

# Capitol Hill: Science Among Nations

by Frank Sartwell

The House Subcommittee on Science, Research and Development begins the new session of Congress with a dozen domestic concerns at hand and a new pre-occupation with international policy as it relates to science.

A three-day symposium on the subject starts January 24, with prominent scientists from abroad—as yet unnamed—scheduled to address the meeting of the full committee on Science and Astronautics with its Panel on Science and Technology.

But there are still plenty of national concerns on the committee's docket, most of them dealing with Great Society goals.

Committee chairman George P. Miller (D-Calif.), announcing the public seminar, declared that, "International cooperation in science and the establishment of sound foreign policy toward this end is a critical area warranting our closest and continuing scrutiny."

Rep. Emilio Q.

Daddario (D-

Conn.), chairman

of the subcommittee,

is responsible for

planning the details

of the meeting. Although

the agenda and the

participants are not

completely firm, he

expects the meeting

to consider science

and technology

in economic development

and world comity

as well as the evolution

of scientific development

in the Far East, Europe

and Latin America.

**The panel,** set up in 1960

to advise the committee

and to act as a link

between the scientific

community and the

legislators, is made up

of 16 well-known

scientists, engineers

and educators. In the

past, its meetings have

been addressed by

such prominent men

as Lord Snow and

Dr. Lee A. DuBridge.

Members of the panel

are:

Dr. Edward J. Baldes,

Mayo Clinic

(Emeritus); Clay

Bedford, Kaiser

Aerospace and

Electronics

Corporation; Dr.

Harrison S. Brown,

California Institute

of Technology; Dr.

Clifford C. Furnas,

University of

Buffalo; Martin



Daddario

Dr. Edward J. Baldes, Mayo Clinic (Emeritus); Clay Bedford, Kaiser Aerospace and Electronics Corporation; Dr. Harrison S. Brown, California Institute of Technology; Dr. Clifford C. Furnas, University of Buffalo; Martin Golan, Southwest Research Institute; Dr. Walter J. Hesse, Ling-Temco Vought; Dr. Thomas F. Malone, Travelers Insurance Cos.; Dr. W. Albert Noyes,

Jr., University of Texas; Dr. Clarence P. Oliver, University of Texas; Dr. Roger Revelle, Harvard University; Dr. Richard J. Russell, Louisiana Coastal Studies Institute; Dr. H. Guyford Stever, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Dr. James A. Van Allen, State University of Iowa; Dr. Fred L. Whipple, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, and Dr. Maurice J. Zucrow, Purdue University.

On the domestic scene the subcommittee has outlined 12 "areas of concentration" which will "soon require further scrutiny from the scientific and technological standpoint by the appropriate committees of the Congress."

As described by the subcommittee, these areas are:

- Protecting the natural environment: Problems of pollution, weather conditions, conservation and use of natural resources. "The rate at which we are altering our environment and consuming our resources may be the most serious blight affecting contemporary civilization—not excluding the possibility of widespread war."

- Providing new sources of energy: "Even the most casual look at future needs makes it clear that we must have, relatively soon, sources of energy more plentiful and efficient than the traditional fossil fuels. At present, no feasible alternative appears to be in sight."

- Application of cybernetics: "Many civilized countries, including the United States, are moving rapidly into the automated world of the computer, with all its great promise and equally great risks. Until we learn to provide . . . a more efficient coupling to human control, however, we are unlikely to make sufficient progress. . . ."

- Strengthening information management: "A revolution in this phase of science and technology is already in the making, yet it appears to be little understood by most policymakers."

- Induction of industrial R&D: "As other expensive federal commitments grow rapidly, there is no certainty that the current rate of (federal) support for science and technology can be maintained. Investigation should be made into ways and means for encouraging or permitting an accelerated rate of industrial research, basic as well as applied, in order to avoid a possibly disastrous slackening."

- Stimulating transportation innova-

tions: "We can and must combat these problems on a thoroughly integrated systems basis—technologically, socially, economically—or become bogged down in a hopeless morass of logjammed machinery and obsolete thoroughfares."

- Diminishing urban congestion: "Here again we are without adequate knowledge of the technology or social sciences needed to alleviate our multi-megalopolis diseases. Humans are not geared to the life of the ant or the bee."

- Enhancing adequate housing: "This is a corollary of the urban congestion problem and one which serious technological research might do much to solve."

- Improving food production and distribution: "Even now our surpluses are dwindling and our food growth rate is not particularly comforting when plotted against the population curve. . . . Research into both the production and distribution of food will be essential in the future—and not very far into the future at that."

- Alleviation of crime: "A hydra-headed monster. Both the physical and social sciences offer hopes for a solution to a genuinely hopeful degree."

- Upgrading the quality of education: "The American effort to handle the quantitative phases of education over the past 20 years has been herculean and generally successful. . . . Need for stronger efforts for improving the quality."

- Protecting the national health, "An old, ever-present problem."

**Certain to be reintroduced** is Rep. Daddario's bill to amend the charter of the National Science Foundation. The bill, passed last session by the House but lapsed in the Senate, has been stripped of some provisions that would have given NSF more control of national policy at the expense of other executive branch agencies. The remaining provisions streamline NSF procedures, tie it more closely to the Daddario subcommittee, and increase the Foundation's interest in applied science. (This proposal has been attacked as a rejection of basic science by Dr. Caryl P. Haskins, president of the Carnegie Institution.)

Opposed in its original form by the President's Office of Science and Technology under Dr. Donald F. Hornig, the bill has been sanitized to the point where it offends no one but still strengthens and upgrades NSF.