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The American Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in 1848 and incorporated in 1874. Its objects are to further the work of scientists, to facilitate cooperation among them, to improve the effectiveness of science in the promotion of human welfare, and to increase public understanding and appreciation of the importance and promise of the methods of science in human progress.

Biologists' Choice

On 26 January the Governing Board of the American Institute of Biological Sciences voted unanimously to repay in full the AIBS debt to the National Science Foundation (*Science*, 25 Jan. 1963, p. 317, and 1 Feb. 1963, p. 392). They hope to make a first payment of \$100,000 very soon and to clear the rest of the debt in three annual installments. The proposal is an honorable one; we hope that the responsible authorities on the federal government side will accept it.

Now AIBS must raise the money, and raising it will require support from many biologists. This may be difficult, for most biologists have no reason to feel personally responsible for the AIBS's difficulties, and to many of them AIBS is a somewhat remote organization. Their immediate loyalty is to a more specialized society which is only one of many that make up the federation that is AIBS. But AIBS has been of service to biologists generally, through the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, through the arrangement of meetings and conferences, in managing a portion of the National Roster, in representing the interests of biologists in Washington, and in a variety of other ways. AIBS can continue to provide such services only if biologists in large numbers are willing to support it.

The Governing Board plan involves three elements. A substantial portion—perhaps equal to the first payment of \$100,000—can be expected from royalties or advances against royalties from the AIBS Film Series. Gifts and long-term, no-interest loans will be sought from individual biologists and other sources. And AIBS will start a strong drive to recruit individual members at \$10 a year. Through these means, the Governing Board hopes not only to repay the debt to NSF but also to build up an operating fund to enable the organization to avoid in the future the kind of deficit financing and use of grant funds that got it into its present difficulties (see page 472).

If biologists come forward quickly with gifts, loans, and pledges of annual dues to AIBS, they will save AIBS; provide it with capital to allow it to go forward as a useful federation of biological societies; justify the faith the federal government has shown in withholding the severe measures that might have been imposed; and give new encouragement to the general policy on which most federal fund-granting agencies have worked—that of trusting a grantee instead of constantly policing him.

In contrast, if the Governing Board proposal is not sustained, AIBS will be bankrupt and will probably disappear; biologists will have disavowed responsibility for the past actions of their federation and the leadership of the Governing Board in attempting to resolve the difficulties; science in general and biology in particular will suffer a general loss of esteem; and the federal government will have been given an open invitation to replace the policy of trust in the grantee with one of rigid rules, red tape, and policing.

The issue that now faces biologists is whether to support the program advanced by the Governing Board or to fail to support it, and by this decision to endorse the consequences of one or the other course.—D.W.