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Use of Manpower

ON DECEMBER 29 the AAAS Council, meeting at Cleveland, Ohio, gave prolonged and careful consideration to the use of trained manpower in the present emergency. Aware of the fact that many official and unofficial, appointed and self-appointed, committees were working on the problem and making suggestions and recommendations, the Council was reluctant to befog the situation by making an independent set of proposals or by backing any of those already made; but it was the consensus that a group that represents every phase of science and technology should declare itself in general, but not uncertain, terms.

Two resolutions were passed unanimously by the 63 Council members present, but it was the feeling that the entire Council should express itself. On January 10, therefore, the resolutions were mailed to the Council, and 212 votes have been received. This is exactly 80 per cent of the total Council membership.

The text of the resolutions follows:

a) The American Association for the Advancement of Science affirms with all seriousness and conviction that it would be a national calamity not to make a maximum use in the present emergency of the scientific and technical skills possessed by our trained personnel; and that it would be equally calamitous not to assure an adequate continuing supply of such trained personnel.

b) To achieve these objectives of making a maximum use and assuring an adequate continuing supply of trained personnel, a system of Universal *National* Service, as distinct from Universal *Military* Service, should be instituted, to be administered by a carefully qualified civilian agency that will grant no deferments but will allocate all scientific and technical personnel to such national service as their individual training and skills permit, and national needs require.

The vote, though not unanimous, is decisive:

In favor of (a), 207 Opposed, 4
In favor of (b), 188 Opposed, 24

Comments were numerous, ranging from enthusiastic endorsement to qualification, query, or criticism. One member approved the first part of (a) but not the last part. Nearly 40 felt that part (b) should be "spelled out," specifically in regard to the qualifications and method of selecting the personnel in the civilian agency set up to allocate scientists, and in regard to application—whether to all scientists of all age groups or only to those within draft age limits.

Statements relative to the qualifications and method of selection of the personnel in the agency that will allocate scientists according to national need are not too difficult to formulate, but actual operation will, for its success, require a large agency that has access to accurate information regarding military and civilian requirements, on the one hand, and available scientific personnel, on the other. Decisions must be made by men with the perspective to assess the relative importance of competing demands for manpower in military, industrial, research, and educational areas. As many Council members stated, it is not a simple matter to put this kind of organization together.

As for age limits, they must be at least as flexible as those set in legislation covering military service. It should be a basic policy to apply no more regulations than the immediate situation requires. In an all-out war effort, however, the American Chemical Society's recommendation of "total mobilization of the nation's scientific and technical manpower between the ages of 18 and 65" does not appear too extreme, even in a democracy. Resolutions are meaningless unless translated into action, and these will be effectively publicized. It is further proposed to be ready, as an organization, to provide whatever assistance may be requested in the adoption and implementation of a wise program of manpower utilization.

HOWARD A. MEYERHOFF
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