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Science and the State Department

THE report *Science and Foreign Relations*, prepared by Lloyd V. Berkner, special consultant to the Secretary, examined the twofold question of how the department could aid in the progress of science and reflect the effects and potentialities of this progress in the conduct of its foreign relations. The report also made certain recommendations to enable the department effectively to meet its responsibilities in the scientific aspects of foreign relations. They included proposals (a) for establishment in the department of an Office of Science Adviser, to be primarily responsible for advising on the science aspects of U. S. foreign policy and programs; and (b) for establishment in important diplomatic missions of science attaché posts to aid the office in carrying out its responsibilities.

The Office of the Science Adviser was formally established February 6 under the direction of the Under Secretary of State. A beginning has thus been made for setting up a mechanism which, in cooperation with the National Research Council, can bring American scientists into closer relation with government and, at the same time, be helpful in the progress of science. The office will be guided by the principle of an optimum international flow of scientific information and exchange of scientific persons, consistent with considerations of national security.

The office will heed the report's proposal of "a foreign policy that will permit the fullest possible exchange of unclassified scientific and technical data." It will be "scrupulous in adhering to the established rules and standards of national security," but at the same time "be constantly on its guard against the abuse of these rules and standards."

The office is mindful of the report's observation that interchange of scientists constitutes "a means for accelerating scientific creative thinking," and will attempt to carry out the recommendation that "the De-

partment . . . lend strong support to recognized international professional scientific organizations and meetings through a positive program directed toward adequate support of United States delegates to such meetings." On the matter of bringing into this country foreign scientists for temporary professional visits, the office will urge the department to "weigh the potential contribution to United States scientific progress and to international understanding represented by such visits against the potential hazard to this country of admitting such scientists."

American scientists can help the Office of the Science Adviser perform its responsibilities in several ways. Suggestions or proposals on science and foreign policy will be welcomed. Constructive contributions for a more effective international understanding through science will be most helpful. Background and other available details will help bring satisfactory results when scientists direct attention of the office to particular problems of international exchange of scientific information or persons.

Preparation for international travel connected with scientific lecture tours, symposia, international organization meetings, etc., is important and requires coordination of public and private endeavors for plans to work out smoothly. Accordingly, the office will be more effective in facilitating travel and other arrangements for these purposes if scientists will furnish it or NRC in advance with the fullest information at hand about their plans.

Science attachés can be especially helpful to American scientists in foreign countries in facilitating their arrangements. To help ensure effective assistance from our science attachés, scientists planning travel abroad are urged to notify the office or the NRC of their travel plans.

Cooperation between American scientists and the Office of the Science Adviser is basic to the success of the science program.

J. B. KOEPLI

*Office of the Science Adviser
Department of State*

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