

## Quo Vadis Industrial Science?

There was a proposal last year to abolish the Industrial Science Section (P) of the AAAS. However, after consideration at its recent meeting, the Committee on Council Affairs did not recommend dissolution. Hence, while we are not well, at least we are alive! We are heartened by this decision, since we believe that in today's and tomorrow's world the potentials of Sec-

tion P are great, both in terms of relevance and in terms of utility.

Most of those who favored the abolishment did so without comment. In general, those who did comment took the attitude that if the Section cannot do any better than it has done in the past, then perhaps it is best to do away with it. But those who defended its purposes, objectives, and potentials did so convincingly and eloquently, while at the same time calling for a renaissance.

Bringing this renaissance about at

this time takes on added significance for the following two reasons:

1) *Interest within AAAS.* In addition to the 560 members of AAAS who primarily identify with Section P, there are no less than 4000 additional members who are on record as having more than passing interest in its affairs.

2) *There is much interaction between societal problems and industrial science.* Here Section P can create opportunities for dialogue and contribute to solutions.

In our world, beset by crises, our aspirations are outrunning our means of attaining them. The difference seems to be increasing—a situation not exactly conducive to world tranquillity. Conflicts abound. Resource extraction, conversion processes, and the production of end-use items seem to interfere with the improvement and even with the maintenance of the quality of our social and physical environment. We have already experienced such phenomena as the "environmental crisis" and the "energy crisis" with related "oil politics," reflecting highly complex international conflicts. We may be on the eve of an even more serious "world food crisis" with "food politics."

In times past, science and technology have proved to be most effective "tools" in helping reduce the gap between what we want and what we can have. Industry has been and is a major contributor to the development of these tools, as well as an effective user. It is also industry that is at the interface between supply and demand and between the markets of society and the goods and services that it can produce. These vital interfaces, we feel, are worthy of much study and reflection. It should be evident then that an active and effective Section on Industrial Science or better yet an *Industrial Science and Technology Section* within the AAAS would be in the best interest of all concerned. It could then concentrate on the *utility* and *application* of not just science, but also technology, within an industrial context and the large social context.

We have already embarked on the renaissance alluded to before. A realignment proposal has been mailed to the 560 members of Section P. Members who are not among these but who would like to get involved in our efforts, please send a note to either of us in care of the AAAS.

GABOR STRASSER  
Chairman, Section P  
ROBERT L. STERN  
Secretary, Section P

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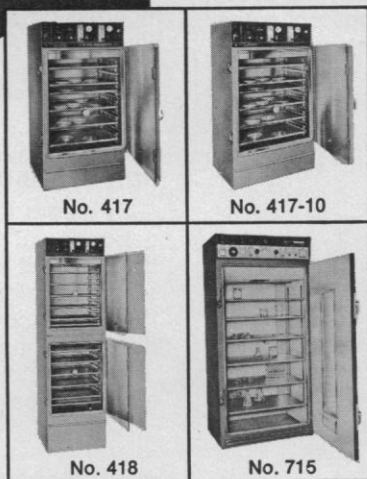
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