

# War on Filing Cabinet Cuts Purchase 65 Pct.

By Mike Causey

One of Uncle Sam's more successful population control programs has been the relentless, often dirty, war against filing cabinets. The war was declared personally by the Commander-in-Chief 22 months ago.

The kill ratio in the anti-cabinet campaign has been wonderful, officials say. It has exceeded even the wildest dreams of economy-minded strategists.

Since the President's ban on the purchase of unnecessary file cabinets, the total number bought by the General Service Administration for Federal offices has plunged 65 per cent.

Although area commanders caution against undue optimism, it appears there is no longer much danger of file cabinets outnumbering the filers. A rough estimate of the cabinet population puts it at around 2 million, which compares favorably with the 2.7 million Federal workers.

The exciting story of the decline of the file cabinet can best be told with figures. From January, 1965, through September, 1966, GSA bought almost 68,000 file cabinets, at a cost of \$3.3 million. That sounds like a lot, but it's a far cry from the boom period that preceded it, when nearly 128,000 cabinets joined the Government, at a cost of \$9.7 million.

In current Pentagon jargon, that represents a "cost avoidance," in this case, about \$6.4 million worth of avoidance. It should mean there is also more space for people in Government offices.

Economy wasn't the only reason for the file cabinet edict. *Archive's Record Service* had complained that there were too many old records hanging around Federal agencies. It suggested that they be retired, destroyed, or sent to records centers for microfilming. The easiest way to do it, it was felt, was to stop letting people have all the cabinets they wanted to store away junk they didn't need.

Some offices, however, while adhering to the no-new-

cabinet order, have developed other filing systems. These include paper boxes and bookless book cases.

Before it moved to its new headquarters, the Office of Economic Opportunity even had records and papers stacked in bathtubs and sinks in several offices, which formerly had been hotel rooms. One Health, Education and Welfare employe reports that whenever his office needs a new filing cabinet, it orders a bookcase.

Now a new drive on excess furniture, **Operation Cleanup**, has been launched in Federal agencies. GSA and employes from the agencies concerned are now walking through offices, determining which office has excess furniture that can be returned to a central pool.

A similar drive, **Operation Hideout**, has been launched by some harassed clerks and secretaries. They are trying to hide, or justify, office furniture they aren't using at this very moment, but which they are sure will come in handy at some later time.

**Hatch Act:** Sens. Daniel Brewster (D-Md.) and George Murphy (R-Calif.) have been named to the commission that will study the Hatch "no politics" law covering Federal workers. Reps. Arnold Olsen (D-Mont.) and Ancher Nelsen (R-Minn.) will represent the House on the 12-member commission.

Robert Ramspeck, former member of Congress and Civil Service Commission chairman, and Oscar Jones, professor of political science at Arizona State University, have been named by the House as private members of the commission. The remaining six members will be named by the President, and the Senate.

**National Association of Government Employes** has asked the President to call Congress back to enact a pay raise for Federal workers. NAGE President Kenneth T. Lyons, says Federal pay lags from 3 to 45 per cent behind private industry salary rates.

Willard L. Johnson Jr., has been named assistant administrator for admission by GSA. He had worked for Defense and most recently was director of the local office of the Stanford Research Institute.



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## MEMORANDUM

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way down and closed, though whether the slats should be closed up or closed down the memo doesn't say.

The antiwaste prong is much longer, and was evidently illustrated by a Johnson City sixth grader. The theme is "Your Office Home — Take care of it." It went out to 3,000 HEW supervisors across the country.

The text explains, in grammar that would make a Johnson City sophomore blush: "In the attachment there is depicted numerous ways in which each employe can help in keeping government operating costs down."

Some of the numerous ways depicted include:

"Walls — Tacks and tape are damaging. Do not soil with pencil markings, handprints, etc." One cartoon shows a truly Bunyanesque thumb demolishing a wall by tacking up a calendar. The other drawing is a panorama of improbable doodlings, including a straw-hatted stick figure labeled Peter and a crooked tick - tack - toe game containing six Os and three Xs (which the Xs won!).

"Ventilation — Keep windows closed," is illustrated by what appear to be a banana and two American Eagle feathers floating in an open window, under which someone has unaccountably stacked a short length of railroad track.

"Receptacles" is the real puzzler, though. "Never empty an ash tray in the wastebasket," it warns. When coupled with "Floors — Dispose of that cigarette in the ash tray," this policy has frustrated one local supervisor to the point where he circulated a facetious memo speculating on what in the world a heavy smoker is supposed to do when his ash tray is full.

"Until receptacles for this purpose are provided, we see no alternative to emptying ash trays either a) on our desks, or b) in our desk drawers," it concludes.

There is another possibility, of course. They can all empty their ash trays into a large mail sack and ship it over to the White House with the daily load of announcements. It probably never would be noticed.

## ECONOMY AND BEAUTY

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## Tidy HEW Keeps It Quiet

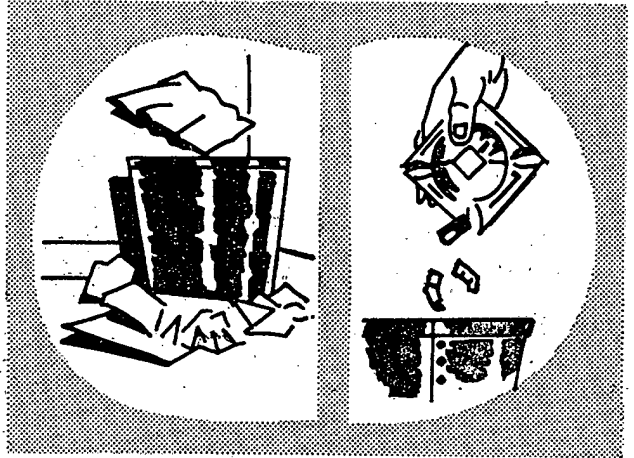
By DAVID BRAATEN  
Star Staff Writer

Somewhere in Johnson City, Tex., a high school senior had better start packing his bags.

Here the Department of Health, Education and Welfare has launched a two-pronged attack on waste and ugliness — primary administration targets — and nobody even thought to put out a press release, much less let the White House announce it.

This is just the sort of thing the President had in mind the other day when he threatened to replace Executive Branch public relations people with young press agents from the Pedernales.

Both prongs of the HEW attack took the form of quietly circulated memoranda, which is hardly the Great Society manner. The antiugliness prong was issued Sept. 7 to all headquarters personnel of the Food and Drug Administration and is



HEW's Advice on Tidiness

titled "Placement of Venetian Blinds."

"The Department has requested our cooperation in making further improvements in the appearance of the buildings we occupy to meet the objectives of the President's Beautification

Program," it states. "As suggested, one of the ways this can be accomplished is by uniform placement of venetian blinds at the end of each working day . . .

Proper placement is all the See MEMORANDUM, Page A-3