

"in the meantime we will work toward the sanitation [*sic*] of our finances to the satisfaction of both our board and the granting agencies which have supported AIBS to such a large extent."

Rosenthal replied the next day that the proposals "are unacceptable since they are not considered adequate to protect the interests of the U.S. government." He demanded that AIBS "stop all disbursements from AIBS bank accounts and agree not to make any further disbursements except upon approval of a NSF representative." The telegram was backed up by an informal warning that if AIBS failed to comply, NSF would seek a court injunction and would perhaps seek to declare AIBS bankrupt and place it in receivership.

The order was promptly heeded, and for 24 hours AIBS did not write a check. The ban was then lifted to permit AIBS to pay its staff and continue the flow of money to its various proj-

ects. But all expenditures were made under NSF scrutiny, and with Cox exercising no control. AIBS's headquarters staff was reduced about one-third, and virtually all purchasing was suspended.

Meanwhile, AIBS's elected officials, led by Went, appealed to the membership for funds. The letter, dated 6 December, pointed out that past predictions of financial disaster had now been realized. It said nothing, however, about the diversion of large sums to the film project, but rather stated that difficulties had arisen because "advanced funds have had to be used as 'capital' funds for contracts and other AIBS authorized activities for which reimbursement can be recovered only after expenses have been incurred." Went stated that this practice would no longer continue.

"Futhermore," the letter continued, "we can no longer count upon 'overhead' allowances from grants to sup-

port non-grant, non-contract activities of the AIBS, even in part." (This is a curious interpretation of the function of overhead, which, by definition, is intended only for those costs incurred while administering specific projects.)

The letter was reported to have drawn about 4000 replies by last week, with a total of approximately \$34,000 in cash or pledges. AIBS is also seeking other sources of quick revenue, and is attempting to sell the film series rather than wait for the royalties that were expected to solve its financial problems. An offer of \$100,000 has been reported.

Meanwhile, Ebert has called the AIBS governing board, composed of representatives of the member societies, to an emergency meeting in Washington on 25 January; the society presidents, as well as several AIBS past-presidents and a number of other persons, have also been invited to attend.—D. S. GREENBERG

"Biology on the Cuff"—Is AIBS Worth Saving?

An open letter from the Institute's president.

Had the Governing Board of the American Institute of Biological Sciences foreseen that within three months after its last elections, the institute would be battling desperately against dissolution, it might have chosen as its president an attorney or certified public accountant. But, not being seers, they chose an embryologist, a blunt outspoken, and "politically" inexperienced one at that. The former characteristics, although not always a blessing, may be needed today. As for my political inexperience, I have had to learn some previously unwanted skills quickly. As a biologist, at least it is comforting to know that such acquired characteristics are not heritable.

It is customary for incoming presidents to open their terms by proclaiming their pride in their organizations. I am proud of having been elected president of AIBS. When I substituted for Frits Went in introducing Melvin Calvin at the annual meeting at Oregon State University, I found the occasion inspiring: over 5000 biologists were assembled for his unforgettable lecture. And this number represents only a fraction of my constituents, the company of biologists, held together by the common bonds of scientific curiosity and the spirit of dedicated inquiry. It has been AIBS that fostered and implemented the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study (BSCS), that initiated

the promising Commission on Undergraduate Education in Biological Sciences, whose Education Committee established the Committee on Facilities and Standards in Biology, that has carried forward the *Quarterly Review of Biology*, and has acted as spokesman for all biologists in dozens of ways that most of us do not grasp fully (for example, working toward salary equality for biologists in government service). I speak with conviction, for, as a relative newcomer to AIBS, I have been struck by its vitality and scope. It has fostered a few less important, possibly uncritical activities, but viewed as a whole, the record of achievement is remarkable. Hence my pride; and it is my pride in the achievements of the company of biologists that gives me the courage to begin this frank recital.

Since our meeting with NSF on November 21, 1962, when the charges first came to our attention, I have, as a member of the Executive Committee and since January 1, 1963, as president, made a careful study of the situation, attempting to obtain all relevant facts. It is a very complex matter, but on the basis of my study, I am now of the opinion that our earlier appeals for funds, in a letter dated December 6

and in the *AIBS Bulletin* for December 1962, were ill-timed, incomplete, and insufficiently frank. I do not apologize for them, for they were written in good faith by men of good faith, in haste and under pressures that are even now painful to recall.

The editors of *Science* have permitted me to read the article by D. S. Greenberg. I believe that it is an objective statement of the situation, and I base my further remarks on the facts as reported in the article.

The gravity of the charges cannot be overemphasized. The weight of evidence of irregularity on the part of AIBS is heavy. All of us who have served on the Governing Boards and Executive Committees of the Institute throughout the years are in varying degrees responsible for permitting this situation to develop and to remain uncorrected. To some extent, each member must share the responsibility. The problem, however, is not one for biologists alone, for it in some measure reflects the difficulties besetting all of science today.

Our task now is not to assign blame but to correct the situation and to preserve AIBS for the vital functions it can and should continue to

perform for the benefit of biologists.

Our corrective actions thus far, as reported in Greenberg's article, are only emergency measures. It is necessary that we immediately propose and within 30 days set in motion a program for repayment. We must immediately place the AIBS in a position where it has the confidence of and merits renewed support from the National Science Foundation and all other agencies concerned with science.

An emergency meeting of your Governing Board has been called for January 25-26. At that time, I will propose that unprecedented, immediate action be taken. A part of the money owed the government, possibly one-third, can be obtained from royalties on the Film Series. The rest must come from the membership. If AIBS is to continue, the Governing Board must resolve to obtain prompt commitments from the individual members of the member societies to pay at least \$10 per year, beginning in 1963, for repayment of the debt and for maintenance of basic operations. An even larger sum may be necessary.

Coupled with the financial need is a need for a complete review of AIBS management activities. It is vital that

the Executive Committee and Governing Board play a more positive role in AIBS. They must discharge the responsibilities that have long been theirs, and which Sonneborn presented so forcefully in his presidential message (*AIBS Bulletin*, October 1961). At the same time, there must be a reorganization of our operations and financial management. Possibly the appointment of a general manager, a step taken on 12 December 1962 as an emergency measure, may be a first step toward a workable arrangement. A Finance Committee recently organized under the chairmanship of Paul Kramer should be a permanent part of the organization.

Should AIBS be continued? I believe it must be; we need a strong AIBS, not just as an adjunct record center and housekeeping service, but to give the several societies a central focus, a sense of direction, and continuity and meaning above and beyond their individual areas of investigation. AIBS must be continued, but *only* if biologists are now ready to accept their individual financial obligations.

JAMES D. EBERT

President, American Institute of Biological Sciences

Detergents: Reuss Bill Would Ban Those With Polluting Proclivities

Legislation aimed at taming detergents which resist degradation in ordinary waste disposal systems has been introduced by Congressman Henry Reuss. The Wisconsin Democrat's bill (H.R. 2105) would prohibit the movement in interstate commerce after 30 June 1965 of detergents which do not meet standards of "decomposability" much higher than those common in commercial detergents now in use. Responsibility for establishing standards by which detergents would be judged, and regulations for enforcement, would be assigned the Surgeon General. The legislation would subject imported detergents to the same standards.

Reuss says the bill is modeled on a statute passed by the West German Parliament in 1961 after the West German government had been unsuccessful in encouraging private industry to develop a less intransigent detergent. As a result of the law, says Reuss, new types of detergents were developed in Germany "which decompose in much

the manner of soap made from animal and vegetable fats, and they do so without foaming. They are only slightly more expensive than the nondecomposing synthetics now threatening the purity of our water."

Cooperation in Space: U.S.-Soviet Delegations to Discuss Next Moves

Working parties from the United States and the Soviet Union will meet in Rome in mid-March to make further arrangements for cooperation on three projects under a "peaceful uses of outer space" agreement announced by the two nations in December.

The bilateral agreement provides for cooperation in establishing a global weather satellite system, in mapping the earth's magnetic field, and in making experiments with communications satellites.

The American delegation will be headed by Hugh L. Dryden, deputy administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, who was the chief American negotiator in

the talks that led to the agreement last year. For the Russians, Academician A. A. Blagonravov, who was Dryden's counterpart in the negotiations, will head the delegation.

The talks are scheduled to precede a meeting of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), established by the International Council of Scientific Unions, which will be part of the second assembly in Rome (18-22 March) of the international committee that is planning the International Quiet Sun Year.

Education: ACE Asks Federal Aid To Develop a National Resource

The American Council on Education, the leading national association of colleges and universities and organizations concerned with higher education, last week released a series of recommendations on heavily increasing federal programs of aid "to develop higher education as a natural resource."

Top priorities were given by ACE

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