

REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO ACADEMY
CONFERENCE AND COUNCIL OF THE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

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I represented you at the St. Louis meeting as a representative to the Academy Conference and as a member of the Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It is customary for the same person to act in these two capacities for all the academies and there is no conflict of scheduling both groups.

Twenty-nine academies out of the thirty-eight which are currently affiliated were represented by thirty-five people. Thus several academies had more than one member in attendance. The Academy Conference urges academies to have two members at the meetings if possible; one the member for the AAS council and the other preferably the president or president-elect of the academy. Academies are also urged to appoint these representatives at least one year in advance so that new members can be indoctrinated during the year.

Your representative has been the same now for ten years. He was president of the Academy Conference two years ago and during his tenure a constitution was adopted, a history was written of the Conference and now this year at the Boston meeting he is chairman of a committee to propose by-laws and several amendments to the new constitution and is serving on two other committees. In addition he holds the appointive office of "Archivist" or keeper of all records of the conference.

At the last conference a committee reported on the Opportunities for Cooperation between Academies. A questionnaire that was sent to the secretaries of all academies resulted in less than half of them replying. It was generally agreed, by those who replied, that exchange of delegates between neighboring academies would be desirable. Such delegates might profitably sit in on business sessions, improving the opportunity for exchanges of experiences. There was little enthusiasm for joint meetings of neighboring academies; it was suggested that more experimentation in this direction might be helpful. No trend of opinion could be discovered regarding cooperation of academies for support or disapproval of "developments in public education or federal projects;" the Committee believed that more widespread exchange of delegates might bring about more agreement on this question. The feeling was evident that academies might make special efforts to invite visitors from near-by states for part of the program and for sneakers. Officers of several academies expressed a desire to receive programs from other academies so that they might make plans to attend. An additional report will be made by this committee this year.

Another committee reported on a Study of Cooperation of the Academies of Science with the Academy Conference. I was on this committee so you can expect your academy to be well in line. Some proposals were: continuity of membership; early and due consideration of appointment of delegates; opportunity for the delegate to report back to the academy; some financial aid to the representative; academies were urged to send science talent high school students to the national meetings when possible, and finally academies were urged to help to increase the membership in the AAAS. Difficulties in cooperation with the conference are due to differences in constitution of membership, and in aims among some affiliated academies. Further studies seemed to be profitable so the committee will report again this year.

A round table discussion, *Responsibilities of Academies of Science in Promoting Improvement in Teaching of Science in the Public Schools*, brought out several interesting points. Inadequate training and recruiting of students in colleges has resulted from the unprecedented demands for scientific personnel in industry and in government. The responsibility of the academies lies with direct contact and action with the public school teachers who teach science to these potential scientists in our schools. Some ways that colleges are attempting to prepare better science teachers and by which more high school students can be induced to follow scientific careers are: (1) increased interest in good teaching as shown by institutional and national conferences on science teaching, workshops, and bringing business and industrial interests to the campuses; (2) providing annual awards for distinguished teaching; (3) a program of study for teachers of science—as in summer fellowships for teachers of science. I believe the present trend in the better high schools and colleges is to minimize the teaching of methods and the appreciation of science and emphasize the accumulation of facts.

A second round-table discussion on *Relations of the Academies of Science to the Public*, brought out these items: Most academies believe their relations to the public consist of: (1) obligations to their own members, and (2) sponsorship of a junior academy to encourage high school students to enter science fields. Twenty-seven of twenty-nine academies reported that they published a journal or proceedings. Twenty-five sponsor junior academies; two sponsor high school science fairs, and sixteen aid, or plan to aid, in state-wide science talent searches. Cooperation with government agencies in the study and development of conservation of natural resources was reported by less than one-half. There is little cooperation with news collecting agencies and little use is being made of radio and television. Three academies are sponsoring television programs and four others are presenting regularly scheduled radio programs. Other public services offered by several academies include speakers bureaus, counselling programs in cooperation with educational groups, and the sponsorship of collegiate academies of science. The California Academy of Science sponsored a TV program *Science in Action* for thirteen months without a

sponsor; during the past two years their commercial sponsor has been a bank.

A third round-table discussion was on *Relations of the Academies of Science to the Press*. This discussion was led by Watson Davis of Science Service and he knew whereof he spoke. Constant contacts with the people are through the press, radio, and television. All media of public information should be treated as members of academies as far as notices are concerned, without payment of dues. This includes editors, columnists, feature writers, and news desks of radio and TV stations. Reporters must not be expected to besiege academy meetings; hence handouts, or intelligible summaries should be prepared and distributed. They must be in simple language. Special facilities should be provided for photographers and interviewers; reporters cannot be expected to sit through scientific lectures. The press might be provided with a list of academy members with an indication of their fields of interest. Academies should urge local press to carry features on science, such as obtained from Science Service, a non-profit public service institution. Watson Davis remarked that "If the press is considered a part of an Academy of Science, not only the public but science will benefit." Make sure the press is welcomed to our meetings, not just tolerated; be sure they receive free tickets to our banquets.

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