

Office of Science and Society Programs: Congressional Science Seminars

The AAAS continues, for the 15th year, its series of science seminars specifically designed for members of Congress and key congressional aides. The seminars are jointly sponsored with the Brookings Institution. The 1975 spring series concludes with Dr. Ruth Davis speaking on "Privacy: Current Concerns and Planning for Action." Other speakers and topics include: Dr. Lawrence Roberts, "The Revolution in Computer Communication and Its Impact on Society," and Dr. David J. Rose, "National Energy Policy: Balancing the Options." In addition the AAAS separately presents the seminars for the science attachés of Washington embassies.

The seminars are always informative and well received, but sometimes the timing and subject seem to lead to particularly significant evenings. "World Climate and Food Supply" was the subject of one seminar in the spring 1974 series when Dr. Kenneth Hare of the University of Toronto was the speaker. A dozen representatives and senators, plus nearly 20 key congressional staff members, listened as Professor Hare described the recent instability of world climate, including the drought in Sahalian Africa, and the remarkable expansion of global snow and ice cover that took place in 1971. He examined the impact of such events on world food supply and grain trade, speculated on future trends, and commented on the role of expert advice in making public policy decisions related to climate and food supply.

Topics for the seminars have ranged from mechanisms of heredity and weather modification research in space during the early years, to mining the ocean floor, drugs in society, and the problems of ballistic missile defense in the late 1960's, to such topics as noise and the public, the corporate social audit, and agriculture and arid lands within the last few years.

The setting is that of the traditional dinner-seminar, but the atmosphere is decidedly low-key and the emphasis is on providing information and developing a give-and-take question session following the brief presentation. In this way the AAAS feels that it is not only contributing scientific and technological information needed by our elected officials and their staff aides,

but it is also creating an environment which facilitates the development of understanding and mutual respect which must always exist if science and government are to work effectively together.

Six AAAS Scientists with Congress

Six scientists and engineers are spending a year in Washington, D.C., as AAAS Congressional Science Fellows (see *Science*, 10 January, 1975, page 52). They are E. Kevin Cornell, Pamela Ebert, Jerome Harper, Henry Kelly, Gary Thomas, and Jon Veigel.

Dr. Cornell has recently begun his fellowship and will spend the next year in the office of Senator Gary Hart, working on environmental legislation. Before beginning his fellowship, Dr. Cornell was an assistant professor of physics at American University.

Dr. Ebert has been working with Senator Walter Mondale's Subcommittee on Children and Youth. She is a psychologist who has specialized in visual perception and, prior to coming to Washington, taught introductory and experimental psychology at the University of Georgia. As a Congressional Science Fellow, Ebert has been concerned with an assessment of the role of social indicators in legislation.

Four Congressional Science Fellows work with or out of the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA). Dr. Harper, an agricultural engineer, has worked extensively on the OTA agricultural information system assessment. Until last September he was a graduate research assistant at Michigan State University where he was closely connected with the Agricultural Pollution Control Laboratory.

Dr. Kelly, a physicist, is working on oceans assessment, growth questions, and potential arms control related assessments. Prior to his fellowship, he was a member of the SALT support staff at the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency where he worked in the Nuclear Weapons and Advanced Technology Bureau.

Dr. Thomas, an associate professor of electrical engineering at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook

prior to beginning his fellowship, is working on the OTA materials assessment, especially the materials-energy interaction aspects. While at SUNY, he worked as special assistant to the president for energy conservation.

Dr. Veigel is also with the OTA, where he directs the recently formulated major energy assessment. Trained as a physical-inorganic chemist, Dr. Veigel was an associate professor at Small College, California State College, Dominguez Hills, before beginning his fellowship in September.

The AAAS Congressional Science Fellows are part of a group of 12 fellows participating in the overall program, which includes an orientation, placement information and guidance, seminars, and general liaison, and which is organized by AAAS. The other six fellows are Drs. Allan Hoffman (Environment Subcommittee, Senate Committee on Commerce), Thomas Moss (office of Representative George E. Brown, Jr., D-Calif.), and Haven Whiteside (Air and Water Pollution Subcommittee, Senate Public Works Committee), all sponsored by the American Physical Society; Drs. Lloyd Craine (House Committee on Science and Technology), and Willis Smith (Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee), both sponsored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers; and Dr. William Widnall (House Committee on Science and Technology), sponsored by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

The selection for next year's AAAS Congressional Science Fellows is now being made and the awards will be announced sometime this month.

The selection committee includes Dr. Pamela Ebert; Mr. William Golden, a former adviser and consultant on government organization to President Truman; Dr. David Johnson, chief, Microanalytical Services and Instrumentation Section, National Institutes of Health; Mr. Elliot Segal, former AAAS Congressional Fellow, now with the House Interstate Commerce Committee; Dr. Michael Telson, former AAAS Congressional Fellow, now with the House Budget Committee; Dr. N. Richard Werthamer, former APS Congressional Fellow, now supervisor for Corporate Planning at AT&T; Mr. Christopher Wright, a consultant with Rockefeller Foundation; Dr. Jon Veigel; and Dr. Richard Scribner, director of the AAAS Office of Science and Society Programs.

—RICHARD SCRIBNER