

SUMMARY

The »SAK» as a pressure group in Finnish politics. By Väinö Huuska.

In Part I of this article (Politiikka no. 1/1962), the writer discussed certain general problems related with pressure groups, as well as the political position of a special kind of the Federation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK) and its activity as a pressure group in matters concerning the Government.

The topics covered by Part II of the article, published in the present issue, are the relations of the SAK with Parliament, its activity on public boards and committees, the pressure policies pursued by it and the opinions advanced concerning these. The writer concludes his article by giving a summary of the pressure-group roles played by the SAK in Finnish political life.

Besides its original function as a labor market organization representing the workers, the SAK constitutes a very strong and active political force. As a pressure group it has exerted influence on matters at two stages: through the political party with which it is most intimately connected and through pressures that it has made to bear direct upon the highest state organs, Parliament and the Government. In connection with the latter line of activity, it has also used, as a matter of course, such habitual means of pressure politics as the press, speeches and lectures. In the early fifties there was a marked increase in the political power of the SAK, but since 1955 a definitely declining tendency has been discernible. A political split in its leading circles (and a consequent re-orientation regarding party politics), as well as the general strike directed by it in 1956, seem to have weakened the SAK as a political pressure group.

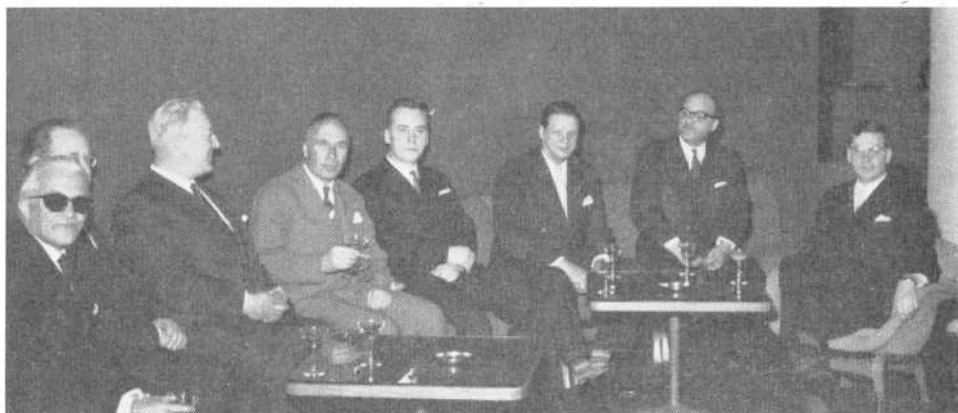
The policies pursued by the SAK have mainly been in agreement with the political opinions of its leaders — sometimes even against the views held by a majority among its members. Great field-organizations are apparently prone to develop into non-democratic organizations, in which the leaders can easily, and through purely technical manipulation, pursue their own political goals in the name of the whole organization. The »political behavior» of the Finnish SAK also shows that organizations originally founded for other purposes are easily turned, in one way or another, into pressure groups with great political influence.

New trends in content analysis. By Antti Eskola.

This article is based on the assumption that if content analysis were freed from its traditional restrictions and brought closer to the general methodology of social sciences, its sphere of application could be increased very markedly.

Finnish research in sociology and political science prefers, for one reason or another, panel studies to content analysis, and an abundance of material in communication research is still waiting its explorer. The writer feels that a content-analytical approach to this material would prove at least as fertile as the studies based exclusively on interviews or on other statistical material. Some problems may be best to solve through combining data secured through both methods. For instance, a many-sided investigation of political ideologies presupposes a content analysis pertaining to party programs and party press, as well as interviews undertaken among the members and supporters of different parties.

Amongst other things, content analysis can serve today as a methodological bridge between historical and sociological research. Unlike a social scientist interested in the present time, a historian dealing with past events is unable to interview people of the period studied by him, with the result that he does not, as a rule, regard the methods of social sciences as useful to himself. In the writer's opinion, however, methodologically accurate content analysis provides an excellent means for increasing the exactitude of historical study.



Professor Jacques Chapsal visited the Finnish Political Science Association last April. From the left: Albert Sundgrén, Jan-Magnus Jansson, Edvard A. Wegelius, mr Chapsal, Kauko Sipponen (Chairman of the association), Kullervo Killinen, Pauli A. Kopperi (Secretary of the association) and Mauri Elovainio. Professor Chapsal hold two interesting lectures on French studies of politics during his visit.