

announcing the formation of a new organization of

SCIENTISTS dedicated to vigorous SOCIAL and POLITICAL ACTION

Over the past 25 years the scientific community has grown very large in numbers and in resources, but we have become complacent with our prestige and have failed to face the responsibilities created for us by our very material achievements. While we now see that many of the products of science and technology have become more a menace than a boon to the interests of human society, the dominant professional associations - such as the APS - have deliberately remained aloof from the desperate problems facing mankind today; and those few individual spokesmen and groups of scientists who do concern themselves with questions of government policy have failed to provide the bold leadership which is so badly needed. As scientists have become more and more dependent on the government for research funds and for their very livelihood, speaking out on public issues has been done more and more cautiously. We must therefore strive to regain our full intellectual and political freedom; and the very existence of this proposed organization will help strengthen each scientist's resolve.

An essential task is one of self-identification. We reject the old credo that "research means progress and progress is good." Reliance on such simplistic ethical codes has led to mistaken or even perverted uses of our scientific talents. (Consider the channeling of young scientists into weapons development work by the present complex of federal policies on education, funding and the draft.) As an antidote we shall establish a forum where all concerned scientists - and especially students and younger members of the profession - may explore the questions, Why are we scientists? For whose benefit do we work? What is the full measure of our moral and social responsibility?

As an ongoing organization we shall seek new and radical solutions for long range problems and immediate issues, and we shall press for effective political action. We shall work for change within our present affiliations (professional society, university, laboratory), but foremost we shall strive to present our opinions as an independent body of socially aware scientists free from the inhibitions which abound in the established institutions we now serve. We shall also seek to relate our activities to those of similar groups (radical caucuses) now forming in other professions.

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Our initial meeting - open to all those interested in participating - will be held during the annual meeting of the American Physical Society at the New York Hilton Hotel, February 3-6, 1969, at a time and place to be announced there. Our primary business will be the formation of action groups committed to press forward on specific issues which this organization will attack. We particularly emphasize the need for participation by the younger members. Any offerings of ideas, labor and funds to aid this program will be appreciated, but must come second to the need for a sincere dedication on the part of many individuals to what will be a long and difficult enterprise.

Michael Goldhaber  
Rockefeller Univ.  
New York, N.Y.

Martin Perl  
Stanford Univ.  
Stanford, Cal.

Marc Ross  
Univ. of Michigan  
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Charles Schwartz  
Univ. of California  
Berkeley, Cal.