
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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PRICE CALLS FOR LARGER NSF SOCIAL SCIENCE APPROPRIATION

Testifying before a House appropriations subcommittee on May 4, Rep. David Price (D-NC) recommended that the National Science Foundation (NSF) increase its support for the social and behavioral sciences. Speaking before the House Veterans Administration-Housing and Urban Development-Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Robert Traxler (D-MI), Price urged Subcommittee members to "send a strong message to the administrators of NSF about the importance of these disciplines."

Price, a former political science professor at Duke University, cited hearings held by the House Science, Research and Technology (SRT) Subcommittee in March (see Update, March 17, 1989), where three distinguished social scientists (Herbert Simon, Charles Schultze, and William Gorham) testified "on the social values of their disciplines and the 'languishing commitment' they found at the NSF." Price also chastised the Foundation for ignoring the 1988 National Academy of Sciences' report, Behavioral and Social Sciences: Achievements and Opportunities, which calls for increased support for social and behavioral science at NSF.

Price has also written a letter to NSF Director Erich Bloch, expressing the congressman's dismay "over the apparent low regard in which [the social and behavioral sciences] are held at the NSF and the fact that they have not enjoyed funding increases

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The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

Raymond E. Wolfinger, *President*

Howard J. Silver, *Executive Director*

proportional to the rest of the Foundation." Following up on their exchange during Bloch's appearance in March before the SRT Subcommittee, Price also supported the idea promulgated by Nobel Laureate Herbert Simon that NSF establish a separate directorate for the social and behavioral sciences.

Traxler's committee also heard from COSSA Executive Director Howard Silver, who urged the doubling of the NSF budget during the next five years. This, he said, would provide sufficient support for the Foundation to implement the funding recommendations presented in the NAS report.

Silver also noted the important role social and behavioral research plays in the arenas of scientific enterprise, public policy, and the country's economic and national security. In terms of scientific enterprise, Silver noted sociological research on women and science and economic research on the return on investment in science. In illustrating the vital role that social and behavioral research plays in the public policy process, he referred to the more than 300 social and behavioral scientists who have appeared as expert witnesses before congressional committees in the past 16 months. As for economic and national security, Silver noted that NSF has sponsored social and behavioral research on international issues, economic stability, economic productivity, attitude and behavior change, and cognition and learning theory aimed at creating an educated, productive next generation of Americans.<<

BBS ADVISORY COMMITTEE DISCUSSES GLOBAL CHANGE, DATA BASES

The newly reconstituted Advisory Committee for the Biological, Behavioral and Social Sciences (BBS) Directorate at the National Science Foundation (NSF) met on May 5 and 6 to discuss the Directorate's proposed scientific themes for the next five years. The Committee, which consists of eight biologists, one behavioral scientist (Linda Smith of Indiana University) and one social scientist (Barbara Heyns of New York University), is chaired by Peter Raven of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Raven is the sole holdover from the previous BBS advisory group. Mary Clutter, assistant director for BBS, guided the discussions.

The proposed scientific themes discussed by the Committee included global change, plant science, and dynamic (biological) form and function. Social and Economic Science (SES) Division Director Roberta Miller reported on the Division's initiative for promoting social science research on the human-dimensions aspects of global change. A program announcement for research in this area distributed last fall has attracted a number of good proposals that will be reviewed by a multi-disciplinary panel in June. Echoing her speech at a conference on global change held earlier in the week (see next story), Miller noted that to study deforestation without understanding the impact of market systems that make such action profitable restricts the ability to

limit such destructive environmental behavior. She also reiterated the need for cross-national research examining longer time frames than social science researchers usually study. She said collection and standardization of data on global systems are also needed.

Miller, who is a former COSSA executive director, presented the Committee with a report on the major data bases in social and economic sciences supported by NSF: the Panel Study on Income Dynamics, the General Social Survey, and the National Election Studies. She stressed the importance of the data collected by these surveys for research in the social sciences and their importance for education and training purposes. But she also noted that the heavy investment in these surveys over many years has raised the issue of continued funding for old data bases versus the need to start new ones. As an example of new projects, Miller cited an SES-proposed initiative to collect data on larger social units such as organizations.

Given the relatively stagnant SES budgets, Miller also pointed out that the increasing costs of these major database surveys limit the amount of funds available for other SES-supported research. In discussing possible funding options for future data bases, Miller cited the new Luxembourg Income Study, a 13-nation project supported by small grants from the national science agencies of those nations and housed by the government of Luxembourg.<<

FORUM ON GLOBAL CHANGE: HUMAN DIMENSIONS MUST BE EXAMINED

In a recent two-day "Forum on Global Change and Our Common Future," a number of experts in various fields urged that more attention be paid to the human dimensions of the problems associated with global change. Such problems include depletion of the ozone layer, destruction of the terrestrial ecosystem, and deforestation, among others. COSSA Board Member and Sigma Xi President Thomas Malone chaired the forum, which was held May 2-3 in Washington, D.C.

Former COSSA Executive Director Roberta Miller, now director of the Social and Economic Science (SES) Division of the National Science Foundation (NSF), noted the need to examine the "human and social forces in environmental change" by dealing with "direct human action and indirect institutional and structural causes of change in the earth system." In order to understand and ameliorate the harmful aspects of global environmental change, she said, we cannot ignore "the various economic and political influences on people in different nations" or "the cultural diversity that distinguishes, and in some respects, dominates our actions."

Miller suggested a social science research agenda on the human dimensions of global change that would be "worldwide in scope, international in organization, institutional in focus, and

historical in breadth." For its part, SES is sponsoring a special initiative to support research on the human dimensions of the global change problem, she said.

Norway's Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who delivered the Benjamin Franklin lecture as part of the conference, stressed the need for "sustainable development." Brundtland defined this broad concept of "social and economic progress" as "meeting the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs." Achieving sustainable development, she noted, requires "political reform, access to knowledge and resources, and a more just and equitable distribution of wealth within and between nations."

Other speakers addressing the human dimensions of global change included: B.L. Turner of Clark University, Paul Ehrlich of Stanford, and Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute. Support for the conference was provided by NSF, the National Academy of Sciences, the Smithsonian Institution, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Sigma Xi.<<

HOUSE HOLDS HEATED DEBATE ON SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT

The House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, chaired by Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), held two days of hearings on the procedures by which federal institutions and universities respond to charges of scientific fraud and misconduct. While emphasizing that the Subcommittee was interested in "process," the often heated and sometimes tedious debate focused almost exclusively on the details of an ongoing dispute over a 1986 article published in Cell. The hearings continue inquiries started last year.

The dispute centers on allegations made by a post-doctoral scientist regarding "errors" in the Cell article, a paper that included among its authors Nobel laureate David Baltimore of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The post-doctoral scientist, Margot O'Toole, worked in the Tufts University lab of co-author Thereza Imanishi-Kari, whose work has come under close scrutiny as a result of these charges.

Since 1986, Tufts, MIT, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have investigated O'Toole's concerns. Some serious errors have been confirmed; however, none of the investigatory panels convened has concluded that fraud or misconduct occurred. The Subcommittee also investigated the case, placing particular emphasis on a Secret Service forensic analysis of 17 pages of Imanishi-Kari's notebook that O'Toole had copied.

The first day of the hearing, May 4, had the feel of a television courtroom drama. NIH Director James Wyngaarden and

the NIH review panel were intensely questioned, primarily by one of the Subcommittee's staff counsels. Secret Service examiners produced evidence of irregularities in the 17 pages under question. These irregularities included date changes and evidence that some material dated "1984" was actually entered in the notebook in 1986. Further, the examiners revealed that a photograph used in the paper was actually a "composite" picture from which some original information was not visible.

Seeking explanations to the Secret Service data, Dingell grilled the co-authors, who tried to explain, among other things, that Imanishi-Kari is "messy" and that composite photos are a standard procedure in microbiology. Dingell's prosecutorial style was countered by Reps. Norman Lent (R-NY) and Alex McMillan (R-NC). Both stressed that none of the confirmed charges affected the scientific interpretation of the primary findings and that no evidence of intentional fabrication or misrepresentation had been uncovered. The day ended with Dingell, seemingly frustrated by the proceedings, stating his displeasure that the hearings had not been more revealing.

On May 9, the process continued with input from O'Toole, Tufts, and MIT. This hearing was more subdued than the previous one, with more emphasis by Dingell on institutional procedures for protecting and responding to whistle-blowers. Dingell praised O'Toole for her relentless efforts; Lent and McMillan questioned why she would not let the issue drop despite the many scientific panels that have pursued her allegations.

The end result of these hearings, which many in the scientific community viewed as a significant challenge to the process of science itself, is unclear. However, its ramifications could well go beyond biomedicine to include the social and behavioral sciences as well. NIH has recently established an Office of Scientific Integrity within the Office of the Director to provide these issues with more focus and visibility throughout the Public Health Service; likewise, an Office of Scientific Integrity Review will be established within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health. Further, proposed regulations that would require institutional assurances regarding procedures for handling misconduct have been sent from NIH to the Office of Management and Budget for review. It is uncertain whether Congress will think more action is required.<<

COSSA URGES STRONG SOCIAL, BEHAVIORAL AIDS RESEARCH SUPPORT

In Congressional testimony presented May 1, the Consortium urged Congress to strengthen the federal role in supporting AIDS-related social and behavioral research. Presented by COSSA Executive Associate Brian Daly, the testimony drew heavily from the findings and recommendations listed in a recently released National Research Council report, AIDS: Sexual Behavior and Intravenous Drug Abuse. Daly's remarks were made before the

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, chaired by Rep. William Natcher (D-KY).

The COSSA testimony included a call for stronger federal support of studies on sexual behavior, including a national survey initiated by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (see Update, April 14, 1989). It also called for more studies related to IV drug use and an expansion of the Centers for Disease Control's HIV seroprevalence surveys.

Daly further recommended improved evaluation of AIDS-related behavior-change strategies, as well as an increase in the number of social and behavioral scientists working on AIDS at the various federal health agencies. In concluding the testimony, Daly noted that while funds must be found for AIDS research and prevention, they must not be taken out of other federal health budgets. The federal health effort, he said, "must not be viewed as a set of either-or propositions."<<

COSSA TESTIMONY RECOMMENDS MORE LABOR RESEARCH FUNDING

Appearing before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies on May 3, COSSA Executive Director Howard Silver urged full funding for research and evaluation at the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and data collection and analysis at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Silver asked the Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), to provide sufficient funds to enable the two agencies to support: ETA research to follow up on the changes in the workforce identified in Workforce 2000; revival of the ETA-sponsored dissertation grant program; redesign of the Current Population Survey to make it a longitudinal data base; continued collection and analysis of the data in the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experiences; and a new Health and Retirement History Survey.

Silver also suggested expanding the ETA-supported labor research agenda to further examine changes in family composition, the impact of women on work, the private sector's response to child-care needs, adolescent learning of the work ethic, and efforts to make members of the underclass productive working citizens. He also recommended more research on changes in the workplace, such as the impact of new styles of management and new methods of compensation, including pension plans, on productivity. Responding to a question from Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HA), who chaired the hearing in Harkin's absence, Silver discussed the Office of Management and Budget's intrusive use of the Paperwork Reduction Act's clearance procedures to set the research agendas of federal agencies.<<

GAO REITERATES CONCERNS ABOUT 1990 CENSUS

At a recent oversight hearing in the Senate, a number of witnesses voiced their concern about the U.S. Census Bureau's plans for conducting the 1990 census. Among them was Gene Dodaro, director of general management issues at the General Accounting Office (GAO), who reiterated GAO's claim that the Bureau is underestimating the cost of the census by \$400 million (see Update, March 31, 1989).

Testifying on May 5 before the Government Information and Regulation Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Dodaro said the Bureau's estimate of \$2.6 billion for taking the 1990 census "does not fully incorporate prospective cost increases."

Census Bureau Deputy Director C. Louis Kincannon held to the \$2.6 billion figure, telling the Committee that it was "sufficient funding to take a good census." He added that the 1990 census would be marked by "improved data quality overall," and that planned improvements over the 1980 census could also be met within the range of the \$2.6 billion request.

Other witnesses took issue with various aspects of the Bureau's plans for the 1990 census. Michael Stoto, chairman of the American Statistical Association's Census Advisory Committee and member of a National Research Council panel on decennial census methodology, said he was particularly concerned about the Bureau's post enumeration survey (PES). A key component of the Bureau's census evaluation program, PES is instrumental in estimating the size and distribution of the historic undercount of minorities and the poor. Stoto charged that PES has been scaled back and given "lower priority" by the Bureau. As a result, if the Bureau is ordered to adjust for the undercount, it will be unable to do so in a meaningful way, he suggested.

The undercount issue is a source of much contention on the Hill and elsewhere, and has been raised in one census oversight hearing after another. The debate centers on the Commerce Department's decision in 1987 to scuttle plans to remedy the undercount by adjusting the 1990 census (see Update October 7, 1988). The Senate hearing on May 5 was another indication that the issue has yet to fade from view.<<

Clarification

In our last issue, we reported that Allan Bromley's appointment as President Bush's science advisor is not, by itself, subject to Senate confirmation. However, such confirmation is necessary for Bromley's appointment to direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy.<<

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