

relationships between some Members of Congress and OMB officials may be excellent, the historic institutional relationship is one of natural adversaries. While OMB may support Congress in the same idealized sense that every part of the federal government should help every other part, OMB's function is to support the President, not the Congress.

Several features distinguish CBO from OMB, but the fundamental difference is that OMB is a policy-making institution and CBO is not. Nevertheless, in a relatively short time CBO has become an important element in the Congressional budget process and a source of increasingly skilled and analytic support.

RICHARD A. SCRIBNER

*American Association for the Advancement
of Science*

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Washington, D.C.

Journals for the third world

Scientists in developing countries face a severe problem of the non-availability of a large number of very expensive professional journals. It has become increasingly difficult for libraries in these countries to obtain even the most important journals because of the economic situation. The problem is even more serious in countries having a very unfavorable balance of trade (for example, countries in the Indian subcontinent) and is aggravated further by the introduction of new journals (March, page 11).

Having recognized that, under the present economic circumstances, it is often not possible for libraries in developing countries to satisfy the needs of individual scientists, the only solution for individuals is to subscribe to one or two important periodicals (a necessity rather than a luxury!). Unfortunately, the subscription can amount to a substantial part of one's salary if one happens to be working in a poorer country such as Bangladesh or India. And even in a relatively better-off developing country, such as Malaysia, if one has to subscribe to several important journals (one is often faced with the problem of several journals of competing standards in a branch of physics or other disciplines) the situation again becomes perturbing. Therefore, I propose that:

► The subscription charges for individuals be on a sliding scale determined by the standard of living of the member's country and/or the member's salary scale (say a constant fraction of salary). A subscription socialism! The latter is, in a way, practiced by many professional societies through a differential in member grades (for instance, member grades of the (British) Institute of Physics). Obviously, the greatest problem is that of economy, and the implementation of the proposal would pose the least problem for

those journals whose subscriptions from developing countries represent only a small amount. An increase in the number of subscriptions from these countries should partly offset the cost. Moreover, the production cost of additional copies for developing countries should not be very much more than the actual cost of material, once the normal quota has been produced. After all, lecturers in many of these countries are not much better off financially than the research-student members of societies who pay significantly reduced rates.

► The members from these countries subscribing to a particular society should be treated (for the purpose of subscription to journals) as members by other sister organizations in the same branch of a discipline; that is, waiving the initial membership fee. Thus a member of the Royal Meteorological Society should be able to subscribe to publications of the American Meteorological Society at the member's rate and vice versa.

► In the case of bodies comprising many member and affiliated learned societies, like the American Institute of Physics, a member of any one of these societies should be allowed to subscribe to any publication(s) of the other societies (members or affiliated) at the member's rate. Thus a member of the AGU should be allowed to subscribe to publications of the AAS (member of AIP) as well as the AMS (affiliated to AIP) and so on.

As the AIP is one of the largest publishing bodies, it should be able to take up some of these steps in the immediate future.

Will AIP consider these proposals seriously?

M. ILYAS

University of Science of Malaysia

Minden, Penang

Malaysia

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Physicists and Washington

I congratulate PHYSICS TODAY for its efforts in bringing Washington and physicists closer (August). I am particularly referring to the articles by the Honorable Member of the Congress, Mr. Mike McCormack. The article was very informative and for the first time I have been able to understand the legislation process of the science-related policies.

I believe in the fact that the scientific community should be well represented and heard in the Congress. The interdependence of science and the society should be recognized. Definitely, scientists have a role to play in shaping future science and technology objectives, and this can only be achieved by the active and effective participation of the scientific community in the legislative process.

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