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## Open Letter

My dear Mr. President:

The substantial amount of uncertainty that exists concerning future plans and future funding levels for research and other scientific activities suggests that it would be useful to have an authoritative statement of the science policies of the federal government.

Discussions with staff members of federal agencies indicate that some of them share the uncertainties concerning the future that are widely expressed outside of government. The preparation of a statement of federal science policy—which would require agreement among the Bureau of the Budget, the Office of Science and Technology, and perhaps other offices that are responsible to you for national planning—would therefore help to clarify several problems that now make it difficult for the whole scientific community, in and out of government, to plan for the next several years.

I have in mind such matters as:

- ▶ the criteria for choice among alternatives, not all of which can be supported;

- ▶ the possibility of assigning a larger share of research-supporting responsibility and funds to the National Science Foundation, in view of the number of research programs NSF has had to take over from other agencies and of the objections being expressed in Congress and on some university campuses to Department of Defense support of research in the universities;

- ▶ possible changes in the nature and size of graduate fellowship and traineeship programs that may be indicated by the changing supply-demand relationships for scientific personnel and the forward time scale on which the planning of these programs is based;

- ▶ the apparent diminution of emphasis on basic research and training in the area of biomedicine at a time when the need for major and long-range improvements in medical services is being widely urged; and

- ▶ the fact that federal appropriations for research and development are not keeping up with rising costs.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but these are examples of issues that need clarification.

Two Presidents of the United States were members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and one, Herbert Hoover, maintained his membership for over 60 years. It was at a meeting arranged by the AAAS, in cooperation with the National Academy of Sciences and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, that President Eisenhower announced his decision to recommend to Congress that the federal government finance construction of the large linear accelerator at Stanford University as a national research facility. *Science*, the weekly magazine published by the Association, has frequently been the medium of discussion of science policy problems by your science adviser and his predecessors, by other members of the executive and legislative branches of government, and by scientists outside of government. It would be an appropriate place to publish a statement of the science policies of your administration. I believe that the publication of such a statement would help to focus discussion on the major issues involved.

Sincerely,

*Dael Wolfe*

Dael Wolfe  
Publisher

The Honorable

The President of the United States