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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.

## The President's Science Adviser

Announcement of the retirement of Jerome B. Wiesner as the President's Science Adviser is an event which calls for stocktaking. Wiesner has served simultaneously in many roles—President's Science Adviser, chairman of the President's Science Advisory Committee, director of the Office of Science and Technology, and chairman of the Federal Council on Science and Technology. In addition he has been de facto director of the Bureau of the Budget for research and development and personnel procurement officer for scientific posts. He has had at his disposal perhaps more power than that enjoyed collectively by all other scientists connected with government. The principal sources of this authority have been access to the President, and control in budgetary matters.

In his many roles Wiesner has been required to present at least three differing visages to the world. As the President's adviser, his appropriate function has been that of self-effacing, impartial judge, often acting under tightest security. As director of OST, it has been in the public interest for him to wield authority as openly as possible. His power also implicitly has required him to be a Statesman of Science—a deep thinker—with long-term views of evolving patterns in science and technology and of the relations among society, science, and education.

The realities of politics and power dictate that the role of President's Science Adviser and its needs should transcend all other functions. Almost inevitably the secrecy necessary to that office has been carried over into the Office of Science and Technology, which attempts to keep secret even the identity of its employees and consultants. The realities of human behavior also dictate that immediate operating decisions take priority over long-term thinking.

Wiesner has served the nation during a very difficult period. He has been among the most conscientious, hard-working individuals who have held high position in Washington. By tradition, comment at this time should consist of fulsome praise of his policies and accomplishments. Yet such comment would necessarily be an exercise in creative prose. After almost 3 years in which Wiesner has participated in countless decisions, there is little in the public domain to indicate the quality of his judgments or actions. For instance, the last annual report of the Federal Council for Science and Technology conveys the information that various studies are in progress.

When power is exercised, someone gets pushed around, and other executive agencies have been the resentful victims. In addition, the fate of the OST budget indicates misgivings in the minds of members of Congress. Thus, the PSAC-OST complex faces potential hostility on the part of Congress and government agencies, and it has provided almost no intellectual basis for support by the scientific community. To repair the situation will probably require more than changing the guard. It will certainly necessitate a less arrogant mode of operation. Means should be found to separate functions of the PSAC-OST complex into logical packages, with no one man asked to perform more than is humanly possible. The job of President's Science Adviser is a big one which merits full-time effort. A full-time director should head OST, and he should have a far better staff—one of high scientific stature. Finally, we need a Planning Office headed by a man who can think and who can marshal the wisdom of this nation in attempting to give guidance for the future.

—P.H.A.