

Science Foundation: New Director Appoints University of Chicago Aide to Reactivated Deputy Post

Leland J. Haworth, incoming director of the National Science Foundation, announced last week that John T. Wilson, a former NSF official, would return to the Foundation as deputy director. The appointment, which is the first to be made by Haworth, has been extremely well received in science-administration circles.

Wilson became assistant to the president of the University of Chicago in 1961 after lengthy service with NSF, including 6 years as assistant director of the division of biological and medical sciences.

The NSF deputy directorship, which pays \$20,500 a year, has been unoccupied since the resignation of C. E. Sunderlin in 1957. At that time, NSF instituted a reorganization which established the posts of associate directors, and director Alan T. Waterman decided that it would be unnecessary to continue the post of deputy.

The appointment appears to be in line with thinking that NSF has reached a point in its growth where closer attention at the top would prove beneficial. There is no talk of a far-reaching shake-up, but it is felt that a "revitalization" is in order.

Meanwhile, amid high tribute and many expressions of approval, Haworth's appointment was endorsed early this month by the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee and then speedily confirmed unanimously by the Senate. Both he and Wilson are expected to take office 1 July.

Plans are now under way for what is to be one of the most sentimental and significant occasions in relations between the scientific community and the federal government: a dinner in Washington, on 21 June, marking Waterman's retirement after 12 difficult, and often insufficiently appreciated, years as NSF's first director. There has been no dearth of publicity on difficulties arising from the Foundation's growing pains, but the generally untold and most meaningful story is that, under Waterman, NSF has evolved into a powerful and intelligent supporter of the nation's scientific community. This result was not inevitable; in fact at the outset, the odds were that the very opposite would happen. The fact that it did not is a testimonial to Waterman's performance.—D.S.G.

Science Exhibits: At Seattle Fair, Federal Funds, Scientists Helped, New Yorkers Try a Different Tack

Ever since the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851 set the style for international exhibitions, no world's fair has been complete without science exhibits. Science has been used in a variety of ways—to illustrate human progress, to flaunt national achievements, simply to create crowd-pleasing effects. Usually the fair-makers' motives are mixed, and the science exhibits are intended to serve a combination of purposes. Some visitors to the Brussels Fair in 1958 came away feeling that chauvinism about science, which is not new, had been given a strong ideological twist and that one thing the science-exhibit designers had in mind was to help fair-goers draw comparisons between Western and Communist science.

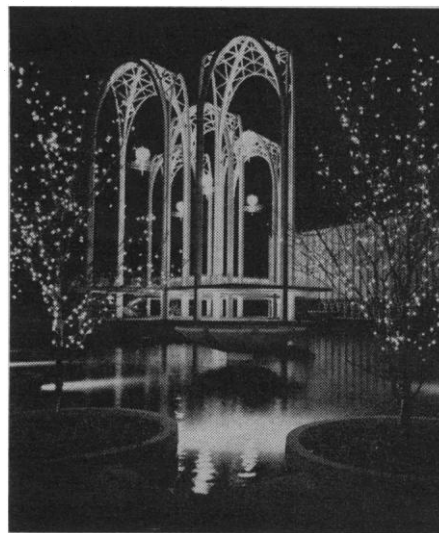
Generally, science exhibits have stressed the works and wonders of science and have leaned heavily toward displays of technology. At the Seattle World's Fair in 1962, planners of the United States science exhibit risked a display that was essentially science without technology, and they appear to have made a popular success of it.

At the New York World's Fair of 1964 and 1965, which opens next April, science will get its usual favorable mention in a number of foreign and domestic exhibits and will have a place of its own in a Hall of Science, which is intended to survive the fair as a permanent museum of science and technology for the city of New York. At this decidedly late date, however, the project is still on the drawing board.

If the science exhibit at Seattle emphasized science for science's sake to a greater extent than is customary, this seems mainly the consequence of two factors: scientists were more deeply involved than usual and so was the United States Government.

Technology has tended to dominate the science exhibits, probably because industry has been interested in linking science favorably to its products and because it has had the money and expertise to do the job. Exhibits typically have run to working models, dramatic effects like man-made lightning, and a priori glimpses into the future. And industry has put on some fascinating shows.

Science exhibits, virtually by definition, are designed to educate, and their



U.S. Science Exhibit, Seattle.

style and content have been governed by two main assumptions: (i) that people do not know much about science, and (ii) that a crowd in a fair-going mood does not want to spend too much time or effort in self-improvement.

For the scientific community, the question of the responsibility of the scientist to help educate the public on science has been a perennial one. There are excellent arguments on both sides, but in this matter most scientists choose the role of monk rather than missionary. Certainly in respect to publicizing and interpreting science on the fairgrounds this has been true.

The bigger role assumed by scientists in shaping the Seattle exhibit seems to have been the result both of accidents and of trends. The promoters of the Seattle fair, which had a Century 21 theme, thought that science should play a prominent part in a fair dedicated to the next century. At the same time, a group of scientists, science administrators, and foundation officers of national note shared a feeling that there was serious lag in the popular understanding of science.

These two groups made common cause in an attempt to persuade the federal government to participate in the Seattle fair as sponsor of a large popular science exhibit. It was deemed appropriate that a federal pavilion be dedicated to science, since the federal government is now the biggest science contractor in the world and it is not difficult to make a case that the nation literally lives or dies by science. The proponents of the science exhibit apparently also reasoned that if the citizens and taxpayers understood more