

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR  
THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE**

*Science* serves its readers as a forum for the presentation and discussion of important issues related to the advancement of science, including the presentation of minority or conflicting points of view, rather than by publishing only material on which a consensus has been reached. Accordingly, all articles published in *Science*—including editorials, news and comment, and book reviews—are signed and reflect the individual views of the authors and not official points of view adopted by the AAAS or the institutions with which the authors are affiliated.

**Editorial Board**

|                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| ROBERT L. BOWMAN       | EVERETT I. MENDELSON |
| JOSEPH W. CHAMBERLAIN  | NEAL E. MILLER       |
| JOHN T. EDSALL         | JOHN R. PIERCE       |
| EMIL HAURY             | KENNETH S. PITZER    |
| ALEXANDER HOLLAENDER   | ALEXANDER RICH       |
| WILLARD F. LIBBY       | DEWITT STETTIN, JR.  |
| GORDON J. F. MACDONALD | CLARENCE M. ZENER    |

**Editorial Staff***Editor*

PHILIP H. ABELSON

*Publisher*

DAEL WOLFLE

*Business Manager*

HANS NUSSBAUM

*Managing Editor:* ROBERT V. ORMES*Assistant Editors:* ELLEN E. MURPHY, JOHN E. RINGLE*Assistant to the Editor:* NANCY TEIMOURIAN

*News and Comment:* DANIEL S. GREENBERG, JOHN WALSH (European Office, Lime Tree Farm, East Hagbourne, Berkshire, England), ELINOR LANGER, LUTHER J. CARTER, BRYCE NELSON, MARION ZEIGER, JANE AYRES

*Book Reviews:* SYLVIA EBERHART

*Editorial Assistants:* ISABELLA BOULDIN, ELEANORE BUTZ, BEN CARLIN, GRAYCE FINGER, NANCY HAMILTON, OLIVER HEATWOLE, ANNE HOLDSWORTH, KONSLYNNIETTA HUTCHINSON, KATHERINE LIVINGSTON, BARBARA SHEFFER

**Advertising Staff***Director*

EARL J. SCHERAGO

*Production Manager*

ROSE MARIE ROMAGNOLO

*Advertising Sales Manager:* RICHARD L. CHARLES

Sales: New York, N.Y., 11 W. 42 St. (212-PE-6-1858): ROBERT S. BUGBEE

Scotch Plains, N.J., 12 Unami Lane (201-889-4873): C. RICHARD CALLIS

Medfield, Mass. 02052, 4 Rolling Lane (617-359-2370): RICHARD M. EZEQUELLE

Chicago, Ill. 60611, 919 N. Michigan Ave., Room 426 (312-DE-7-4973): HERBERT L. BURKLUND

Los Angeles 45, Calif., 8255 Beverly Blvd. (213-653-9817): WINN NANCE

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE: 1515 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: 202-387-7171. Cable: Advancesci, Washington. Copies of "Instructions for Contributors" can be obtained from the editorial office. ADVERTISING CORRESPONDENCE: Rm. 1740, 11 W. 42 St., New York, N.Y. 10036. Phone: 212-PE 6-1858.

**Academic Responsibility**

Many questions have arisen concerning the proper conduct of a faculty member in relation to other persons, his university, and the agencies that provide research support. Some of the worrisome questions were illustrated in the account in last week's *Science* of the summer activities of Professor Stephen Smale. On a quite different front, medical and behavioral scientists have been troubled by the disregard a few of their fellows have shown for the rights of human beings used as experimental subjects. Despite much discussion of the management of grants, problems persist. It seems likely that among all the persons whose work is supported by federal funds there are a few scoundrels who have accepted salary from two sources for the same period, or in some other fashion have violated common standards of honesty. The number who are dishonest, callous, or foolish may be small, but frequency is not the issue. It takes only a few to make a large amount of trouble, and they can continue to do so as long as the majority shrug off misbehavior as the business of someone else.

Standards are established either by government decree or through voluntary self-discipline, and both methods have their appropriate uses. Penal codes and tax rates, for example, are subject to government control, while academic standards, accrediting procedures, and codes of ethics are adopted voluntarily.

When the federal grant program started, the scientific judgment, honesty, and good sense of scientists were expected to control the ways in which money was used. Elaborate rules established by government action were not considered necessary. More recently, as the number of grantees and the amount of money involved have increased many fold, government regulations have multiplied, for informal surveillance by professional colleagues and academic or research administrators has no longer seemed to provide adequate controls.

Many scientists object to this trend. They dislike time-keeping requirements and the necessity of receiving advance permission for what their scientific judgment tells them are necessary changes in budget allocations or desirable changes in research plans. The trend toward greater government control has also been a matter of controversy in government circles. Critics have advocated stronger central controls at the same time that science agencies have argued that control should be primarily a voluntary and institutional rather than a governmental responsibility and have pleaded with universities and research laboratories to accept that responsibility. University presidents have generally understood the importance of keeping control at the institutional level. But scientists often have not, and some have failed to recognize the need that there be public confidence that public funds are used prudently and honorably. They have talked much of academic freedom without accepting the correlative requirement of academic responsibility.

Sooner or later there is going to be a messy public scandal. When that happens, the damage will be much less if the universities, with the wholehearted support of their faculties and the scientific community, can demonstrate that they have recognized the danger, have established responsible standards, and can deal promptly and effectively with violations. If they cannot, the warning is clear: government controls will grow stricter; reporting requirements will become more onerous; and the whole enterprise will suffer.—DAEL WOLFLE