convenes an Advisory Committee of distinguished scholars for its document publication series, "Foreign Relations." The Advisory Committee's report for 1969 is reprinted here for the information of the profession. Members of the Committee are drawn from the APSA, the American Society of International Law, and the American Historical Association.*

The publication of "Foreign Relations" has been slipping chronologically ever since World War II. In 1962 this Committee recommended that the slippage be held at not more than 20 years. During the last seven years, the series has actually fallen back to 23 years behind the dates of the documents. Unless something is done about it, this gap will steadily lengthen toward 25 and even 30 years, despite the best efforts of the Historical Office. A number of reasons appear to conspire to this end: a shortage of historian-compilers in the Historical Office, very slow clearance procedures, uncertainties and delays in contracting-out procedures for editing, among others. In the Committee's view, these problems are quite soluble with very little cost and effort. While cognizant of budgetary and related difficulties, the Committee believes that underlying these, there has been perhaps less appreciation in the Department than there

should be of the importance of the early publication of "Foreign Relations".

This series, in our view, is an opinion-molder of no little importance, particularly in the area of major international political affairs. If the 20-year rule were actually being applied, for example, this year would have witnessed the publication of the year 1948, recording in significant detail Soviet pressures on Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Publication several years ago of the 1945, 1946 and 1947 volumes might have thrown into sharper relief some of the recent writings of historians of the origins of the Cold War, "revisionist" or otherwise. The Committee believes that a fuller appreciation of the contemporary significance of earlier publication of "Foreign Relation" might well provide a climate of opinion within the Department which would be more benign to the Historical Office's problems of manpower, clearance, and editing.

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## RESEARCH ON CONGRESS

*In response to comments to the Association from political scientists, Members of Congress and Congressional staff, the Editor surveyed these groups on the problems of research on Congress. The results are reported in P.S. for the information of the discipline.*

A recent review of research on Congress by Robert L. Peabody (in Ralph K. Huitt and Robert L. Peabody, *Congress: Two Decades of Analysis*) noted the impact of a broad and questioning scholarly interest in Congress, particularly over the last 20 years. Programs such as the APSA Congressional Fellowships and the Study of Congress series have played a part, but the desire to study Congress has had a broad base in the discipline. One of the most marked trends in Congressional research has been the use of techniques for close observation of Congress such as participant-observation, extensive interviewing and regular attendance at Congressional proceedings. This trend reflects both the emphasis in social science research on empirical study, and an awareness by teachers and students of the opportunity for personal contact with elected officials.

One of the results of this continuing, and perhaps increasing, focus on Congress is probably inevitable in a field of study where the institution studied (unlike, for instance, local government) is unique and limited in size. That is the feeling of the subjects themselves and some scholars who are longtime students of the institution that they are being overwhelmed by the apparent popular interest in the area. Many Congressmen, Congressional staff members and researchers have perceived the corridors of the Capitol and Congressional office buildings becoming crowded with students, interns, teachers and researchers of all kinds. Not only are students more mobile and financially able to come to Washington; comments are also heard that the mail is heavy with requests for questionnaire completion, letters requiring detailed answers on legislative proposals and congressional behavior for term papers. Some scholars wonder whether academic researchers generally are not hurt by these demands, especially those of high school and undergraduate students. Congressional staffs resent completing questionnaires which their employers will never see.

But comments made in passing often reflect the circumstances in which they were made. What may seem like an avalanche to one person may not dent the attention of another. To probe the research situation on Capitol Hill, *P.S.* has informally surveyed both political scientists with experience in congressional research, and congressional offices, and the results are conveyed to political scientists here.

The situation, as seen by one thoughtful Congressman, is this.

Every year I and other members of Congress are besieged by pleas from political science students, graduate and undergraduate alike, to complete long (and often open-ended) questionnaires, to agree to 15- or 30- or 45-minute interviews on subjects having only peripheral interest for us and having no connection with our districts and for research papers we will never see, to assign staff to aid in huge data collection projects, to circulate "Dear Colleague" letters to the entire membership of the House soliciting information or assistance on research projects—and so it goes ad infinitum.

For my own part, I've always tried to satisfy reasonable demands on my time and my staff's by students, and I applaud the growing interest in public policy problems as a visible dividend of our improving educational systems. However, I must report that in recent years student requests have simply flooded my office, and the demands on my time have forced me to pick and choose between research projects not on the basis of their potential value, but rather on whether a particular request by chance fit into my busy schedule.

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Political scientists asked to comment for this survey were Richard F. Fenno, University of Rochester; Randall B. Ripley, Ohio State University; and John F. Manley, University of Wisconsin. Members of Congress contacted were Gerald R. Ford, Morris K. Udall, Bill Brock, William J. Green, Lawrence J. Burton and F. Bradford Morse. Several Congressional staff members were also consulted. The survey should not be taken as "representative," but indicative. The Editor appreciates each of the responses. Although the focus was on the House of Representatives, comments in most instances are generally applicable to the Senate, although obtaining interviews is more difficult in that body.

One staff member reports receiving a questionnaire in practically every mail—though another office estimates one a week—and the common feeling is that questionnaires have been increasing over the past few years. One political scientist with much experience in Congressional research comments:

The problem lies partly with the First Amendment to the Constitution, having to do with the right of petition, free speech, etc. Every schoolboy and school girl has the Constitutional right to talk to his or her Congressmen. Teachers teaching citizenship in grades K-16 encourage the exercise of the right. And Congressmen, left to their own devices, would rather talk to any constituent than to any Ph.D. candidate in political science or professor thereof. We tend to be seen as one more claimant on their time—and a non-constituent claimant at that. More seriously,

### NEW CHALLENGES IN CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH



—B. DOUGLAS HARMAN, American University

*“I merely said to the Congressman that I was a student taking a survey. . .”*

in the teaching of citizenship, many students—high school and college at least—are encouraged to write or talk to Congressmen for the purpose of writing papers. Congressmen lump all those who want information into one undifferentiated group. They do not distinguish professors from Ph.D. thesis writers from undergraduates from high school students. All are “writing a paper on something or other.”

Another perspective is provided by another political scientist.

By and large, I have never felt that this problem is as serious as some of my colleagues say. While the number of serious students of Congress has increased so too has the access of those who have both the stamina and financial support to engage in extended field research on Congress. What is really impressive is not that a few Congressmen are tired of seeing political scientists but that so many have become allies of those who want to understand the institution better.

Political scientists and Congressmen are agreed on at least one thing: the problems of questionnaires. One political scientist put it forcefully.

I think questionnaires are worse than useless in research on Congress. They are useless because return rates are low and in most offices a relatively low-ranking staff member answers them if they are not thrown out. Many members simply have a standing policy of discarding all of them they receive. They are worse than useless because their continued arrival antagonizes both members and staff members alike. Their use tends to make members and staff members suspicious of the entire academic enterprise as it relates to Congress and certainly can make them personally hostile to academics seeking interviews.

This view is confirmed by the remarks of Congressmen.

I would say that I answer about one-half of the questionnaires. The questionnaires that are well constructed so that the answer can be given quickly are answered. Where the questionnaire is not well constructed or the questionnaire is vague, I just don't have time to work it out.

This is often a bothersome thing for the simple reason that the questionnaires tend to be extremely detailed and lengthy and it requires considerable thought and time to answer them properly. The amount of paper work that comes into a Congressional office is staggering and often I fear questionnaires are put to the side, covered up, and have to work up to the top of the heap. Often by the time we can give them attention, they are of no use to the researcher.

If I receive a request for any written, subjective statements I generally relegate them to the circular file, primarily because they would be too much of a drain on time. If the questionnaire is short, with yes or no questions, I will probably answer it, though I expect that type of inquiry is of the least value to productive scholarship.

Congressmen respond favorably to interviews, but cannot always allot the time necessary for them.

When it has been possible for me to do so, I have enjoyed sitting down with students and answering their questions. However, that is not always possible from my standpoint, and it is not always possible for a student to be in Washington.

I think the most effective way to gain information is through interviews, the technique to which I am most apt to respond.

On the one hand, the demands on my time might force me to refuse an interview with a doctoral student writing a dissertation on Congress while, on the other, granting an interview to an undergraduate attending one of the local universities because he happens to drop in to my office at the right time.

While many Congressmen and scholars recognize the problems of congressional research, fewer have considered possible solutions. The goal of any professional effort toward dealing with these problems should be to clarify to Congressmen the different levels of research, as one of the scholars suggests.

All that we can do—and I'm not sure how to do it—is to assist the Congressman in differentiating between bonafide scholarship on Congress by Ph.D. candidates and professors from all the rest. I don't think we can coordinate this academic research on Congress or screen it or anything else. But if we could let the legislator know that there is a stratum of academic research different from all other requests for information, maybe we would be part way home in solving the problem.

Self-restraint is mentioned by political scientists, especially on the part of teachers:

I think academic political scientists should use great restraint in urging their students to travel to Washington for purposes of interviewing members of the House and Senate. Interviews are obviously useful for many studies and necessary for some studies. I would urge my colleagues to decide after long thought whether interviews on the Hill are really necessary and not just useful for their research endeavors. If they are necessary, the only course open is to plow ahead. If they are only useful, then restraint may well be in order. If and when interviewing is done, normal rules of courtesy should be observed: obtaining the appointment well in advance, informing the member or staff member of the nature and length of the interview and the use to which it will be put, trying to interview at relatively slack periods in the legislative cycle, thanking the interviewee with a short note afterwards, etc. Obviously interviews should be undertaken only when the interviewer is ready. By this I mean, for example, that an interviewer should get *all* that he can from documents and other printed materials before conducting the interview.

I myself will not allow an undergraduate to go to Washington to interview legislators. Insofar as I can I discourage graduate students from interviewing legislators unless they are writing Ph.D. theses.

And a Congressman suggested that teaching political scientists discourage

students, and especially undergraduates, from seeking special assistance with research projects from Congressional offices. I would suggest as a general rule that instructors urge students writing term papers on topics relating to Congressional activity to choose topics which can be thoroughly researched at local libraries. Perhaps the most egregious demand on Congressional time is presently made by undergraduates who commonly ask for detailed political and legislative analyses relating to term paper topics.

Another suggestion, made by a Congressman, is for a review committee

which would review all proposals made by graduate and post-graduate researchers which concern Congress and require the assistance of Congressman and their staffs. The committee (possibly, two political scientists and a Congressman or Congressional staffer) would review all research proposals and make judgments as to their potential academic value and relation to how much time and effort they would require on the part of Congressional offices.

This is similar to the idea, periodically discussed by Congressional scholars, of having an omnibus questionnaire circulated periodically to Members of Congress, which would include questions submitted by researchers to a committee of scholars.

Most Congressmen do not follow the political science literature, and many undoubtedly have a limited notion of what researchers seek.

Some of the research is obviously better in quality and in terms of its contribution to knowledge. But I don't think I have seen enough to pass judgement.

As to the value of the information gathered, much of it is doubtless valuable, but often one gets the impression that whoever framed the questions was not too familiar with political realities and everyday conditions in politics.

One suggestion on this point from both Congressional and scholarly groups is that students provide, out of courtesy, information on the outcome of their research to those they questioned.



In conclusion, whether anything could be done to "organize" Congressional research is doubtful. Scholars develop their own techniques for successful research, and would resist attempts to limit their efforts. On the other hand, a sensitivity and awareness of possible problems may reduce their negative impact on future research. As one scholar summarized,

Only by husbanding the scarce resource of Congressional good will and accessibility can political scientists hope to continue some lines of research on Congress. And only if academic political scientists take the necessary responsibility will this husbanding be successfully achieved.

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## PENN GRADUATE PROGRAM

The University of Pennsylvania has received a grant of \$100,000 from the National Science Foundation in support of a revised Ph.D. program developed by the Department of Political Science. Its purpose is to provide broader instruction in new methods of political analysis and to enable students to gain greater first-hand experience in independent research under direction of the faculty. The new curriculum was initiated on a transitional basis during 1968-69 and is now fully in effect.

The program was designed to remedy certain deficiencies which were believed to characterize predoctoral studies in political science at the University of Pennsylvania and most other universities. A self-analysis undertaken by the Department of Political Science during 1966-68 highlighted several problems. The existing program, it was felt, gave Ph.D. candidates insufficient preparation for research. The traditional field structure had become increasingly irrelevant, and there was an over-reliance on formal courses. Such subdivisions as comparative government, American government, and international relations were open to criticism for being atheoretical and for failing to represent the context in which research was actually conducted. Formal courses all too frequently embodied an authority relationship that was inimical to the involvement of students in the process of inquiry.

The structure of the new program makes it possible to incorporate new methods of political analysis and newly discovered knowledge more readily into the curriculum. It also enables each student to design his own course of study

and determine his own professional identification.

One innovation is the elimination of all but a handful of formal graduate courses. Instead of taking courses, predoctoral students work with faculty members in directed reading and research programs, either individually or in small groups. This pattern of student-faculty relations not only permits students to engage in individually tailored programs of study but also gives them apprenticeship research experience.

A second major change is a substantially increased exposure to the modes of political analysis and to the political concepts employed by researchers currently doing much of the significant work in political science. During each semester of the first two years, students attend a weekly Colloquium which deals with fundamental intellectual problems facing the discipline. Members of the Pennsylvania faculty, as well as visiting lecturers, address Colloquium participants on such topics as systems analysis, process analysis, mathematical modeling, and policy analysis. Faculty members also conduct three-to-five-week Symposia, which focus on major concepts in political science (e.g., conflict, consensus, decision-making, political culture, and urbanization) and are open to all graduate students and faculty.

The preliminary examination for the Ph.D. degree, usually taken after the completion of two years of graduate study, no longer emphasizes fixed subfields of political science, such as American government, public administration, and international relations. Instead students are examined over conceptual and sub-

stantive areas of their own choosing, subject to prior approval by the faculty.

In the third year, students normally spend half their time as teaching or research assistants, the remaining half being devoted to independent study. The fourth year is given over to writing the doctoral dissertation. The current enrollment for graduate study in political science at Pennsylvania is approximately 100. Oliver P. Williams is chairman of the department. Henry Wells is Director of Graduate Studies.

## NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER

### *The Cross-National Program*

Recently, there has been a growing interest in cross-national research using survey techniques. One of the most extensive research programs of this sort—the Cross-National Program in Political and Social Change—has moved its home base to NORC. Sidney Verba, the director of the program, and Norman Nie have both moved from Stanford University to the University of Chicago, where they are members of the Department of Political Science and Senior Study Directors at NORC.

The Cross-National Program is a collaborative research project involving groups in three other countries: the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, the University of Tokyo in Japan, and the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, India. The field work in the United States was done by NORC. The main purpose of the Cross-National Program is to study processes of political development in the four participating nations—India, Japan, Nigeria, and the U.S. The main research interests are on such questions as: What kind of people become interested and active in the political life of their nations? What modes of political participation do they use? What channels of access are available and are used in contacting the government? And what are the types of needs and problems that citizens are likely to take to the government? This study is carried out in four widely differing nations in order to find whether there are uniformities in processes of political development across such wide cultural and developmental gaps. In each of the participating nations, approximately 2,500 interviews were conducted with a cross-section sample of the population, as well as interviews with a sample of local political leaders in the communities from which the cross-section samples were drawn. In addition,

information of a noninterview nature about these communities was gathered. In this way the attitudes and behavior of respondents can be linked to characteristics of their environments, and the attitudes of leaders and ordinary citizens can be linked to each other. The program is organized as a fully cooperative venture among the four national groups involved. The theoretical framework, the research design, the research administration, and the data analysis have been the joint responsibilities of the participating groups.

The field work has been completed in the four nations and data analysis is currently in progress. There is also some possibility that the research program will be expanded to other countries. This program will bring NORC into closer contact with research groups engaged in similar work in other nations.

### *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), originally developed at Stanford University, is now being maintained and distributed through NORC. SPSS is an integrated system of computer programs for the analysis of social science data. It is designed to provide the social scientist with a unified and comprehensive package enabling him to perform many different types of data analyses in the most convenient way and with a great deal of flexibility in data format. SPSS provides a comprehensive set of procedures for data transformation and general file manipulation and offers a large number of statistical routines commonly used in the social sciences.

Besides the usual descriptive statistics, simple frequency distributions, and cross-tabulations, SPSS contains procedures for simple and partial correlations, multiple regressions, and Guttman scaling. The factor analysis program is undergoing final debugging and is scheduled for release late this summer. The data management facilities, which can be used to permanently modify a file of data and can also be used in conjunction with any of the statistical procedures, enable the user to generate variable transformations, recode variables, sample, select, or weight specified cases and to add to or alter the data or file defining the information.

SPSS is fully operational and is currently in use at twenty-six universities and research organizations. At the present time the system is operational for IBM 360's, model 40 and above. However, Northwestern University is in the process of converting SPSS to CDC

6000 series equipment, and an exportable system completely compatible with the 360 version is scheduled for release by October 1, 1969.

SPSS has a user's manual, which is a complete instructional guide to the system and makes it easily accessible to users with no prior computer experience. The manual will

be published by McGraw-Hill in Spring, 1970. A preliminary version is available for \$6 from NORC. The IBM 360 version of the system can be purchased, including one-year maintenance and service. For further information, contact Patrick Bova, Librarian, NORC, University of Chicago.

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## Rassegna Italiana di Sociologia

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*Decimo anno.* — Camillo Pellizzi, *Materiali per una sistematica della sociolinguistica.* — Paolo Ammassari, *La mobilità ascendente nella società avanzata.* — Enrico Ressiga Vacchini, *A proposito del fenomeno dell'autorità.*

NOTE E DIBATTITI: Bruno Rizzi, *La contestazione marxista ed i suoi precursori.* — Giacomo Sani, *C'è davvero bisogno di una nuova sociologia politica?*

RICERCHE: Thomas H. Greene, *Il partito comunista in Italia e in Francia.*

SEGNALAZIONI BIBLIOGRAFICHE.

ENGLISH SUMMARIES.

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