

Both Killian and Philip Handler, president of the National Academy of Sciences, looked favorably on the proposal to establish NIRAS as a way of bringing about a broader view of research support and greater stability of support. Edward Condon of the University of Colorado and E. R. Piore of IBM had recommended establishing a Department of Science. Others, including Secretary of the Air Force Robert C. Seamans, Jr., and S. Fred Singer of the Department of the Interior, had favored a "heavily augmented" NSF. Any legislation to implement the NIRAS concept recommended by the subcommittee will surely encounter strong opposition if it provides for a full or partial dismemberment of NIH. Some witnesses, such as Patrick E.

Haggerty of Texas Instruments, Inc., suggested that OST should be converted to a Council of Science and Technology, on the model of the Council of Economic Advisers. While neither accepting nor rejecting this suggestion, the subcommittee decided, for the moment, simply to recommend the separation of OST from the science adviser and PSAC and to call for "additional statutory backing, staffing, and funding" for the agency. Yet OST derives much of its influence, such as it is, from the fact that its director is chairman of PSAC and science adviser to the President. Without someone with access to the President at its head, OST could well become another obscure and forgotten agency.

Observing that the U.S. balance of

payments position was becoming less favorable, Haggerty warned that the nation already is being hard pressed by other technologically advanced nations such as Japan and the nations of Western Europe. On the same point, Derek J. De Solla Price of Yale indicated that, in the future, the United States must look increasingly to science and technology to compensate for the diminishing of some of its natural resources. "The richness of this land now lies ultimately in the laboratories of the academic world and in the near-academies employed in industry and government," he said. "It is exactly in this area that the U.S.A. will meet during the next decade a very serious challenge from Japan, and perhaps from other countries later." —LUTHER J. CARTER

## Academic-Labor Alliance Formally Established

Cambridge, Mass. Representatives of organized labor and the academic community met here 29 October for their second session in 2 weeks and formally agreed to establish a national coalition for political and social cooperation. The labor leaders pledged membership support and organization; the academics promised brain power and student cooperation. In coming weeks in ten or more cities across the country, the as yet unnamed organization plans meetings among unionists, students, and professors to begin work on specific, common problems. In the words of one laborite, the organization could "unlock the door which has been slammed between universities and working people" by the Nixon Administration.

Leading the discussions were the originator of the two meetings, Nobel prizewinner George Wald, Higgins Professor of Biology at Harvard, and the man who made the coalition proposal, Hal Gibbons, vice president of the Teamsters (*Science*, 29 October). This latest meeting elected an executive committee of nine (three from labor, three faculty, and three students) which will circulate names and information about existing worker-student projects among the ten pilot projects. Although carefully limited to this clearinghouse function, the committee is well connected; included among its members are Leonard Woodcock, president of the striking United Auto Workers (UAW), and Joseph Rhodes, Jr., Harvard junior fellow and student member of the President's Commission on Campus Unrest.

Primary emphasis will be on the local projects involving the concerns of rank and file union membership. Possible areas include coping with layoffs in places where military contractors have had their funds cut, establishing day care centers, safety on the job, community and environmental health, worker's pension insurance, improved education, and racial discrimination.

A major point of attack will be industrial conversion. Victor Reuther of the UAW explained: "One of the biggest myths today among the American worker is that

he thinks employment opportunity is related to the maintenance of defense security. We've got to debunk this myth, so he can identify job security with peaceful and positive social goals." Seymour Melman, professor of industrial engineering, Columbia, talked at length on the economic research still needed to understand the implications of the post-Vietnam economy for the work force.

But there also emerged during the 7 hours of meetings a number of internal strains over other directions the group might take nationally. A key one was speaking out on political issues. Rhodes talked of the "obscurity" of Administration electoral strategy in drawing public attention to student unrest and "permissiveness" rather than to issues that are closer to the worker, such as unemployment, inflation, and racial injustice.

Suggestions by academics that the group adopt specific stands on political issues ran into opposition. "You're living in a different world," said Tony Mazzocchi, legislative director of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers, "if you think that the workers think the way some of us do on issues. It would be counterproductive." Some of the labor people and many of the students were adamant that group pronouncements on national issues would cause a loss of confidence in the organization among the rank and file.

Yet unanimity and goodwill generally prevailed. Carl Wagner, of the Alliance for Labor Action, spoke of some student and young worker projects he had started. "There are six million trade unionists in this country who are under 28. And they're like the students. They believe that somebody else is controlling their lives." And the Teamsters' Gibbons said, "The kids of the United States have been taking a real beating because they are leading a fight for a better society. Every time they get out there I want to throw a protective cordon of trade unionists around them. They are fighting for what we all want—a better community."—DEBORAH SHAPLEY, *associate editor, M.I.T. Technology Review.*