Science Policy and State Government

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Increasingly, we Americans are beginning to examine critically our support of science and technology. We are asking whether our scientific and technological endeavors are sufficiently focused on solving the problems facing society today and whether we are sufficiently alert to possible dangers to society in some technological advances.

The utilization of science in this century has, until now, been affected in ways that scarcely impinged on most of our democratic political institutions. Earlier in the century application of science centered on an inventive, industrial technology to supply consumer goods and was later expanded to federally managed development of defense and space technology. There developed mutually supportive programs in our universities, in industry, and in the federal government. The needs served were not primarily the concern of state and local government, and recent reviews of science policy, such as those in the 1968 Dallas AAAS Review of Science Policy in the United States, and D. K. Price's book, *The Scientific Estate*, center on federal policies and their relation to science in universities and in industry.

Today, most of society's critical shortages are in the public sector, traditionally the province of state and local governments. The needs in health, housing, education, transportation, and environmental control are in areas where state and local governments, representing the citizens and communities directly affected, bear traditional and inescapable responsibilities. Here, in a situation entirely unlike national defense, local governments must be concerned with every stage of the development of technology patterned to domestic public needs. In recognition of this fact, many states have begun experimenting with various types of science agencies or councils designed to provide scientific and technological advice in governmental decision-making. Some state agencies have funding authority to sponsor research and development programs. Alert to this trend, the National Science Foundation has a formal planning program to develop information for state government and to aid in evolving innovative approaches to governmental use of science and technology.

It is becoming apparent that if science is to serve the domestic public sector, vigorous science policies based on cooperation of state and local governments with industry, universities, and the federal government, must be promoted, just as national defense needs enlisted the universities and industry in support of federal efforts.

The symposium on Science Policy and State Government, to be held on 30 December as part of the 1969 AAAS Annual Meeting in Boston, is intended to provide a forum for scientists and government officials to examine the possible character of the new partnership. On the premise that state government is strategically placed—at once close to those governed and potentially capable of working effectively with federal and local authority and with universities and industry—and recognizing that some states are already taking the lead, the emphasis is on the possible central role of state government in the national tasks ahead.

The general chairman of the symposium is M. Frank Hersman, associated with the National Science Foundation's programs on state science policy; the two co-chairmen are governors' science advisers, Robert W. Cairns of Delaware and Thomas G. Fox of Pennsylvania.

The morning session will be devoted to examining current patterns and future prospects for utilizing scientific expertise in state government and in developing productive state science policies. The afternoon session will examine the functions of science and technology in serving state government, as seen by state officials; and the opportunities for interaction of state government with federal agencies and the universities, as seen by leaders in federal and academic establishments. Discussion periods are scheduled at the end of each session.

The present moment offers a new challenge and opportunity to scientists and engineers to serve public needs more directly. As Lee A. DuBridge, President Nixon's science adviser, has observed in a recent *Science* article, "Science Serves Society":

> Some have said that science is too important to get mixed up in politics. The fact is that today science is too important to stay out of politics. For in our democracy, it is through politics that things get done.

It is fitting that at this AAAS Meeting, scientist and politicians from universities and industry and state, local, and federal government should discuss how we must work together to insure that science serves society more effectively in the last third of the century.

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Speakers and Topics

Morning

Utilization of Science Advice in State Government, Harvey M. Sapolsky (M.I.T.).

Ingredients of a Model State Science Policy, A. B. Biscoe, Jr. (University of Tennessee).

Strategy for Developing a Multistate Regional Science Policy, Wyatt M. Rogers, Jr. (Southern Interstate Nuclear Board, Atlanta, Georgia).

Problems in Implementing a State Science Policy, Chandler H. Stevens (Governor's Advisory Council for the Development of Government Programs, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico).

Afternoon

The Function of Science and Technology in the Executive Branch of State Government, The Honorable John N. Dempsey, (Governor, State of Connecticut).

The Role of Academic Institutions in Providing Scientific and Technical Assistance to State and Local Governments, Detlev Bronk (President Emeritus, Rockefeller University; Science Adviser to Mayor Lindsay, New York City).

Requirements of a State Legislature for Science Policy Information. Speaker to be announced.

Developing a Federal-State Framework for Science and Technology Activities. Speaker to be announced.