

New Responses to Attacks on Human Rights of Scientists in Latin America Called for

Participants at a conference of North American and Latin American scientists, engineers, and medical professionals from 13 countries, meeting in conjunction with the AAAS Annual Meeting in Toronto, condemned the violations of human rights currently taking place against their colleagues and others in several Latin American countries. Violations have ranged from harassment to disappearance, torture, detention without charge or trial, and often death.

Cochaired by John T. Edsall, then chairman of the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility (CSFR), and Marcel Roche, editor of *Interciencia*, the Workshop on Scientific Cooperation and Human Rights in the Americas was arranged by the CSFR.

Some 55 participants expressed concern over the decline of academic and scientific freedom in recent years. This has led to a deterioration in the quality and availability of scientific and general education at all levels and to a restricted research environment. The conferees noted that human rights and scientific freedom are closely linked, so that attacks on scientists and students imperil the long-range possibilities for national scientific and technological progress and contribute to the "brain drain."

The condition of human rights and

scientific freedom differs from one country to another. The situation ranges from widespread repression, such as has been carried out by the military governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Uruguay, to isolated instances of detention and torture of physicians in Colombia, where the democratic government has not adopted a generally repressive policy.

The workshop participants were concerned that, in conditions of generalized violence which characterize the current situation in El Salvador and Guatemala, scientists—particularly medical personnel—are being killed by military and paramilitary groups. This represents a breakdown of the Geneva Convention which pledges nations to regard doctors and nurses as well as the sick and wounded as neutrals during military conflict.

All attacks on basic human rights recognized under international law, whether from the right or the left, no matter whether they occur in repressive or in so-called "moderately repressive" regimes, were condemned.

José Goldemberg, president of the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science, pointed out that workshop participants "didn't get together to cry about the violation of human rights in

Latin America, but to find new ways of facing these problems." It was concluded that the attacks on human rights and scientific freedom have become a chronic problem, requiring the exploration of new initiatives.

The working groups recommended greater cooperative efforts by scientists and scientific societies in Latin America and North America in responding quickly to violations of the human rights of scientists; the establishment of a Latin American regional center to monitor and support scientific and academic freedom; the monitoring by scientific groups of the granting of loans by international lending institutions to educational and scientific institutions; and the recognition by public and private funding institutions of the need to support research on the underlying causes of repression and violation of human rights.

It became clear during the meeting that there is an urgent need for scientific societies in the United States, Canada, and Latin America to create groups charged specifically with responding promptly to violations of the human rights of their colleagues.

The workshop recommended that the scientific communities in the Americas work in conjunction with public and private groups to establish a regional human rights documentation center in Latin America. Such a center would strengthen the international network of scientists and scientific societies concerned with human rights, and would emphasize the responsibilities of scientists to respond to violations when they occur.

Participants emphasized that human rights violations have their roots in the larger social, economic, and political environment, and they urged that social scientists in all countries make it an important research priority to clarify these causes and to develop a greater understanding of the social conditions which promote respect for the life and dignity of every human being. This goal could be facilitated by establishing research fellowships in this area.

The workshop recommended that scientific organizations encourage international lending institutions to include human rights considerations in their loan criteria and to establish beyond a doubt that scientific and academic freedom will be preserved when loans are granted to



Several participants during closing day luncheon at Toronto Workshop on Human Rights in Americas.

educational and scientific institutions. In particular, it was suggested that scientific societies take it upon themselves to monitor, to suggest policy, and if possible to participate in the process by which decisions are made for such loans.

In conclusion, the participants affirmed that the advancement of science is fundamentally linked to the advancement of human rights. Scientists therefore have a responsibility not only to promote scientific freedom but also to promote the basic rights guaranteed to all people under international law. Furthermore, scientists have a duty to refuse to participate in actions which violate the human rights of others.

In a related action, on 7 January, the AAAS Council by unanimous vote adopted a resolution condemning attacks on scientific freedom and human rights and encouraging other scientific societies and individual scientists to do likewise.

A report of the Workshop on Scientific Cooperation and Human Rights in the Americas is being produced and will be available through the CSFR later this year. For further information on the workshop, contact Eric Stover, human rights coordinator, CSFR, at the AAAS address.

ERIC STOVER

*Committee on Scientific
Freedom and Responsibility*

Science Ethics Reprint Series Available

A new *Science* reprint collection of 20 articles on scientific freedom and responsibility has been prepared by AAAS. The reprints include articles by C. P. Snow, Bertrand Russell, Bentley Glass, and John T. Edsall, as well as AAAS committee reports and selected editorials from the 1960's and the 1970's.

The new series provides an introduction to the ethical and moral role of the scientist in today's world. Thus, it describes key areas of concern among scientists, philosophers, and the public, as well as providing a record of the development of these concerns.

This is the first time that AAAS and *Science* have made such a collection available. It is designed particularly for use in university courses on science and society, professional ethics, and philosophy and history of science.

Copies are available at \$10 for a complete set of 20 individual reprints. Orders for the set should be sent (prepaid) to

David Joins Board

Edward E. David, Jr., president of Exxon Research and Engineering Company, Inc., and a former AAAS Board chairman, has accepted the invitation of the Board of Directors to fill the remainder of John C. Sawhill's term. Sawhill, former chairman of the U.S. Synfuels Commission, resigned from the AAAS Board of Directors in December.

SFR Reprints, AAAS Product Sales, 1515 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20005. Further information about these articles is available from the office of the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility.

Rutherford Named AAAS Adviser

F. James Rutherford, former assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, has joined the AAAS as adviser on science education to the Board of Directors.

In making the announcement at the Annual Meeting in Toronto, AAAS president Frederick Mosteller noted that Rutherford would be "charting a strong course" for AAAS "to begin to make a difference" in the area of science education. Rutherford was previously assistant director for science education at the National Science Foundation.

The appointment is part of the AAAS effort to make science and engineering education, and general scientific literacy, central concerns of the Association in the 1980's. To formalize this decision, both the AAAS Board of Directors and the AAAS Council have passed a resolution that pledges the Association, in partnership with its affiliated science and engineering societies, to a "full measure of effort to reverse the damaging decline of science and engineering education in the United States."

The resolution directs the president of the Association "to convene a consultative conference of heads of affiliated societies to appraise the health and priority needs of science and engineering education in the United States in the 1980s." It further mandates that a major theme of the 1982 meeting of the AAAS be "Toward a National Commitment to Educa-

tion Excellence in Science and Engineering for All Americans."

AAAS also plans to use *Science 81* to create lively teaching materials to help science teachers in the secondary schools, and especially to benefit minority students and girls, according to Mosteller. "We will work with our affiliated scientific societies to develop action programs, and we will have joint projects with science and technology centers and museums," he said.

The AAAS action follows a report by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the director of the National Science Foundation last fall that pointed out that there had been a 15-year decline in the U.S. commitment to excellence in science, math, and engineering.

R&D Project Analyzes FY 1982 Budgets

Seventeen scientific, engineering, and higher education organizations joined AAAS last month in the preparation of a fourth annual intersociety report on R&D in the federal budget. The document, *Intersociety Preliminary Analyses of R&D in the FY 1982 Budget*, is designed to provide early independent examinations of the Administration's proposals for support of R&D. It serves as a resource for members of the participating organizations and other persons in government, industry, and academia who are involved in the congressional budget process. The report provides information on R&D in the Carter Administration's FY 1982 budget and on President Reagan's budget proposals for R&D-related activities, as available at press time.

The intersociety project began in 1978 when seven groups cooperated in the preparation of a report on support for R&D in the President's FY 1979 budget and of a follow-up report in the fall summarizing congressional actions on the President's recommendations. Now in its fourth year, the project has expanded to include 17 participating organizations, permitting comprehensive coverage of most of the major R&D agencies. In addition, the report includes disciplinary summaries of R&D in the social and behavioral sciences, physics and astronomy, chemistry, chemical engineering, biology, the mathematical and computer sciences, electrotechnology, and the atmospheric and oceanographic sciences, and an analysis of federal R&D support to colleges and universities.