

The Responsibilities of Scientists

At the request of the Committee on Council Affairs, Council spent some time in discussing the responsibilities of scientists. Among the questions raised were scientists' responsibilities to employers, assistants, granting agencies, and others; possible conflicts of interest; the responsibilities of scientists when serving as consultants and witnesses; and whether decisions concerning these responsibilities should be made by individual scientists, by professional societies, by public agencies, or through some other means.

Following a discussion of a number of the issues involved in the responsibilities of scientists to society, of the right of an association or group to make an ethical judgment that may conflict with the judgment of an individual, of the possibility of preparing

a formal statement, and of the studies already being undertaken by the Committee on Cooperation among Scientists and the Committee on Science in the Promotion of Human Welfare (mentioned previously), it was suggested that the Board of Directors or the Committee on Council Affairs establish a mechanism to coordinate the activities of the two committees that are already interested and additional work that might be done by the Committee on Council Affairs or a study committee. On the other hand, some members of Council pointed out, what is needed now is discussion from a variety of points of view, and this might better go forward without any formal coordinating mechanism. The outcome of the discussion was a vote to request the Committee on AAAS Meetings to organize a full-day symposium to be held at the 1964 meeting

and a further vote to request the Committee on Council Affairs to continue its interest in stimulating consideration of the responsibilities of scientists.

Other Business

It was suggested that Council request the Board of Directors to see what AAAS can do to support the recommendations made in the report of the Study Committee on Natural Areas as Research Facilities. President Waterman replied that the Board would consider this matter.

Council voted to request the Committee on Council Affairs to consider the possibility of holding the Council meeting on one day instead of holding one session on 27 December and another on 30 December, as has been done for a number of years.

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A Report of the Seventh Cleveland Meeting

Raymond L. Taylor

Considered collectively, the annual reports of AAAS meetings, published since the founding of the Association in 1848, provide a panorama of American science. Those persons particularly interested in the history of science find the proceedings volumes and the files of *Science* an indispensable outline of the major trends of scientific thought during the past 115 years (1). In these records can be noted the shifts of emphasis in research, the proliferation of societies in many scientific disciplines, the consolidation or merger in others, and the impressive progression of those individuals who lead in science.

The record of the Association's most recent meeting is necessary, therefore, to continue the traditional annals for posterity. At the same time, it may serve as a summary of the highlights for those who were there but scarcely could attend every session, and an account for those who missed a first-rate scientific meeting.

"First-rate" may not be an adequate adjective. Though the Association has had larger meetings—when on the Atlantic seaboard—there has been no meeting that surpassed the seventh Cleveland meeting in the uniformly high quality of the principal programs. "Scientifically, this is one of the most productive meetings I have attended" wrote one experienced section secretary who is not given to overstatement. He well expressed the given sentiments of others who have come to recognize

that, in recent years, AAAS meetings are showing the results of the earnest thought and effort devoted to their content by the Committee on Meetings, by the section secretaries who bear the responsibility of arranging the core programs, and by others concerned with the meeting.

This 130th meeting of the AAAS was distinctive in that it included three sessions for the papers of 17 eminent members of the Science Council of Japan; John Kenneth Galbraith who delivered the Distinguished Lecture to an audience of 2500; and other featured sessions. All four speakers in the Moving Frontiers of Science series gave exceptionally interesting discussions of their specialties in terms intelligible to all. The other evening events also will be long-remembered. The five interdisciplinary symposia competed for audiences from among the entire attendance. Among the carefully chosen speakers in the scores of symposia were two Nobel laureates—W. F. Libby and Harold C. Urey; speakers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru in the symposium, "Arid Lands of Latin America"; anthropologist Mauricio Swadesh from Mexico who spoke on linguistic evolution; and more than a dozen others from six foreign countries. The list truly indicates the growing tendency to invite authorities from any part of the world. W. E. Swinton (director, Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto) was the official representative of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

The Annual Exposition of Science and Industry was most conveniently located in the Sheraton-Cleveland's new exhibit facilities and Whitehall Room on the mezzanine level. The splendid programs of the AAAS Science Theatre were well attended by appreciative audiences that broke into spontaneous applause on more than one occasion!

Briefly, the factors responsible for a successful AAAS meeting—from attendance and financing to press coverage—are numerous and complex. Those that are basic include the excellence of the programs; advance information in *Science* and in cooperating scientific journals; adequate and convenient physical facilities; complete plans and their execution by a devoted staff; and, not least, the effective work of truly interested local committees. The seventh Cleveland meeting had all of these in adequate measure.

Pre-meeting Publicity

No matter how good programs may be they cannot be well attended unless they are adequately publicized well in advance. Nearly all the major programs of AAAS meetings are planned, at least tentatively, almost as soon as the previous year's program has ended. The Committee on Meetings and the section secretaries meet separately on a weekend in late January or February; the Committee considers the special sessions, and the secretaries report on their plans. Both groups then meet jointly to inform each other of their proposals. It is at this time that the interdisciplinary programs are decided.

Generally, by mid-April it is possible to prepare copy for a preliminary announcement of the current year's AAAS meeting for publication in a May issue of *Science*. Included are brief synopses, or as much information as is known, of the planned programs of the sections and participating societies. In late July, data on hotel headquarters and addi-

The author is associate administrative secretary of the AAAS.