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The President addresses Congress from the House rostrum. The address portends a lean period for science.

The State of the Union

Pollution, crime and the cities were in; space, science and new technology out, as the President reported to the nation.

To the research and development community, President Johnson's State of the Union address was as significant for what it didn't say as for what it did.

In a "caretaker" kind of message, with little in the way of new programs, even the one big hardware decision appeared negative—a "hold" on any American effort to build an antimissile system, in hopes that the U.S.S.R. can be talked out of building one; the President was obviously pointing toward a new round of disarmament talks. The day after the sombre President reported to the Congress and the nation, his new Ambassador to Russia, Llewellyn Thompson, arrived in Moscow, carrying a message to the Kremlin.

The President hopes to avoid another round in the arms race which would "impose on our peoples, and on all mankind, an additional waste of resources with no gain in security on either side." Russian antiballistic steps so far, he said, were limited to some moves to protect Moscow and were less than full deployment of a missile defense system.

The President's approach to the \$40 billion problem was immediately attacked by members of the Congress. Legislation to proceed with the system is certain to be introduced. If it should pass, there is the possibility that the President would simply refuse to spend the money.

The Administration, sorely beset with practical problems seeks from its science practical answers. Mr. Johnson's

boyhood Populism shows through: for his money he wants progress that he and the people can see—whether in education, health, clean air, medical care or safety of the streets. Neither his words nor his ideas soared; there were no blood-stirring national commitments to explore the moon or create a perfect society on earth.

After some seven years in which the cry of "science" was almost enough by itself to open the public purse, the word was never mentioned. It seemed that after those fat years public science has fallen on lean times, perhaps for more than budgetary reasons.

The mood of Congress seemed balky; strengthened Republican forces recreated their alliance with the southern Democrats, a move that portends trouble for the President, particularly in his social programs and the suggested six percent surtax on individual and corporate income taxes, and on his increase of \$8.3 billion in the total administration budget, bringing it to \$135 billion for fiscal 1968.

Senators and Representatives from both parties promised a sharp look at all spending proposals—a situation in which little that is new in government support of science can be expected. "Great Society" proposals will draw particular scrutiny.

Apart from the antimissile missile question, President Johnson's concern with technology was limited virtually exclusively to such questions as crime laboratories, food and population, pollu-

tion control, the social problems of urban development, the prevention of power failures and protection against hazardous substances.

Surprisingly, the word "space" was not even mentioned by Mr. Johnson, a space buff of long standing. Neither was the supersonic transport. "Technology" was mentioned only in relation to the redemption of decaying cities, and improving world food supplies.

Even oceanography, despite almost simultaneous appointment of a commission to recommend national policy (see page 63), got no mention.

The thrust of Mr. Johnson's address was pointed at Vietnam (the budget imbalancer) abroad, and "Great Society" programs at home—although the words "Great Society" were never spoken.

New anti-crime methods, which the federal government would back financially, were called for. Mr. Johnson hopes to be able to offer communities 90 percent of the cost of developing plans to combat crime; 60 percent of the cost of developing instant communications and special alarm systems and introducing new scientific techniques.

Specific recommendations for applying advanced technology to crime control will be spelled out in the National Crime Commission report to the President at the end of this month. However, last summer's National Symposium on Science and Criminal Justice identified many ways in which crime can be made more difficult—ways so far unexploited by local police forces

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who have had neither the money nor the technical resources to do it alone.

For instance: Technology can develop means of locking ignitions so that even if the keys are left in a car, it cannot be stolen. Since nearly half the car thefts occur because drivers left their keys, a simple ignition lock would reduce thefts substantially.

Technology can provide more secure locks and alarm systems on buildings. It can affect the design of new buildings to reduce violence. Automatic elevators and enclosed stairwells, for instance, invite crime. One solution is to put stairs, walkways and elevators on the outside of buildings or construct them of transparent material.

Police forces need, particularly, a quick, efficient communications system. They need better weapons, especially nonlethal ones whereby criminals can be incapacitated but not harmed.

New crime laboratories could take advantage of computer technology, in filing fingerprints for example. Supposedly the system is so bad in some local departments now that even if the police lift a good fingerprint from the scene of the crime, they cannot find its owner in the files.

The technology for sophisticated chemical and metallurgical analysis is developed but cities have not been able to take advantage of it because they lack good laboratories. Mr. Johnson would have the government pay half the expense for such laboratories.

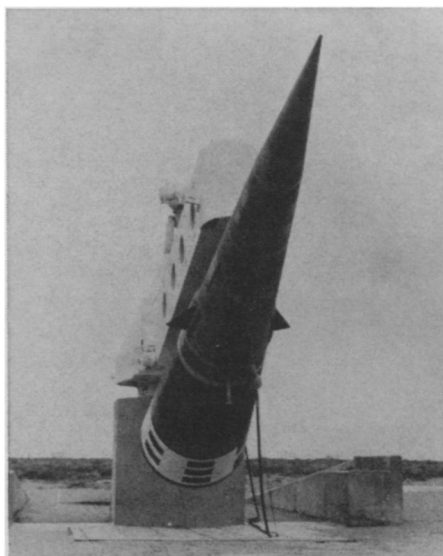
He called upon the "genius of private industry and the most advanced technology to help rebuild our cities." Model cities will attempt both by paying for imagination at the local level.

Under the new program, money will not be given to cities on a first-come, first-served basis. Rather, special consideration will be given to those cities that come up with the most innovative plans for solving specific slum problems, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Weaver. In a press conference on the morning following the President's speech, Weaver said that residential rehabilitation is a major thrust of the Model Cities program and those who look for new techniques will get the greatest consideration. This means new designs, modern building practices and cost reduction techniques—many of which should come from industry.

Cities will also be encouraged to apply technology to such problems as garbage collection, transportation, health services and so forth. An ingenious method of solving the waste disposal problem, for instance, would be highly likely to receive funding under the Model Cities program.

The Model Cities program looks for a mix of federal, local and private money. Though federal demonstration grants amount to only \$900 million over the next two years (providing Congress appropriates even that much) HUD officials estimate their money will be multiplied six or seven times. They expect, for instance, that private enterprise will play a large part in housing rehabilitation.

Mr. Johnson said he would try for an expanded Head Start, beginning earlier and ending later in the child's life. This has been the most successful of the antipoverty program. Psychologists have warned that unless Head Start techniques are carried over into the elementary school year, the benefits are lost. The President called for



Army

Missile defense; no decision yet.

such a follow-through. Psychologists also have said that by the time a slum child is three years old, personality troubles leading to alcoholism and unemployment are present. Mr. Johnson will ask that Head Start begin when a child is three. Head Start now works only with the older preschool children.

The President proposed extension of Medicare benefits to 1.3 million disabled Americans under 65 years of age. Earlier in the day, Representative Cornelius E. Gallagher (D-N.J.) had already reintroduced a bill to this effect. Benefits are not expected to cost enough to arouse opposition to the extended care, the Congressman believes.

Regional "airsheds," proposed by the President in his "total attack on pollution," will probably prove to be an administrative improvement on the Clean Air Act of 1963. A weakness of that law, administrators find, is its dependence on local initiative. Although it provides higher levels of federal support

for regional programs (three-fourths of the cost) than for local efforts (two-thirds of the cost), local governments have tended to take what they could get rather than relinquish any local control to regional organizations.

The procedures to be proposed for providing a federal initiative—and perhaps the power to force regional cooperation—are now under discussion. Pilot airsheds might be designated surrounding such metropolitan centers as New York, Chicago or Los Angeles.

The key to the program will be the word "regional." Present pollution measures have been stymied because of communities' unwillingness to clean their own air if they will have to breathe gas and dust from neighbors. Industries complained that it is unreasonable to expect them to clean up their own exhausts while competitors, only a few miles distant, still freely belch fumes.

A major difficulty in establishment of airsheds will be determination of their boundaries. Unlike watersheds, airsheds will involve a constantly moving mass of atmosphere affecting a widely varying area.

"Steps to prevent massive power failures," glossed over by the President in less than a sentence, could actually take the form of a huge mapmaking operation. For years the Federal Power Commission has been working at a national power grid, connecting the power centers of the country in one huge web. Many of the grid lines, however, need redrawing, so that areas in need can borrow power from their neighbors at a split second's notice. The famous Northeast power failure occurred when areas tried to borrow power from neighbors who had none to lend.

The President's goal is undoubtedly to see that power once again becomes the complete province of the FPC, not the Office of Emergency Planning.

The most conspicuous absence from the President's address was space. With a manned moon landing only two years away, the lack of comment seemed almost louder than would have a few well-chosen words.

There are two probable reasons for the omission. First, there are very few "changes and new stuff" about Project Apollo, said a National Aeronautics and Space Administration official. "The space program is on its way; the hardware is already on the shelf."

Secondly, the post-Apollo future, which ought to start mustering its money as soon as possible, will not look nearly as spectacular as a pair of astronauts walking around on the moon. "The next appearance of space," predicted the NASA official, "will be as a line item in the President's budget."