

argue, the keystone of any Presidential candidate's strategy. Two of them—New York and Massachusetts—are significantly more liberal than the rest of the country. Another six—California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan—are middle-of-the-road "bellwether" states. But the remaining four—Florida, Indiana, Texas and North Carolina—are actually quite conservative.

Further, although these states have a slightly larger concentration of Jewish voters than the rest of the country, they contain a somewhat smaller share of blacks. Thus, several political scientists have concluded that contrary to the conventional wisdom, black voters would be more influential in a direct election than they are now.

Nearly outflanked on both left and right, Bayh's amendment squeaked through the Judiciary Committee by a 9 to 8 vote. Two of the nine, Joseph Biden and Majority Leader Robert Byrd, may oppose it if the amendment reaches the floor, where it will need a two-thirds

margin. Though the House overwhelmingly passed a direct election amendment in 1969 (only to see it filibustered to death by then-Senator Sam Ervin), it has no plans even to hold hearings until the Senate votes.

That may never happen. James Allen promises another filibuster, and Byrd told Bayh that he will not even bring the amendment to the floor unless Bayh can assure the 60 votes necessary for cloture. Though Bayh aides express confidence that he will have the votes by February, they concede that he does not have them now. William Scott's assessment may be closer to the mark: "I don't think it's got a snowball's chance in hell."

If the amendment fails to pass next year, supporters of direct election probably can pack it in for a while. The Electoral College is like a leaky roof: when it's raining, you can't fix it; when it's sunny, you don't feel like you have to. As Bayh put it, "The further away from [a near-disastrous] election we get, the more tendency there is to sweep it under the rug." MICHAEL NELSON

U.S. STILL IN VIETNAM

NEW YORK—The United States military has left Vietnam, but their legacy lives on in the form of battered countryside and probable increases in the incidence of birth defects and cancer.

During the war in Indochina, the United States dropped more than 100 million pounds of chemical defoliants on Vietnam. Along with saturation bombings of the countryside, the defoliation program was part of a more general policy of "forced urbanization" of the peasant population. Formulated by Harvard political scientist Samuel Huntington, "forced urbanization" aimed at drying up Vietcong guerilla support within the "sea of the people" by destroying the "sea." Huntington's strategy was unsuccessful against the Vietcong, but its enforcement did afflict the small farmers. Hundreds of thousands of them were driven into the already overcrowded cities in the South, or the squalid military camps set up by the United States to receive its newly created refugees. The defoliants destroyed large reaches of farmland and forest, poisoning the water supply and cutting rice production at a time when malnutrition and a variety of related nutritional diseases were already serious health problems.

One of the few Americans in a position to talk firsthand about the fallout from the defoliation program is Arthur Galston, Eaton Professor of Botany at Yale, who recently returned from a month-long visit to Vietnam. Galston, a plant physiologist with long-standing interest in the defoliation problem, has visited Vietnam three times in the last six years.

The agricultural system in Vietnam, Galston reports, has never fully recovered from the damage done during the war. Two years after the end of the conflict, "there is still widespread hunger, maybe even starvation, among people we would want least to hurt, like old people, babies and pregnant women." The fishing industry has been virtually crippled. Galston claims that "the mangrove forests, several hundred thousand acres of which were heavily sprayed, have been killed dead, deader than a doornail, and they're not showing any appreciable signs of recovery. They may never recover, or it may take a century. That's particularly significant since the mangroves are at the estuaries, where it's important that there be a flourishing biological community. When the mangroves go, as they have, so does a large percentage of the shellfish and fish."

In addition, the lumber industry, always important to Vietnam but specially critical at this point of reconstruction, also remains decimated. In the upland forest region, Galston says, "the totally sprayed parts have been mostly killed, and the timber in them is largely



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unusable. Some of it is rotted, while the remaining good wood has so much shrapnel in it from the bombing that you can't afford to put it through a sawmill. You just keep breaking blades. In the areas that were badly hurt, scrub bamboo has taken over, which cannot be killed off with conventional herbicides and isn't valuable in itself. So that land seems to be lost." He estimates that 20 to 30 percent of the total forest land in Vietnam has been badly damaged, with a smaller percentage permanently destroyed.

Even more striking than the loss to Vietnam's critical fishing and forestry industries, however, is the chemical legacy of the leading defoliant used in the herbicide program—Agent Orange. Agent Orange is a 50-50 mixture of two herbicides, one of which is made from 2, 4, 5-trichlorophenol. In the synthesis of the latter compound, traces of the ultra-toxic TCDD (tetrachlorodibenzodioxin) are produced. The traces of TCDD in a defoliant like Agent Orange are not clearly harmful in ordinary use. The case of Vietnam, however, is not typical. Saturation spraying has left approximately 550 pounds of the poison distributed throughout the country. While small quantities of the TCDD have prob-

ably washed away, and others been broken up by ultraviolet radiation, the material is a highly stable compound and can reasonably be expected to remain active for decades.

The extreme toxicity of TCDD and its likely effect on the Vietnamese have been hinted at for years. One of the more spectacular side effects was an alarming increase in the incidence of birth deformities in the villages sprayed. As early as 1969, *Dong Nai*, a Saigon newspaper, printed a long article entitled "The Disease of Women Producing Stillborn Fetuses," which they said was a new phenomenon which was causing the "noisiest discussion" in the country. Next to the article was a photograph of a dead, deformed baby with a face like that of a duck. On the following day, the same newspaper reported a case of a woman giving birth to a deformed baby with 2 heads, 3 arms and 20 fingers. Just above the article, the paper carried a picture of another deformed baby with a head resembling that of a poodle or a sheep. Another paper, *Tia Sang*, printed a picture of a baby with three legs, a head squeezed in close to the legs and two arms wrapped around a big bag that replaced the lower section of the face.

Accusations linking defoliation with birth deformities have recently received independent confirmation in research done by T. Diane Courtney of Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. A 1976 study by Courtney published in the *Bulletin of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology* dealt with carry-over effects in TCDD. It was discovered that minute quantities of the chemical administered to mice produced widespread congenital deformities in their litters.

Upon his return from Vietnam, Galston brought more unpleasant news. Ton That Tung, a professor of medicine at the Viet-Duc Hospital in Hanoi, reported recently that the incidence of liver cancer in Vietnam has risen 400 percent in

the last 10 years, and links the startling rise to the defoliation program. Galston met and talked with Ton That Tung about his research, and feels that he has "quite convincing evidence" of the connection between the use of the drug and the rise in cancer. Galston's own observations are supported by recent research of James Allen and John Van Miller of the Department of Pathology at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Allen and Van Miller fed rats a diet containing TCDD and discovered rapid development of a range of tumors, with some localization in the liver. In a related experiment, rhesus monkeys fed TCDD became anemic after six months, experienced the total loss of all blood components within nine months, and showed generalized bone marrow deterioration. Between 9 and 11 months, five of the eight monkeys died. It is notable that the relationship between dosage and body weight in this experiment was 2 to 3 micrograms per kilogram of body weight. To reproduce a similar ratio for every one of the 50 million living Vietnamese would require roughly 500 pounds of TCDD, or the amount now estimated to be in the country.

Despite these scientific reports, and the actions of groups like Friendship (777 U.N. Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017) which has sent 2,000 tons of goods and \$2 million to Vietnam, Congress has refused to participate in the reconstruction of that country. A number of "senses of the House" (and Senate) have been passed, saying that they intend to give no aid, even through third parties like the World Bank. "The Congress obviously doesn't take a very kindly view," Galston remarks. "After World War II, we aided the Germans and the Japanese, our former enemies, to rebuild. We ought to aid the Vietnamese to rebuild in the same way. Even though we didn't quite lick them, that shouldn't be the basis for our giving aid."

JOEL ROGERS

POPULISM PUSHES LABOR

WASHINGTON—The labor law reform bill passed by the House last month is an important measure both of labor's renewed organizing militancy and of the strength of some interesting new political coalitions which rallied behind it.

Over the last 15 years, the old industrial unions have suffered a massive loss of jobs and membership as "runaway shops" have headed for the anti-union states of the Sunbelt. The reform bill is aimed at stopping the deliberate use by Southern employees (such as J.P. Stevens & Company) of flagrant labor-law violations to delay organizing drives, sometimes for years, while protests work their way through the procedural logjams of the National Labor Relations Board and courts of appeal.

The bill steered through the House (it will go before the Senate early next year) reflected important compromises worked out between the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the White House. Victory was also attributable to the political pressure exerted on wavering congresspersons; the A.F.L.-C.I.O. made it clear that this vote would be weighted far more heavily than votes on any other bills in rating labor sympathies. But most interestingly, for the first time in years, labor's lobbyists were backed by a grass-roots campaign, directed by a special task force operating out of A.F.L.-C.I.O. headquarters in Washington, D. C., in which rank and file members, workers fired in Southern organizing drives, plus civil rights, poverty, youth, consumer, reli-

gious and women's groups put pressure on representatives from their own districts.

References to new "populist" trends in American politics are still viewed with suspicion by the Old Guard of the trade union movement, who would prefer that politicians deal with them rather than directly with the rank and file. But an A.F.L.-C.I.O. publication, "Manual for Grass-Roots Lobbying," drawn up as part of the reform campaign noted: "Currently almost half of our elected representatives have served in Congress for less than two terms. Many of them come from marginal districts, often made up of newer suburban areas that lack a strong labor movement. At the same time, internal House reforms have weakened the ties of party cohesiveness, resulting in increased independence and unpredictability on the part of newer members. Under these circumstances, members of Congress are especially attuned to constituency pressures that may affect their reelection." The A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s traditional "inside" lobbying efforts, the manual indicated, are finally going to have to be supplemented "with pressure from the outside—directly from union members and other working people."

The permanence of the coalitions which have been put together during the reform struggle might determine the clout which organized labor will now be able to exert in fights over a much broader range of economic and social issues.

MICHAEL BRAUDE