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## A Post Goes Begging

The President's difficulty in finding anyone willing and able to take the extremely important post of Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs would be ridiculous if it were not so serious.

Moreover, twice the name of a candidate who had actually been selected has become known, only to have him reject the job when the chips were down. This has happened in the case of Ellsworth Bunker, able ex-Ambassador to Argentina, Italy and India, and now of Carl Spaeth, dean of the Stanford University Law School. It would seem elementary to find out first from the man chosen whether he would take the post or not.

It is believed that about twenty candidates in all have been approached or considered in the past four months.

Of the probable reasons for their refusal, the main one is the dispersion of authority in the field of Latin-American affairs. The State Department's Inter-American Bureau has been pushed into the background by the White House "task force," headed by Adolf Berle, the two White House aides, Richard Goodwin and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., and—in some cases like Cuba—by the C. I. A. As a result the State Department staff has become demoralized.

How can President Kennedy expect anyone of importance to assume a post in such conditions? At best it will be one of the most difficult and thankless jobs in the Government.

This problem should have been settled a long time ago. Now that the White House has been made to look silly twice in recent weeks by choosing candidates, whose names have become public, without getting their prior consent, perhaps the end of this hasty of errors is in sight. Mr. Kennedy will obtain the right man when he offers him a post of authority with a clear line of command from the White House through the Secretary of State.