

# Report from the Retiring Chairman

Leonard M. Rieser

The Chairman of the Board of Directors leaves office on 31 December. When the annual meeting was moved into the winter, no accommodation was made for the fact that the officers would have changed just weeks before. Some argued that terms should end with the annual meeting, whenever it occurred. But it was decided that a more practical arrangement was to ask the past Chairman to report to Council at the annual meeting shortly after his term had ended.

This year we held the second meeting of the Council created under the new constitution and bylaws of the Association. A good place to begin this report is to quote from the minutes of *last year's* Council meeting:

"The priority issues now before the Board are (1) the appointment of an Executive Officer to succeed William Bevan; (2) long-range financial planning for the Association; (3) review of the present committee structure; and (4) reassessment of AAAS meetings and educational activities. To deal with these issues, the Board will meet more frequently in 1974 and the Executive Committee of the Board will meet monthly except in months when the Board meets."

If I were to choose one phrase to reflect the Board's effort this year it would be that we have lowered the entropy of the Association's programs at minimum cost in energy and effectiveness. The report of the Acting Executive Officer deals at some length with the financial details. I shall elaborate here on those matters which were stated as priorities at the last Council meeting.

A year ago we were facing not only the imminent departure of the Association's Executive Officer, William Bevan, but also an increasingly frightening financial situation, and a level of activity both in our committees and in programs which could not be sustained. The Board acted deliberately and, I

believe, responsibly in facing these situations. I shall address the four areas: personnel, finances, committees, and programs.

## Personnel

Clearly, the selection of our new Executive Officer took precedence. The Board delegated responsibility for searching for candidates to the three officers in the presidential succession. This committee was enlarged informally and in effect the Executive Committee of the Board, meeting monthly, became the advisory body. We placed a notice in *Science* in January 1974 to seek nominations and applications. During the late spring we worked from a list of more than 100 names. We solicited advice broadly and reduced our list of candidates to half a dozen for presentation to the Board in June. The three officers were delegated initiative for bringing the matter to a head subject to Board approval of the terms of appointment. The appointment was offered to William D. Carey in August and the full Board approved the detailed letter of appointment written after extensive discussion with him. He had not been directly involved in the affairs of the Association and, understandably, had many questions. He accepted our offer to become effective 1 January. On 2 January, the Chairman, in an exhibition of overconscientiousness, ascertained by a telephone call to the offices of the Association that he was in charge.

The selection of the new chief operating officer of the Association made heavy demands on a number of us throughout the year, but we have been fortunate to gain the services of such an experienced person as William Carey, who brings to the Association fiscal hardheadedness and experience on the Washington scene combined with a liberal commitment to science

and the use of science directed to human well-being.

There were several personnel changes made during this period. In addition to the resignations of William Bevan and Richard Trumbull, John R. Mayor retired after many years as director of the Office of Science Education, including those dramatic years of curricular development under the aegis of the Commission on Science Education.

Two additional appointments were made: William A. Blanpied as director of Communications and Arthur Herschman as director of Meetings. The Board has also made a change in legal counsel to the Association with the appointment of John Lane of Washington, D.C.

At its December meeting, the Board approved a procedure of annual review of the performance of senior officers employed by the Association. Those who are responsible to the Executive Officer for implementing policies and programs voted by the Council and the Board know there is a process of accountability in the best sense of the word.

## The Financial Situation

In addition to the selection of the new Executive Officer, the Board was preoccupied in a major way with the financial state of the Association. In late spring and early summer it became clear that inflationary and recessionary pressures would result in a serious budget deficit in 1974 unless a number of steps were taken. In June, with the appointment of Philip H. Abelson as Acting Executive Officer, a Committee on Transition, consisting of the Executive Officer, the Treasurer, and the Chairman, took responsibility for the affairs of the Association.

The budget forecast which was made at the end of 1973 projected a balanced budget of \$7.9 million in 1974 and \$8.9 million in 1975. As the financial situation developed, it became clear that these figures were unrealistic. Before he departed, Dr. Bevan had reduced the 1974 budget to \$7.5 million and during the summer it was further cut by reducing \$250,000 in expenses to achieve a budget of \$7.25 million for 1974. During fall 1974 a budget was developed and we were able to present to the Board and the new Executive Officer a projected balanced budget of \$7.5 million, including a modest con-

tingency for 1975. The Association is indebted to Dr. Abelson, who carried responsibility for setting the goals, bringing the staff together, and maintaining morale among 150 employees of the Association during this period.

In October, as part of the budget process, the Board voted to increase dues from \$21 to \$25, effective with renewals on 1 May, and to increase the annual subscription rate from \$40 to \$50. The increased income from dues is considerably less than the reduction achieved on the expenditure side. It is hoped that with a vigorous campaign for new members and a development fund for unrestricted gifts to augment income from dues, subscriptions, grants, and so forth we shall further strengthen the revenue side of the balance sheet.

In the course of the year, the Board established a rigorous procedure for reviewing grant applications submitted on behalf of the Association in order to ascertain that the full costs are covered and long-range budgetary commitments are not incurred inadvertently.

One other change in the financial picture is presented in the Acting Executive Officer's report. The Board is responsible for the investment of the Association's assets and is continually advised by the Treasurer and by the Committee on Investment and Finance. These funds are invested in investment trust shares and bonds and in real estate, including 1515 Massachusetts Avenue, NW. The Board authorized the liquidation of the investment in open-ended funds and reinvested in closed-end funds purchased at discount and in Treasury bills. Therefore we recorded a real loss as opposed to a paper loss as a result of this transaction. In the course of the year this amounted to approximately \$700,000 so that the book value of invested net assets other than real estate has dropped considerably. If for no other reason, this is why a balanced budget for 1975 must be maintained without drawing down further on the "nest egg" which provides some security against unpredictable situations.

#### Committees of the Board

A review of the committee structure was also a matter of high priority during the year. The Board and Council have a number of standing committees concerned with the operation of the Association including: (i) Executive

Committee of the Board, (ii) Committee on Council Affairs, (iii) Committee on Nominations, (iv) Committee on Investment and Finance, and (v) Committee on Fellows, plus several committees dealing with prizes.

At the October meeting of the Board a review of all committees was presented by a task force consisting of Ruth M. Davis, Philip H. Abelson, and Caryl P. Haskins. They proposed dividing committees into three categories: those advisory to the Board or Council, committees on fellowships and prizes, and committees on science policies and issues. They recommended terminating a number of committees and redefining the role of committees created by the Board. Specifically, they recommended that "... the charters of all committees on science policies and issues be made specific and tied to stated AAAS objectives or concerns; that all committees in this category be established for a given time period with extension options; that the expected 'generic' committee product be stated; and that the committee structure be tied to regularly updated Board priorities."

There were eleven committees to which this report was addressed. The Board has terminated all but four of them. Because these committees have played such an important role, it is appropriate to comment on the status of each one.

1) The *Committee on Meetings*. The chairman, Norman Hackerman, presented an excellent report to the Board in June. The committee has been discharged. A summary of their report was included in the Council agenda to provide a starting point for an extended discussion of AAAS meetings.

2) The *Committee on Environmental Alterations*. While chaired by Barry Commoner, this committee completed a major study on electric power which has just been published and which is certain to have a major influence in the national debate on this topic. The committee has been discharged with the understanding that Marc Roberts, the last chairman, will continue with a small group to explore issues and make recommendations for possible further studies.

3) The *Committee on Publications* chaired by H. William Koch completed a comprehensive review of the Association's publications program and made a number of important recommendations which are now under consideration. The committee's work has been completed

and it was discharged with the understanding that similar studies might be initiated from time to time.

4) The *Commission on Science Education* was terminated in 1974. This commission was started with the support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) more than 10 years ago. The commission had not only advised the Office of Science Education but, in addition, its members had actively participated in creating curriculum materials, providing bibliographies, and much, much more. When the Board was informed that the sustaining grant would be terminated by NSF, it voted to phase out the commission. This does not mean that the Association is itself terminating a commitment to science education, but rather that the work of the commission per se is completed. The Chairman of the Board was asked to assemble a small task group to recommend to the Board appropriate education commitments for the next half decade. This responsibility has now been assumed by the Executive Officer.

5) The *Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility*, chaired by Allen V. Astin, has submitted to the Board its final report prepared by John Edsall. The excellent report has been accepted and the committee discharged. A summary of the report will appear in *Science* and the entire report will be available shortly for those who wish it. This is a very important piece of work which will serve science and scientists as well as society as a whole. A joint committee of Board and Council may wish to examine the report for further action.

Four committees will continue. The *Committee on Arid Lands*, chaired by Harold E. Dregne, has a long tradition of activity which has gained it an international reputation.

The *Committee on Science and Public Policy*, a relatively new committee, has presented a set of priorities which were approved by the Board after hearing testimony from chairman Raymond Bowers and Richard Scribner of the AAAS staff. A particularly important accomplishment was the preparation of a background paper by Jurgen Schmandt, setting the stage for hearings in the House Subcommittee on Science and Astronautics, which is preparing recommendations on science advising in the Executive Branch. Several other distinguished representatives of AAAS were called to testify at these hearings.

The *Committee on Public Understanding of Science*, now chaired by

Lloyd N. Morrisett, also is very active. This committee continues to advise the Communications Office.

The *Committee on Opportunities in Science*, which advises the office directed by Janet Brown, has already had a major impact both within the Association and outside. The AAAS is now recognized as a leading agency for initiatives in this area.

Finally, there were two committees for which the titles and charges are almost as broad as the Association itself. These were the *Committee on Science in the Promotion of Human Welfare* and the *Committee on Industry, Technology, and Society*. The Board elected to discharge both committees on recommendation of a subcommittee chaired by Richard Bolt, and to explore new mechanisms for taking specific initiatives. Under consideration are a committee on *Priorities and Goals* and one on *Program and Planning*.

In summary, the effect of this overall review is a reduction from eleven committees to four, with two small task groups exploring future initiatives in the areas of the environment and science education. In addition, there are plans to create two new committees: one on Goals, the other on Program and Planning.

### Some Programmatic Changes

There are several additional actions which bear mention:

1) The Board voted in October to terminate the *Bulletin* and to publish Association news in *Science*. This will result in savings of \$80,000.

2) The Board has supported a major effort to increase the number of members which had fallen by almost 12,000 since 1970.

3) Much has been accomplished on the international front, stimulated in part by Glenn T. Seaborg's presidential

address at the Mexico meeting in 1973. A number of Asian scientists met during the annual meeting in San Francisco last year, and this year visitors from Africa, Latin America, and the Soviet Union, the latter representing Znaniye, attended the meeting in New York. The International Office, directed by Irene Tinker, has been instrumental in these and many other programs which were stimulated by the report of the study group on the Association's role in international affairs chaired by Arthur K. Solomon.

The Association has joined with those in several other nations in the Americas to form the *Comite Coordinador de las Asociaciones para el Avance de la Ciencia en las Americas*. This coordinating committee was formed at a meeting in July 1974 in Recife, Brazil. At a subsequent meeting in December in Venezuela, plans were discussed for a trilingual journal and for additional meetings similar to the Mexican meeting on "Science and Man in the Americas." Representatives from Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela attended this year's New York meeting to create a charter for the coordinating committee and to select officers. We are working to include associations in other countries in the Americas and are especially anxious to increase the participation of Canadian scientists in this effort. The Board has a broader concern about the role of 15,000 Canadian members in the affairs of the AAAS and this is being explored with the Science Council of Canada and the Royal Society.

4) This year the Board joined with the American Bar Association to establish a National Conference on Science, Technology, and the Law. Emilio Q. Daddario has taken the leadership on behalf of the Board.

5) In December, meetings of the Board and of the Committee on Council Affairs were scheduled to permit a joint session. The purpose was to in-

crease the coherence of the planning and governance responsibilities of these two bodies and thus of the Council as well. The joint meeting included a discussion of the agenda of the Council meeting and consideration of the themes for the Bicentennial meeting in Boston next February. In addition, we began discussions of the objectives and program goals for the Association in the years ahead. Such a joint meeting is likely to become an annual occurrence because these two governing bodies of roughly equal size must come together to realize their separate roles.

### Conclusion

In concluding this report, which omits a great deal, the retiring Chairman is probably entitled to a valedictory. (Margaret Mead referred to it as a benediction.)

The Association faces two major challenges beyond those obvious ones of maintaining financial solvency and reversing a declining membership. First, there is the necessity to articulate goals for the future. This was started by a series of meetings under the heading of Arden House II, following the tradition of the meeting held in 1951 under the leadership of Warren Weaver. A proposed *Committee on Goals* can serve this purpose. Second, there is a need to maximize the coherence of all efforts supported by the Association to achieve the greatest effect with the funds available. The proposed *Committee on Program and Planning* can encourage this.

I complete this assignment with the sense of having been very privileged to hold the office of President and Chairman of the Board. I pass on the gavel to Roger Revelle, and to Margaret Mead and Bill McElroy in turn, with great confidence and that certain knowledge that nobody can succeed like a successor.