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AAAS Dues Increase

At the meeting of the AAAS Council last December it was proposed from the floor that the association should consider raising its dues—a step which most other associations and scientific societies have found necessary within the past 10 years. This proposal was considered in detail by the AAAS Board of Directors at its March meeting.

Although there has been a gratifying increase in AAAS membership, which now stands at an all-time high of approximately 53,000, there was a small deficit at the close of the association's books for 1956. In the past few years, despite economies and continued efficient practices, the margin between income and outgo has been progressively narrower. Under these circumstances, the board concluded that the time had come for an increase in the annual dues of the association. Accordingly, the board voted unanimously to submit to the council a recommendation that the dues be increased from \$6.50 to \$8.50 per year, effective 1 January 1958. This recommendation met with approval by 87 percent of the large majority of the council members who returned the mail ballot.

The dues of the association were last changed, from \$5 to \$6.50, on 1 January 1948. They were changed then for the same reasons as now—a continued increase in such operating expenses as salaries and especially the printing costs of the association's journals and other publications. Then, as now, there was a reluctance on the part of the board and the council to curtail any AAAS activities which had proved their worth or to reduce the quality of the publications. As before, increases in membership and in advertising revenue have made it possible to postpone but not to avoid an increase in dues.

The AAAS has been fortunate in being able to charge smaller dues than most other associations. Two recent studies, one by the National Education Association and the other by the American Marketing Association, have shown that the median annual dues for professional associations are \$10, which is also the median for associations with 20,000 or more members. AAAS dues have been in the low category for scientific and professional associations and can well remain below the median figure of \$10 for the foreseeable future.

No one has to be told that the costs of goods have increased markedly in the last decade and that often the increase has occurred without a corresponding increase in the intrinsic value of the products. It is fortunate that the AAAS does not have to follow this pattern. The dues increase will be enough to pay the increased costs of an enlarged weekly journal, the combined *Science* and *The Scientific Monthly*, as approved by the council last December. Thus, beginning next January, all members who now receive one of the journals will receive the enlarged weekly *Science*, and those who now receive both journals for \$10 per year will get about the same amount of material for \$8.50.

An equitable plan for putting the increase into effect has been developed. Present members whose terms expire on or before 1 October 1957 may renew their membership for an entire year at the current rate of \$6.50. Similarly, new members who join on or before that date will be accepted at the same rate. Members whose terms begin at subsequent dates will be billed at the new rate of \$8.50.

It is hoped that the combination of the two journals and the association's increased scope of activities will meet with approval by all present members and that a continued growth in association membership will occur during its 110th year. The AAAS has grown in its services to science and society and is needed today more than ever.

RAYMOND L. TAYLOR

Associate Administrative Secretary