THE SENATE

Death Comes For the Bandleader

"I believe," wrote Harry Truman in his memoirs, "that if Dick Russell had been from Indiana or Missouri or Kentucky, he may well have been President." As it was, Richard Brevard Russell Jr. was an unreconstructed Georgian from the red-clay hamlet of Winder, 45 miles northeast of Atlanta; his one effort at the Democratic nomination, in 1952, quickly collapsed because of his unshakable racial attitudes, Russell remained in the U.S. Senate for 38 years. There he alternated between outdated parochialism and respected service in the national interest. When he died at 73 last week of the complications of chronic lung disease, the Senate's ranking member and president pro tem was remembered for what he had accomplished—and by some for what he might better have left undone.

AP

GEORGIA'S RICHARD RUSSELL
National service, outdated parochialism.

Russell's civil rights stand was the legacy of a country boy—one of 15 children—whose ancestors had been well-to-do slaveowners. He possessed another Southern legacy: a love of politics fostered by his father, who became the state's chief justice. Young Richard was elected a state legislator at 23, speaker of the Georgia house at 29, Governor at 33. Two years later, he became the youngest member of the U.S. Senate.

Dove to Hawk. At first an ardent supporter of F.D.R. and the New Deal, Russ-

madge, who was an out-and-out racist in comparison with Russell.

By the time the major civil rights battles began in the Senate, Russell had so much stature—and was so well versed in parliamentary procedure—that he led the Southern forces. "Dick Russell and his Dixieland Band," 19 Senators joined in common cause, managed to delay and obfuscate until cloture finally shut off their filibuster in 1964 and the Civil Rights Act was passed.

Russell built his national career largely as chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, a post he assumed in 1951. The same year, President Harry Truman fired Douglas MacArthur as commander of U.S. and United Nations troops in Korea. The incident caused a turmoil across the country, but the dangerously loud outcries of protest were skillfully muted by Russell's careful, thorough conduct of committee hearings on the incident. Later, as the Senate's foremost spokesman on military affairs, Russell championed antiballistic missiles, a strong Navy and new manned bombers for the Air Force. A devout Methodist who had been religiously raised—Russell had read the Bible through twice before reaching adulthood—he once insisted that if nuclear warfare ever reduced the world to Adam and Eve again, he wanted the couple to be American.

In 1954, Russell had opposed John Foster Dulles' proposal to commit military advisers to Viet Nam. "If you send 200 now," the Senator warned President Eisenhower prophetically, "you'll have to send 20,000 before it's over." When Ike decided to send them anyway, Russell loyally turned, in his own words, from dove "into a screaming hawk." Said he: "When the Commander in Chief committed our flag and our forces to that unhappy land, he committed me."

Steppingstone. The patrician Russell became increasingly a loner. After his unsuccessful bid for the presidency, he refused the leadership of his party in the Senate. Instead he pressed for the selection of Lyndon B. Johnson. Russell never married—he had been too busy with politics, he explained—and he usually avoided capital parties, staying in his Washington apartment reading history or the *Congressional Record*. "I came up here with a country-boy idea that you had to be polite and attend every party you were invited to," he would say. "That liked to killed me the first year."

The Senator's health had been failing for five years. Even so, in 1969 he finally surrendered his Armed Services chairmanship and moved over to the more powerful Appropriations Committee. He spent less and less time in the chamber he loved, however, and finally entered Walter Reed General Hospital six weeks ago. He never turned to Capitol Hill but [illegible] cidentally on the day th
Congress [illegible]

sell later tempered his view. "I'm a reactionary when times are good," he explained, "but in a depression, I'm a liberal." Like other Southerners, he remained in the Senate term after term. His biggest battle was an early one. In his first bid for re-election, he had to fight off gallus-snapping Eugene Tal-

No pic to W.C.