

CONGRESSIONAL SCIENCE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

Beginning 1 January 1976, one AAAS congressional fellowship is available for a scientist or engineer to spend 1 year working with the OTA. Concentration will be in one of the following areas: energy, transportation, materials, oceans, or health. Physical and biological scientists and engineers are encouraged to apply. Applications must include two letters of reference, curriculum vitae, and letter describing qualifications, career goals, and reason for applying. Deadline is 7 November 1975. The award is \$16,000 for the period 1 January 1976 to 31 December 1976. Write to **Dr. Richard Scribner, Special Projects Office, AAAS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036**; telephone: 202-467-4475.

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Interested

in Preserving

Science?

If your copies of *Science* are piling up in the corner, getting dog-eared and torn, then you need our attractive binders to keep your copies in good condition, and available for quick easy reference. Simply snap the magazines in or out in a few seconds—no punching or mutilating. Sturdily constructed, each maroon imitation-leather binder stamped in gold leaf holds one three-month volume of *Science*. They sell for just \$6.00 each; four binders for \$22.00. For orders outside the United States add 60¢ per binder. Imprint: name of owner, year of issues, etc., add \$1.00 per binder.

Send orders to Dept. V-1

AAAS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION for the
ADVANCEMENT of SCIENCE
1515 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

ethics seems to me to be vigorous and healthy. In the judgment of a research project, as conducted at the National Institutes of Health, ethical and scientific values are usually separated. The scientific merit of a project is judged by peers, while the ethical and legal aspects are referred to committees of special competence both of the grantor and of the grantee institution. The machinery for effecting such review is currently under scrutiny and being reformed, and should continue to be studied and improved. Where human subjects are concerned, various safeguards are incorporated, and these are expanded to take care of the special problems of those who can not freely give informed consent.

These points are not at issue. What is at issue is the case of the project which has passed a merit review, has been repeatedly approved by all the properly constituted ethical review panels, and is then threatened or forced to termination by acts of intimidation, harassment, and personal polemic. These techniques may all be part of the political system. They would all have been familiar to Senator McCarthy. They are, in my judgment, damaging to the cause of both science and society.

I am puzzled by Siekevitz's attack upon the personal nature of judgments. It appears self-evident to me that all rulings and decisions by panels and committees and, indeed, by the entire electorate are mere summations of personal judgments. In view of the several personal judgments which he makes in his letter, whence comes the authority to deny like freedom to the rest of us?

DEWITT STETTEN, JR.

*National Institutes of Health,
Bethesda, Maryland 20014*

Congressional Fellows

Recent articles by Constance Holden (News and Comment, 12 Sept., p. 860) and Barbara Culliton (News and Comment, 19 Sept., p. 977; 26 Sept., p. 1071) admirably describe several new programs designed to put scientists to work on Capitol Hill. However, the opportunities for scientists to participate in the policy process are even richer and more extensive than the authors suggest.

Initiated in 1953, the American Political Science Association's (APSA's) Congressional Fellowship Program has, since 1961, included professional employees of federal agencies. A significant number of the 266 career civil servants who have served on the Hill as APSA congressional fellows are scientists: physicists, chemists, biologists, mathematicians, and astronomers, as well

as psychologists, economists, sociologists, and political scientists. They come from many agencies and have found their special talents highly valued by the Congress. One such scientist, Thomas Ratchford, who came to the program from the Department of the Air Force, has put his personal experiences as a congressional fellow directly to use as a science consultant to the House Committee on Science and Technology. Others are utilizing their acquired knowledge in key science positions in federal agencies.

At the same time, several hundred social scientists (primarily political scientists) have come directly from universities to work in Congress as congressional fellows.

Several operating principles have worked to optimize the internship experiences of fellows. First, each APSA fellow serves in both the House and Senate. This helps them understand the dramatic differences between the two Houses and makes them aware of the discontinuities that exist in the legislative process; it also extends their network of contacts on the Hill. Our experience has demonstrated that outstanding professionals can make substantial contributions and derive substantial benefits during relatively short (4- to 5-month) periods in each House.

Second, we believe it important that all fellows approach the Hill with humility. While the special skills and perspectives of scientists and other nonscience professionals are highly valued in Congress, it is easy to underestimate the present capabilities of congressional staff in this regard. Our experience suggests that the primary benefactors of these programs are the fellows and the professional communities from which they come, not the Congress.

Third, fellows are more likely to understand the Congress and the policy process if their peers in the program have diverse professional backgrounds and perspectives. Scientists have much to gain by having as colleagues legal services lawyers, foreign service officers, political reporters, authors of books on Congress, and so forth. Professional careers tend to foster specialization and parochialism. The APSA program facilitates a broadening and sharing of interests among outstanding professionals.

For these and other reasons, officials of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Institute of Medicine asked APSA to include the new health policy fellows within its program (an important fact omitted in Culliton's article). We have all benefited as a result of that decision.

THOMAS E. MANN

*American Political Science Association,
1527 New Hampshire Avenue, NW,
Washington, D.C. 20036*