

## Why I Am Biased in Favor of S. 1850

Howard A. Meyerhoff

*Executive Secretary, AAAS, Washington, D. C.*

For several months I have been reporting news on science legislation in the pages of *Science*, and I have ventured to add current editorial opinions which were prompted by the news. Some of the opinions expressed were sharp, and it was anticipated that they would evoke protests. They did. The volume, if not the vigor, of the protests has been small, and they usually accuse the writer of bias. This is the reason for choosing the title of this article, which is partly a reply to those critics, but which, it is hoped, will also add something new to the issues under debate.

In early October 1945, several hundred scientists returned questionnaires circulated through the AAAS Council. Over 90 per cent believed that a National Science Foundation should be created. Officially, as executive secretary of the Association, I thereupon attempted to convert this belief into legislation. Several elementary principles had to serve as guides: 1) such legislation must meet the high standards of the scientific professions *and be acceptable to a decided majority of scientists*; 2) it had to be acceptable to the Senate committees sponsoring the legislation and at least to a bare majority in Congress; 3) it had to be acceptable to the Executive Branch of the Government or face a veto.

These principles are so self-evident that they should not need stating, but they have been violated by those who clung so long and so obstinately to S. 1285; by those who believe that S. 1777 is the ideal bill; and by those who currently insist that H.R. 6448 embodies everything scientists should want. It would make no difference whether any of these bills is better than S. 1850 from some special point of view—the great majority of scientists do not think so. Support of any of these other bills at this time violates the first principle; and further, as Senator Saltonstall emphatically stated in an address delivered in Washington on 12 June, it creates the impression of dissension

among scientists, and dissension is the precursor of legislative defeat.

I participated in most of the conferences which preceded the formulation of S. 1720 and the ultimate adoption of S. 1850. On the administrative side S. 1850 is the only bill which meets with the approval of experienced legislators.

I witnessed the agreement of the chairman of the Committee Supporting the Bush Report that S. 1850 meets the basic administrative requirements of that group.

I heard the Commissioner of Patents assert that the bill involves no patent reform or changes, and industrialists should agree that the systematization of patent procedure in government departments and bureaus for which S. 1850 provides is desirable.

I was present on the two occasions when the patent provisions were altered to give full protection to the rights and interests of manufacturers and industrial laboratories.

I witnessed, with regret and protest, acceptance of limitations on social science, imposed by the Committee Supporting the Bush Report, although two-thirds of the scientists who participated in the AAAS poll favored inclusion of the social sciences.

There is thus embodied in S. 1850 the most careful consideration of every controversial point and the most effective and acceptable solution of each and every issue. Two hundred thirty-two members of the AAAS Council, which includes representatives of most of the 196 organizations affiliated with the AAAS, believe that this is so; only 10 are sufficiently fearful of political control of science to have voted against support of S. 1850. So long as this proportion wants a National Science Foundation, I am strongly biased in favor of the only bill which has given thought to every issue and alone makes an earnest effort to meet minority needs and objections—S. 1850.

as expressed in a letter from the Director of the Bureau of the Budget to Dr. Vannevar Bush that in order to make the Foundation “effectively responsible to the President and the Congress it should be headed by a director appointed by the President, who should have full administrative responsibility for the operation of the foundation and its several divisions.”

(2) H.R. 6448 does not provide for a Division of Social Sciences, but permits the Board to establish such a division. Nor does the bill provide specifically for scholarships and fellowships in the social sciences. In my opin-

ion the inclusion of the social sciences is too important and fundamental a question to be left to the discretion of the Board and is a proper subject for determination by the Congress. I urge that a Division of Social Sciences be incorporated in the legislation itself.

Both branches of science contribute to national defense and to the general welfare and are, therefore, deserving of Federal support. Moreover, it is generally recognized that the social sciences, which are relatively young, have in many respects not reached the high stage of develop-

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