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Full Circle

With the recent appointment of Wallace R. Brode, associate director of the National Bureau of Standards and president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as its science adviser, the Department of State has taken the first step toward the resuscitation of a program that has been sadly neglected in recent years.

The program now being revived was an outgrowth of an experimental use of scientific attachés at the London embassy in 1947-49. Experience with this arrangement was promising enough to lead the Secretary of State to explore the possibilities of an expanded program. To this end he appointed Lloyd V. Berkner, at that time on the staff of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, to study the problems which scientific and technological developments posed for foreign policy.

The ensuing report [*Science and Foreign Relations*, Department of State Publication 3860, General Foreign Policy Series 33 (May 1950)] recommended the establishment of the Office of Science Adviser to the department and the appointment of science attachés at several European embassies. These recommendations were followed, and the first appointments were made in 1951; by 1952 ten attachés were on duty. But, for reasons that have never been made public and despite approval of the work by Congress, the department allowed the program to decline by the simple expedient of not refilling the posts when they became vacant: there has been no science adviser since 1953, and the last attaché returned more than two years ago. The only continuity the program has had has been provided by the assistant to the science adviser, Walter Rudolph, an "economist who had had much to do with organizing the original plan, and who . . . has done a herculean job in holding the few remaining pieces together" [Lloyd V. Berkner, *Foreign Affairs* 36, 229 (Jan. 1958)].

The decline of the program aroused concern among scientists. Thus, Dael Wolfe commented, "By failing to appoint a science adviser and science attachés the Department of State is depriving itself—and the country it represents—of one of its authorized assets" [*Science* 123, 205 (10 Feb. 1956)]. More recently W. H. Forbes, in considering the role of scientists in the department, wrote, "The subjects with which they deal have long had great economic impact and have now a rapidly increasing significance in matters of government and international relations. . . . This presents opportunities for international cooperation which should be utilized. . . ." [*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 8, 275 (Oct. 1957)].

A similar concern has also found expression in Congress, especially in the House Committee on Government Operations. In 1956 the committee by unanimous vote urged the State Department to restore the advisory program.

Whether the decision to restore the program was a belated response to these urgings or a fairly prompt response to more recent events is not now of major importance. What is important is that matters have come full circle and that the department is reestablishing a system that will again give it the benefit of scientific advice on scientific questions that may affect foreign policy and foreign relations.—G. DuS.

