ing to deliver a deeper moral message, says Thomas Powers, author of *Heisenberg's War: The Secret History of the German Bomb*. "He thought that he got the word out in some form or another," Powers says. "But Bohr makes it clear he didn't hear a thing."

However, Hans Bethe, a physicist and Nobel laureate at Cornell University who worked on the Manhattan Project, says he no longer believes that Heisenberg tried to make only a nuclear reactor. "The letter changed my view," Bethe says. "It seems that in 1941 Heisenberg wanted to build a bomb." After the war, Heisenberg had more reason than Bohr to "misremember" the facts when recounting the meeting, says Gerald Holton, a physicist and historian of science at Harvard University. "Niels Bohr had no reason to say something that wasn't true," Holton says, "whereas Heisenberg had a real problem after the war, namely, explaining why the German group failed to do what they set out to do."

If Heisenberg was working in earnest on the German bomb effort, then his purpose in visiting Copenhagen was likely more personal than political, Bethe says. The Nazis threatened Bohr, whose mother was Jewish, and Heisenberg must have known that his visit would help secure Bohr's safety. "He was convinced that Germany would win the war," Bethe says, "and he wanted Bohr and his institute to survive." **–ADRIAN CHO**

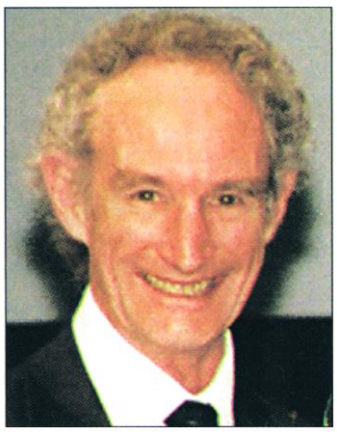
Adrian Cho is a freelance writer in Boone, North Carolina.

UNITED KINGDOM

Parliament Takes Aim At Royal Society

CAMBRIDGE, U.K.—A showdown is looming between Britain's oldest and most respected scientific institution and the U.K.'s House of Commons. Responding to long-standing concerns over elitism and discrimination against women at the Royal Society, the Commons' Select Committee for Science and Technology has launched a probe of how the society and similar institutions should use public money and how they elect members.

The Royal Society, founded in 1660, received $37 million from the government last year, most of which it spent on postdoctoral research fellowships and travel grants. It also organizes meetings, publishes journals, and acts as an independent "voice of science" for the government. Each year, the society bestows lifelong membership on 42 new "fellows." But despite a policy of equal opportunity, only 44 of its present 1216 fellows are women. Moreover, 62% of them are based in London, Oxford, or Cambridge, home to the country's top universities.



Search me. Robert May welcomes the Commons' inquiry.

Select Committee chair Ian Gibson, former dean of biology at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, says he wants to find out why the society's fellows do not reflect the makeup of the wider scientific community. He also wants to ensure that there isn't duplication of effort among the Royal Society, the Royal Academy of Engineering, and other learned societies in areas such as the popularization of science. "That outcome includes the possibility of more money for learned societies," he says. His goal is to achieve "a complete revamp and modernization" of the Royal Society.

Robert May, president of the Royal Society and former government chief scientist, told *Science* he acknowledges that the society is "working against the pyramid" of gender inequality and is actively trying to identify women scientists who may have been overlooked. It has also recently changed its nomination rules: Starting this year, a candidate needs to be nominated by only two fellows instead of six, which may make it easier for women to be nominated. "We also try to have women on all our committees, but that turns out to be a burden for [the female fellows], because there are so few," says May. However, he says, "we will not have different standards of election [for men and women]."

Early reaction from scientists supports that view. Plant scientist Lorna Casselton, a Royal Society fellow at Oxford University, agrees that doctoring the selection process to favor women would be unacceptable: "I don't think women would like to see double standards applied." All the female fellows contacted by *Science* stressed that they had never experienced or seen any discrimination in the selection of candidates. "The problem is with society, not with the Society," says physiologist Frances Ashcroft, a fellow at Oxford University. Fewer women follow careers in science, and the proportion of women in the Royal Society is the same as the proportion holding scientific chairs in British universities, she says.

The Select Committee intends to call the Royal Society and other societies to give evidence after March. It will be an "interesting battle," says Gibson. But he may have little power to influence the inner workings of the Royal Society. "Once the committee has discovered how we elect fellows, we will welcome its ideas," counters May.

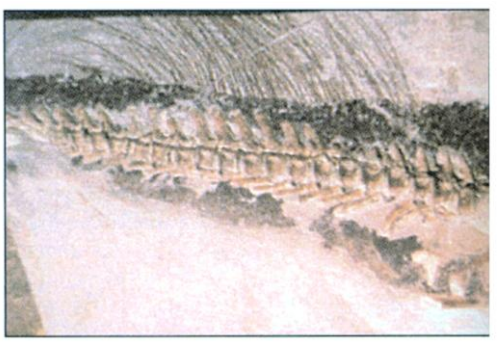
–ADAM BOSTANCI

With additional reporting by Anna Baynham.

PALEONTOLOGY

Tug-of-War Over Mystery Fossil

FRANKFURT, GERMANY—Another blockbuster dinosaur find from China has sparked a disagreement between leading paleontologists in Germany and China. Last week, Friedrich Steininger, director of Frankfurt's Senckenberg Natural History Museum, tried to clear the air over his museum's purchase of a mysterious fossil amid claims that it was smuggled out of China illegally. But Chinese paleontologists insist that the specimen must be handed back. "It is more than clear that Chinese law forbids such exports of important vertebrate fossils," says paleontologist Zhou Zhonghe of the Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology (IVPP) in Beijing.



A tall tale. The disputed psittacosaur and its tail filaments.

One thing not in dispute is that many scientists are clamoring to see the find. The almost complete psittacosaur—a bipedal plant eater that's the size of a large dog and has a parrotlike beak—has a tuft of filaments on its tail that resemble a porcupine's quills. This is the first time such adornments have been found outside the theropods, the group that includes large bipedal carnivores such as *Tyrannosaurus rex*. "The discovery of these structures will certainly change the way we look upon the [skin] of dinosaurs," says Gerald Mayr, a paleoornithologist at the Senckenberg.

The fossil took a circuitous route to the Senckenberg. It first surfaced in 1997 at the Tucson rock show, a major marketplace for fossils and minerals. The following year the fossil was sold by a U.S.-based fossil dealer to a pair of European dealers, who arranged to have it exported legally under U.S. law. At the time, the psittacosaur bones were

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