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## Headlines and Highlights

Scientists busy with research, meeting classes, serving on committees, participating in conferences, and otherwise preoccupied, occasionally find time to read stories with scientific aspects in the public press—or loyal members of their families will quote from these accounts across the breakfast table. Scientists have a general awareness of what the public attributes to science.

Contaminated cranberries have been added to air pollution, fallout, the latest rocket launchings, advances in medical research. And now the “population explosion” is appearing in mass-circulation magazines and on the air waves. It is encouraging that the general public has an increasing opportunity to become informed of problems, large and small, nearly all of which are applications of scientific discoveries or are currently the subjects of intensive study.

Scientists have had advance knowledge of these things. The sources of today's headlines have been in scientific journals or have been reported at scientific meetings. Each AAAS meeting—from the first one in 1848—has included papers on matters of general concern to scientists, often on subjects that affect society.

The proceedings of the past 125 meetings would reveal both concepts of ephemeral significance and serious problems that have continued. Among the diverse programs of a single AAAS meeting—no one can attend all of them—reports of new research and new methods for attacking old problems can be expected. To cite but a few instances: Tranquilizers and psychopharmacology gained prominence at the Berkeley meeting of 1954; plans for the IGY program and the crisis in science education were outlined at the 1955 meeting; in 1956, population growth (a perennial topic) and resource development were discussed; the first symposium on guided missiles appeared in 1957; and, at last year's Washington meeting, there was more on space science, biochemistry, computers, major problems of the American economy, and the phenomena of mental disorder.

What's new this year? A glance at the special sessions and the topical list of symposia in this issue will suggest the collective thinking of the many program chairmen on what is timely and important. For example, Section Np—Pharmacy has a two-session symposium, “The Scientist's Part in Protection of the Public,” on food additives—planned last spring. Section O—Agriculture has five sessions on the development and protection of the germ plasm of plants and animals useful to man, a subject that is indirectly related to food for an expanding population. Among the exhibits of the Annual Exposition of Science and Industry, described on later pages, are some decidedly novel and important items. Large firms participate to show some of their latest advances in technology.

As the meeting approaches, inquiries about its content increase in volume. At least the highlights are requested. This issue of *Science* and the synopses of programs published each week since 30 October should help. One thing can be said: Today's highlights will be tomorrow's headlines!—RAYMOND L. TAYLOR, AAAS