cently been elected to a 4-year term as a member of the board of directors of the Association. I would hope in that period we might address ourselves to the question of how a professional society defends itself against efforts to politicize and thereby destroy it.

In what became a sequence of press conference and counter press conference, a current board member, Barry Commoner, noted that Humphrey had in fact completed his address, and went on to defend the AAAS's general policy of allowing dissenters a hearing. Moynihan thereupon elaborated his remarks to reporters, and then AAAS president Mina Rees and chairman of the board Athelstan Spilhaus followed up by supporting Commoner and the AAAS policy.

The protesters have, in fact, become a familiar, almost institutionalized feature of AAAS meetings. Tables in the main registration area were manned by activists, a room was alloted to them in one of the meeting hotels, and access to a mimeograph machine was thrown in. The "Science for the People" movement, based on the Scientists and Engineers for Social and Political Action (SESPA) group, has been the dominant dissenting organization. Although SESPA makes genuine efforts to avoid distinctions between chiefs and indians, a dozen or so individuals, most of them from Cambridge, Chicago, and New York, are hardy perennials at the AAAS meetings and appear to act as the leading theoreticians and tacticians.

Members of SESPA are mainly graduate-student age or older, and many of them appeared to have gone to Philadelphia this year with the main idea of communicating to their "fellow scientific workers" the view that the present system deprives them of control over their work and lives, whether they be employed in industry, government, or the universities; the AAAS they view as essentially an extension of the system. Intensified U.S. air action over Vietnam during the week of the meeting swung attention back to the war, which has been the chief target of the activists in recent years, and much of their attention was directed to a street vigil and march on Independence Hall on Wednesday in support of a contingent of antiwar Vietnam veterans who were encamped at Valley Forge.

Activist tactics of sending flying squads around to AAAS sessions to enlist volunteers for the vigil and march drew mixed reactions. Interruptions en-

How Soon for Fusion?

In recent congressional hearings on the status and the future of controlled thermonuclear fusion, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy heard a parade of optimistic scientists urge a rapid boost in funds for fusion research. They told the joint committee that money, not nature, was now the chief restraint on progress toward a practical fusion reactor. And among the scientists, Edward C. Creutz, the National Science Foundation's assistant director for research, advocated an accelerated program that could bring about the advent of electric power from controlled fusion by 1990, 10 years earlier than generally predicted. His eagerness collided with skepticism on the part of Representative Craig Hosmer (D–Calif.), who chided scientists for their proclivity to do what seems possible mainly because it seems possible. This slightly abridged dialogue followed:

HOSMER: I am asking whether it is worth while to make the trip in 20 years rather than in 30 years, considering the fact that we have a long time left after that.

CREUTZ: There are some smart people who want to do it and have ideas about what to do for it.

HOSMER: We have to leave some problems for the yet unborn.

CREUTZ: There may be some left. . . . We can't foresee all the problems of society now.

HOSMER: Doctor, if for some unforeseeable reason it turns out that we don't get [a practical fusion reactor] until the year 2010, is the sky going to fall in? Will everybody freeze? Is the world going to be different?

CREUTZ: I am sure it will be different. And I'm sure it will be a much less interesting place if we have not solved this exciting problem.

HOSMER: Exciting to whom? You will be dead and I will be dead by that time anyway.

CREUTZ: Not only to the scientists is it exciting but you talk to any of your constituents and I think you will find this is an exciting thing, if we can get energy from seawater.

HOSMER: We are not doing this thing for kicks, doctor, Ph.D. kicks or otherwise. This is something we have to evaluate on a scale of necessity to the world [and consider] every single bit of money, every single bit of effort and intelligence that goes into this. . . . Just because it makes people at Princeton and Oak Ridge and Livermore and places like that feel good to work on this thing is no sound reason to work on it at all, or to push it 10 years ahead. . . .

CREUTZ: It's not too bad a reason. . . . If it makes people feel good that is a pretty good reason. If we agree that energy is essential to our kind of civilization, if we agree there are only two major sources of energy—namely, fission and fusion—then fission is coming along quite well and fusion is ready to be pushed, and there are people ready to do it.

HOSMER: . . . Why don't we just have a two-year moratorium on any kind of experimental work at all and make these fellows go to their offices and their slide rules and blackboards and do some thinking about this problem so they are not wasting a lot of time bending tin, when they ought to be deciding what ought to be done before they are out doing it?

CREUTZ: This is not the way science and technology go. . . . During the last world war there was a great deal of theoretical work done in Japan on field theories and nuclear forces and most of it was wrong, not because the people were not extremely brilliant physicists, but because you can't carry out science and technology without experimental programs coupled with it. . . . You can't sit back and only think about nature. You have to get your hand on her, too.

HOSMER: Sometimes it looks like too many fingers in the pie. . . .