

John R. Mayor, ex officio, AAAS
Dael Wolffe, ex officio, AAAS

Environmental Alteration

Barry Commoner, Washington University, St. Louis, chairman
T. C. Byerly, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.
John E. Cantlon, Michigan State University, East Lansing
William M. Capron, Harvard University
H. Jack Geiger, Tufts University School of Medicine, Boston
Jacob E. Goldman, Xerox Corporation, Rochester
Oscar Harkavy, Ford Foundation, New York
Walter Modell, Cornell University Medical College, New York
Jack P. Ruina, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Arthur M. Squires, City College of the City University of New York
Dael Wolffe, ex officio, AAAS
William T. Kabisch, staff representative, AAAS

Herbicide Assessment Commission

Matthew Meselson, Harvard University, chairman
Arthur H. Westing, Windham College, Putney, Vermont, director
(members to be appointed)

Committees To Be Appointed

AAAS Socio-Psychological Prize, Judges

AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards, Screening Committee
AAAS-Westinghouse Science Writing Awards, Judges

Representatives

American Association for Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care
William T. Kabisch (1971), AAAS

American Council on Education
Mark H. Ingraham, University of Wisconsin, Madison
John R. Mayor, AAAS

American Standards Association Sectional Committees on Letter Symbols and on Abbreviations for Science and Engineering (Y1 and Y10)
Robert G. Bates, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C.

American Standards Association Sectional Committee on Use of the Decimalized Inch (B87)
Carl F. Kayan, Columbia University

Hawaiian Botanical Gardens Foundation, Inc.
John N. Couch, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Cooperative Committee on the Teaching of Science and Mathematics
Ralph W. Lefler (AAAS Section on Education), Purdue University
John R. Mayor (AAAS), AAAS
T. Wayne Taylor (Association of

Academies of Science, AAAS). Michigan State University, East Lansing
Dael Wolffe, ex officio, AAAS

Marine Biological Committee of Review

H. Burr Steinbach, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

National Academy of Sciences Committee on the Kimber Genetics Award
Marcus M. Rhoades (1970), Indiana University, Bloomington

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education
Arnold B. Grobman (1971), Rutgers University

Science Service Board of Trustees
Wallace R. Brode (1972), 3900 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.
Bowen C. Dees (1970), Franklin Institute, Philadelphia
Athelstan Spilhaus (1971), 137 Woodbridge Road, Palm Beach, Florida

Scientific Manpower Commission
Wallace R. Brode (1970), 3900 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.
M. H. Trytten (1972), National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C.

U.S. National Commission for UNESCO
Arthur K. Solomon (1971), Harvard Medical School, Boston

The 1969 Meeting of the AAAS: A Brief Appraisal

W. G. Berl, Meeting Editor

Our age is, for good or ill, immersed in the social problem. A technological civilisation makes stability impossible. . . . Its rapid developments and its almost daily changes in the physical circumstances of life destroy the physical symbols of stability and, therefore, make for restlessness, even if these movements were not in a direction which imperil the whole human enterprise.

—REINHOLD NIEBUHR (1932)

A bird's-eye view of recent AAAS Annual Meetings reveals progress toward three goals: The center of concern is shifting, as it should, from too

much emphasis on specialized matters that are better discussed in a different setting toward problems affecting all of science, all scientists, and the society in which they function. The host cities are accepting increasingly larger shares of the program planning, contributing an interested audience and exhibiting their local scientific treasures. The dissemination of the contents of the Meetings to a wide audience is now making use of communication methods not previously employed—television, audiotapes (and, perhaps, soon, educational radio). All these developments are aimed to further the basic purpose of the Annual Meetings—to encourage wide-ranging inter-

actions among scientific disciplines and to report to as large a public as can be reached, the prospects and promises of the scientific enterprise.

What specifically took place in Boston during the Christmas week of 1969? It was a "large" meeting both in attendance and content. Despite execrable weather the paid registration (7897) exceeded any previous AAAS Meeting. Several thousand more registered, without charge, as "Guests of the AAAS" or attended events to which the public was invited without registration. Thanks to effective local pre-meeting publicity, public participation from the Boston area was extensive. Equally pleasing was a substantial influx of students from all parts of the country (and a small delegation sent by the British Association).

The program was as varied and lively as has been the custom of late. Unusual audience interest was shown for the following general programs: Hunger, Food and Malnutrition; Human Settlements and Environmental Design; Is There an Optimum Level of Population?; Science and Man in Space; Arms Control and Disarmament; Science and the Future of Man; Physics and the Explanation of Life; Undergraduate Studies in Environmental Sciences; Science and Music—in addition to the well-attended AAAS Invited and Film Lectures. The sophistication of the audience was reflected in their interest in the following more specialized, wide-ranging symposia: Youth: Ego Ideals and Impact of Culture; Climate and Man; Neurological Substrates of Behavior; Biology and Sociology of Violence; Leonardo da Vinci; Cell Division; Power Generation and Environmental Change; Brain and Language Communication; Innovation; Education of the Infant and Young Child.

The local arrangements, thanks largely to the interest of the General Chairman (Howard McMahon) and Vice Chairman (Alan A. Smith) were superbly conceived and carried out.

The institutions of Boston and Cambridge were generous with their contributions: eleven tours to establish-

ments where visitors were warmly received to view work in progress; nine attractive exhibits in museums and libraries; a concert by the Boston Symphony Orchestra; an instructive educational exhibit on the topics of weather research, computers, and health; and an enormous amount of personal and financial help from hundreds of people and dozens of contributors.

Student interest ran high. In these days of intense immersion in matters of social and moral ends it would have been odd if it had been otherwise. At times, the confrontations and the questioning skirted the edges of effective intercourse. A few outsiders attempted to capitalize on the freedom of debate for their own ends. But, by general agreement, the interactions gave a welcome bite to many sessions. They helped to modify some preconceived beliefs and entrenched positions at either end of the spectrum. Out of the heat emerged shafts of mutual understanding.

Without effective dissemination of the findings of the Meeting the task of attending to the "public understanding" of the importance of science in human progress is only partially done. Press coverage, particularly by the Boston daily papers, was unusually extensive and perceptive. As in the past 2 years, public television, through WGBH-Boston and the Eastern Educational Network, covered several sessions in full. In addition, five 1-hour "Meeting Reports" were prepared under the direction of Stephen A. Gilford (WGBH) and David Prowitt (Science Editor of NET) in which the high points of the day's events were reviewed for viewing each evening. These programs were distributed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to all Educational Television stations in the U.S. and were widely seen.

A few remarks are appropriate regarding an experiment in television interconnection. The final roundtable session on the topic "Is There an Optimum Level of Population?" was transmitted to the Caspary Auditorium of the Rockefeller University where

it was projected, in color, on a 16- by 20-foot screen. Dr. Sheldon Segal, Director of Research of the Population Council, acted as local discussion chairman, following the end of the live transmission from Boston. While the effectiveness of this experiment remains to be determined, the technology for such an enterprise is in such excellent shape that one hopes that it offers a suitable "pay-off" for the wide transfer of ideas.

A large number of symposia and associated discussions were recorded on audiotapes (see the advertising of titles on pages 1159-1161). The intent behind this endeavor is to make the spoken record available quickly, particularly to the large number of people who were unable to attend the Meeting in person, and to reduce the onus and inconvenience of scheduling multiple sessions. These tapes are not a substitute for publication of carefully edited and annotated Proceedings along conventional lines. However, the relative ease and speed of recording and duplicating tapes for general distribution makes them an interesting publication effort in their own right.

How should one assess the value of the Boston Meeting? By the number of persons attending? By their enjoyment of the Proceedings? By the news stories written, the hours of television broadcast, the number of audiotapes sold? Was it the nature of the topics under discussion, the conclusions reached, the competence of the participants or the response of the city and its citizens? Weighing them all, the Boston Meeting was second to none in the long history of the AAAS. It attracted many of the most thoughtful men and women in this country and from abroad. It gave young people an opportunity to express their feelings and try out their thoughts. It did not avoid difficult problems. It was concerned with policies, priorities, goals, and with those many other human activities with which science is interacting. It was stimulating, thought-provoking, and, at times, exciting. It set high standards for the future.

—W. G. BERL, *Meeting Editor*

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