



New Political Thrust To Student Protests

Joseph Kraft

BEHIND THE SCENES of the Washington demonstrations this past weekend, there took place a fundamental change in the thrust of protest politics. Students and professors finally kicked their obsession with the Presidency.

They are now plunging into Congressional politics — particularly on the House side. And if they target their efforts effectively, they may soon be reshaping the inner structure of the House in a way that changes national politics across the board.

The move away from the Presidency was symbolized by the delegation of Harvard professors that called on Henry Kissinger, the President's chief foreign policy aide. It included three or four of Kissinger's closest friends from the Harvard faculty and a few others who came along as witnesses.

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THE CLOSE FRIENDS had all worked for one President or another. They had been in touch with Kissinger on many aspects of policy, setting forth their views and occasionally writing letters supportive of President Nixon's policy. They came with witnesses this time to swear off that practice.

They are no longer going to be playing the inside game of trying to sway a President by private counsel. Their visit to Kissinger was an announcement that they had gone public — and into opposition to the executive branch.

Even as some of the most famous idolaters of the Presidency were forswearing their old religion, there were other meetings all over town to put the focus on Con-

gressional politics. At the two main sessions — one at Georgetown University and the other at the home of former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, John Gardner — the big decision was to concentrate on fighting Congressional, and particularly House races.

The House offers a particularly inviting target for many reasons. Districts are usually too small for use of television and other expensive media which students cannot afford. Voter turnout tends to be low — which puts a big premium on getting out the vote. And the one thing that students can probably do better than anybody else is to buttonhole citizens and get them to go to the polls.

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MOST IMPORTANT of all, the inner structure of the House gives great powers to the ranking members of major committees. Many of these committee nabobs are not well enough known in their home districts to be unbeatable. And by knocking them off, or threatening them, it is possible to have a dramatic effect on national politics.

No doubt working the Congressional vineyards is not as exciting as beating President Johnson back in 1968. And many students continue to work in Senatorial races — for Albert Gore of Tennessee and Quentin Burdick of North Dakota; against Henry Jackson of Washington and Thomas Dodd of Connecticut.

But right now the focus is on the House. There lies the best chance of truly transforming national politics — the right offset so many need for the sad events that have so discredited the Presidency.