

proached. Several members of the committee disagree. According to Visotsky, the study got "hung up" on Chu and Trotter, but the issue was really whether the board trusted members of the committee with such a potentially explosive study. Bazelon and others go one step farther. In a recent speech Bazelon said, "Our committee agreed that what we experienced was the ranks of organized psychiatry defensively drawing together; there was to be no scrutiny, even by *insiders*—even they might be foxes guarding the henhouse." In addition, Bazelon feels that many board members feared the project might have been the first step toward

asking some of these "ultimate" questions: What is psychiatry? What can it do? What are its boundaries? "The very idea of exploring the *raison d'être* of one's profession is understandably threatening." He was warned, he said, at the project's outset that not often did a powerful and entrenched professional establishment undertake a seriously self-critical examination. Barton, on the other hand, insists the committee was not disbanded because of fear of "self-analysis." Rather, he contends the study was not approved because of sound methodological objections to the committee's approach and staff.

Barton turned the study over last

February to the APA's Council on Research and Development, with the instruction: "You will want to get a firm grip on the tail of this tiger." Members of the council are now writing to universities in their areas, requesting research proposals. In the fall, the council hopes to begin oral interviews of applicants. The council will farm out the study in traditional APA fashion. In any event, there is little chance that an APA-sponsored study of conflicts in institutional psychiatry will get under way before 1974.—JUDY MILLER

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## AAAS in Mexico: Inter-American Goodwill but Little Press Coverage

*This summer, in cooperation with the Mexican government's National Council of Science and Technology, the AAAS marked its 125th anniversary with a special meeting in Mexico City, the association's first in Latin America. For the occasion, News and Comment asked Edward Edelson, a science writer for the New York Daily News who has covered previous AAAS meetings, to review the Mexico City gathering from a reporter's point of view. A second article by Robert Gillette of the News and Comment staff will elaborate on the objectives of the meeting and on the difficulties of organizing a major international conference.*

With the exception of one notably sore point, officials of both the AAAS and the Mexican government's Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT) came away from their 2-week meeting on "Science and Man in the Americas" sounding rather happy. A primary purpose of the meeting was to improve communications between U.S. and Latin American scientists and, in this regard, the gathering seemed to fulfill most of the hopes of each organization.

The one cause for complaint on both sides was press coverage. While the AAAS meeting customarily attracts more than 300 journalists from most major newspapers and magazines in the United States, the Mexico City meeting drew perhaps a tenth that many. Jorge A. Vargas, one of the CONACYT executives most closely involved in planning the meeting, said

the Mexicans were "deeply disappointed" that the turnout was so small and that such major newspapers as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, which usually are at the AAAS convention in force, were not represented at all.

Vargas, the Mexican science agency's man in charge of U.S. relations, put the blame squarely on AAAS officials for not assuring better press coverage. For their part, AAAS executives stressed such factors as the distance most American reporters had to travel in order to cover the meeting, the reluctance of many editors to assign reporters to a meeting in a foreign country, and the lack of availability of either advance papers or a meeting program until the day the conference began. The meeting, however, did attract Mexican reporters in considerable numbers.

The joint AAAS-CONACYT meeting differed from the traditional AAAS conference in several respects. The demonstrations by radicals that have provided an unfailing source of news copy from AAAS meetings in past years were conspicuously lacking this time. About ten representatives of Scientists and Engineers for Social and Political Action (SESPA), a group that has led the previous radical protests, did make their appearance shortly after the conference began. After negotiations with CONACYT, the SESPA representatives were allowed to set up a literature table, unlike their fellows who were denied space at the AAAS meeting in Washington, D.C., last December.

But even with their table and room, SESPA's stay was not entirely trouble-free. Members complained of minor harassments by the building staff, and at one point six members were arrested for distributing literature and were held at the Mexican immigration office, where deportation, although never clearly mentioned, was certainly in the air. Eventually, however, the SESPA people were released and were left reasonably alone until the end of the meeting. For reasons of their own, the "Science for the People" attendees kept a low profile; there were no interruptions of sessions or other demonstrations against controversial speakers. The SESPA explanation was that there were no "war criminals" at the Mexico City meeting, but the fact that the Mexican police were far from sympathetic appeared to have something to do with the lack of action.

As far as the substance of the meeting went, Vargas said that CONACYT's hope of improving communications

both between scientists in different Latin American countries and between the U.S. and Latin American scientific communities had been realized. The efforts made to ensure more than token appearances of Latin American scientists succeeded, Vargas said; in general, there was close to a 50-50 division between Latin American and U.S. scientists—with a smattering of Canadians—on the various panels, and Vargas estimated with obvious satisfaction that as many as a thousand Latin American scientists attended the meeting at one time or another.

While he said it was obviously premature to talk about long-range results of the meeting after just 2 weeks, Vargas said that a good start had been made in breaking down the barriers separating scientists in the Americas. It is "highly likely that many research projects between Mexico and the United States" will come out of the meeting, he said, mentioning that CONACYT would begin talks with both the National Academy of Sciences and the

Canadian National Science Council on future cooperation. Toward the end of an interview, Vargas summed up the meeting as "one of the most successful international scientific conferences ever organized in Latin America."

As for AAAS officials, they seemed satisfied with the attendance of about 4500, low compared to the premeeting estimate of 5000 and last year's AAAS conference attendance of 6500, but better than the pessimistic views expressed by some at the outset. (Initial attendance was low, but there was a steady stream of registrars as the meeting went on, reflecting the fact that few people came for the entire 2 weeks.) The meeting ran a deficit, but that is traditional.

Glenn T. Seaborg, board chairman of the AAAS, told reporters that a start had been made toward a goal of first organizing associations for the advancement of science in all Latin American countries and then organizing an Inter-American Association for the Advancement of Science. While all the

plans were "very tentative—there's nothing on paper," Seaborg said he was "very hopeful" that something would come of the discussions he held with Latin Americans during the meeting. Seaborg said that it might even be possible to hold similar inter-American conferences in the future, perhaps as often as every 3 years.

The AAAS council meeting, racked in previous years by debates over the Vietnam war, was brief and uneventful this year, in large part because this was a lame-duck body, to be replaced soon by a new council that, for the first time, will be elected democratically by the AAAS membership at large. The most significant resolution passed during the meeting deplored the stigmatizing of dissidents, specifically those in the Soviet Union, with a label of mental illness, but even that was watered down when a proposal to appoint an investigative committee was changed to a proposal to study the appointment of an investigative committee.

—EDWARD EDELSON

## AMA: Major Issues Draw Only Moderate Debate

During the last several years, meetings of the American Medical Association (AMA) have been the scene of impassioned debate about such things as Medicare and Medicaid and Professional Standards Review Organizations (PSRO's) and other federal programs that doctors saw as unwarranted incursions into medical practice. But this year, there was little of that previous fire. The 122nd meeting of the diminishing AMA was a bland affair at which pomp and circumstance and trivia occupied almost as much of everybody's time as did matters of substance.

The show opened officially on a Sunday afternoon at the Americana Hotel in New York City. An organist played 1950's music as members of the House of Delegates, which governs the AMA, found their places. Their wives, who through the Women's Auxiliary this year raised more than \$900,000

for AMA activities, and guests filled the back of the ballroom. Enormous yellow and white mums banked the stage on which the brass were waiting to be formally presented.

At two o'clock, the lights dimmed, the curtain parted, and the spotlight focused on the AMA officers and special guests, who were seated in rows like high school graduates. Each wore a carnation. A sprightly rendition of "Stars and Stripes Forever" accompanied a presentation of colors, and the audience rose to sing the "Star Spangled Banner." And then, for close to an hour, the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants performed, offering selections from *Music Man*, songs popularized by singer Carole King, and "This Is My Country," among other tunes. It was an event to gladden the heart of any patriot.

A more serious, but no less traditional and conservative, note was struck

by Carl A. Hoffman in his address as outgoing president. His year in office, he said, was a "quest for ways to reconcile the delivery of care with the quality of care," and he does not think the country is going about it the right way. In essence, Hoffman then proceeded to declare himself opposed to many of the measures that have been proposed or taken in the last couple of years in the name of making medical care more broadly available. He called the notion that there is a doctor shortage a "dangerous hoax," decried shortened medical school curricula at a time when there is more and more that doctors need to learn, and argued that sending physicians' assistants or other auxiliary medical personnel into rural and ghetto areas as "substitute physicians" is a bad move. He did, however, speak in favor of a National Health Service Corps, in which the government would underwrite the cost of education of needy students who would agree, by contract, to serve for a while in medically deprived areas. Hoffman stressed that, under such a program, no student would be compelled to accept federal aid or sign a contract to give services but that, once he did, he would be bound by it.

Throughout his speech, Hoffman