

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### ● SCIENCE CURRICULUM

**GRANTS:** The National Science Foundation has announced the award of \$14,474,134 to 657 colleges and universities under its institutional grants for science programs. The grants range from \$1,000 to \$142,756. A grant is based on the amount of federal research awards received by an institution in fiscal year 1969.

● **COMPUTER LIBRARY:** The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has received \$400,000 from the Council of Library Resources to conduct a 1-year experiment in a computer-based library system. Known as Intrex (for Information Transfer Experiments), the system employs remote display consoles connected to a central computer which contains detailed cross references to thousands of scientific articles. The consoles will also display the full text of selected articles. Studies for the system were initiated at MIT 5 years ago. Additional support for design and development of Intrex has come from the National Science Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the Independence Foundation.

● **NEW PUBLICATIONS:** *Science Council Report No. 10—Canada, Science and the Oceans* by the Science Council of Canada outlines a major program for Canadian marine science and technology and may be had for 75 cents from Information Canada, Ottawa, Ontario. *Waste Management Concepts for the Coastal Zone*, a report by the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering is available for \$3.50 from the Printing and Publishing Office, NAS-NAE, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20418. *Ecosphere* is a worldwide environmental news bulletin published bimonthly by the newly formed International Ecological University, a Berkeley environmental action and education organization. Subscriptions are \$4 and may be obtained from IEU, 300 Eshleman Hall, University of California, Berkeley 94720. *How Medical Students Finance Their Education*, Public Health Service publication No. 1336-1, contains results of a 1967-68 survey and is for sale for \$1 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 20402.

Athelstan Spilhaus, the current president of AAAS.

Some persuasion was apparently required to get Seaborg to allow his name to be put forward. Seaborg had previously been asked to run for AAAS office in 1963 and again in 1968 (he was AEC chairman in both those years, too), but each time he had declined, citing the press of other duties. In an interview with *Science*, Seaborg said that when he was asked again this year to run for AAAS office he accepted because it would have been "embarrassing or awkward to turn them down a third time" and because he felt he could "adjust my schedule and take on a role at AAAS, if elected." In the opinion of Spilhaus, who is Seaborg's most fervent supporter among AAAS board members, Seaborg was honoring the association and doing it a service by agreeing to allow his name to be put in nomination. "He needs the presidency of the AAAS like he needs a hole in the head," Spilhaus said.

The question of a conflict between Seaborg's AEC duties and his possible AAAS role seems to have been given only slight attention by the nominating committee. Two participants in the committee's 22 June meeting, at which candidates were slated, recall that the question was briefly raised as to whether it was "appropriate" to slate a high government official, but there was little or no discussion and none of the participants indicated much concern over the matter. Nor did Seaborg himself—though he was well aware that he would remain at the AEC for another 5 years—give much thought to the possibility of a conflict. "It didn't occur to me at all—it just didn't occur to me as the remotest possibility," he recalls. Seaborg believes he can resolve any conflict which does arise in "the usual fashion" by absenting himself from discussions and by abstaining from voting on matters that involve the AEC.

Opposition to Seaborg's candidacy does not seem to have developed until after the nominations were publicly announced in the AAAS *Bulletin*, which was mailed to some 130,000 members in September. Several weeks went by with no visible sign of protest against Seaborg's candidacy, but then a highly charged discussion of the implications took place at the board's meeting in October and continued in subsequent informal conversations among board members. One informed count indi-

cates that 11 of the 13 board members have, at one time or another, expressed some degree of concern over Seaborg's candidacy. The spectrum of concern ranged from an opinion that Seaborg should be asked to withdraw to a feeling that he should at least be apprised of the board's concerns so that he could think about the implications of his candidacy. Three board members felt strongly enough to write letters to the board chairman contending the inappropriateness of slating Seaborg. Though the board has no official role in the elections process, the upshot of the board's discussions was that H. Bentley Glass, board chairman, visited Seaborg on 3 November to describe the board's thinking. The discussion was general, and Glass made no formal request that Seaborg drop out of the election race.

Seaborg later told *Science* he "felt at a loss" after Glass's visit because "no names were identified as opposed to my candidacy and no numbers were identified—it was not clear whether one or two board members were concerned or virtually the entire board." Seaborg subsequently consulted with Spilhaus, the head of the committee that had nominated him, and Spilhaus unequivocally urged Seaborg to stay in the race. "I counseled Glenn on no account to withdraw," Spilhaus recalls, "not merely because the nominating committee thought he'd make a splendid president, but also because his withdrawal at that late stage [the ballots were about to be mailed out] would have caused tremendous turmoil." Spilhaus said he also resented the fact that board members were "interfering with the Council's prerogatives" by trying to "manipulate" the election even though the board as such has no official role in the elections process and is not supposed to be self-perpetuating. "Those board members gave themselves a terrible black eye," Spilhaus believes. Ultimately Seaborg, yielding to the urgings of Spilhaus, decided to leave his name in nomination, and the ballots were sent out on 10 November.

Just what were the issues that had the board so upset? For the most part, they involved the possibility that Seaborg's AEC position might interfere with the ability of the AAAS to play a role in public affairs that involve the AEC.

Those who oppose the slating of Seaborg, for example, note that the AAAS Committee on Environmental