

Division of Professional Relations  
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## FROM THE EDITOR . . .

### Report from Washington

On the surface, this was a very quiet meeting. In fact, there was no excitement at all at the Council meeting, and virtually no one rose to offer any comments on the many reports that were presented. We did our part by withdrawing the petition on structural change for ACS before the meeting.

As I reported in the last issue, the petition sought to deal with the problem of the "tail wagging the dog"—the publishing activities of ACS, including Chemical Abstracts, dominating by far the Society's budget. A major intent of the petitioners was to stimulate discussion, but the petition, while getting a lot of attention, generated discussion primarily of the technical defects of the petition itself. The situation was made much more complex by the lawsuit instituted against ACS this summer by Dialog. In the face of this major external challenge, I felt that a public debate on structural change, including the possible splitting off of CAS and/or other publishing activities, was not appropriate at this time. Hence, we withdrew the petition. Nevertheless, the basic issues were highlighted, and we expect to continue exploring them.

On a more pleasant note, the Division recognized two special people in Washington. The first was Dr. Clayton Callis, the latest recipient of the DPR Henry Hill Award. Dr. Callis, a former president of the ACS and long active in the professionalism area, offered thoughtful remarks upon acceptance of the award, which are reprinted elsewhere in this issue.

The second individual was Earl Klinefelter, recently retired from ACS after a long and distinguished career, including several years as the man in charge of ACS professional relations activities. I am sure Earl's cheerful competence is remembered by many in this Division. Earl and his family was invited to a dinner jointly sponsored by the DPR and the Committee on Professional Relations (CPR), and was presented with a certificate by the Division.

I would like to report on one other interesting item. The CPR Subcommittee on Career Support and Member Assistance, which I chair, provides oversight and guidance for several ACS programs—the member assistance program, resume forum, career counseling service, and some others. Part of the job of the subcommittee is to review ACS services for members, and to suggest new programs or improvements. As part of this process, the subcommittee has discussed several groups, e.g., older chemists, younger chemists, and BS holders (of all ages).

A portion of this meeting was devoted to a wide ranging discussion of the BS degree. This was prompted by several things: the recent ACS membership survey, which revealed that BS holders, as a group, were significantly less satisfied with ACS services and products than Ph.D. holders; attempts by chemical technicians to professionalize; the reluctance of *C&EN* and the Employment Clearing House to take notices of job openings that required a BS degree for a technician job (both take notices for technician jobs that are labeled as such, but without the degree requirement); and the fact that about a third of the membership of the ACS have a BS degree as highest degree.

The subcommittee met with Robert Carver, chairman of the ACS Committee on Technician Affiliates. The discussions highlighted several issues: many companies are now requiring a BS degree for a job as a technician (note: we are not talking about the situation of a person hired as a chemist and then being treated as, and paid as, a technician, but rather of the company requiring the training embodied in a BS degree for a job clearly labeled, "technician"); almost 40% of new BS graduates who do not go on to graduate school take jobs right out of school that are called "technicians"; both technician jobs and chemist jobs are much more complex than they were many years ago; the BS can be looked upon as good training for either chemists or technicians, and which kind of work a person chooses depends on the specifics

of the training, and individual talents and interests.

It is interesting to me to note that the BS degree has long been considered a professional degree in many fields of engineering, yet I am seeing much more discussion recently in the engineering community around the idea that advanced training is becoming much more necessary. While these discussions have been going on for a long time, it is my sense that they are reaching a more active stage in academia. If employers begin to want 5-year BS degrees or MS degrees, on the theory that the standard undergraduate program does not offer sufficient training for this complex world, then things can change quickly.

Comments?

### Membership

If we are to keep two Councilors for the DPR, and certainly if we are to expand to more, membership must increase. If everyone gave one gift membership this year, our Division would be strengthened tremendously. Give generously, help your friends, support your profession.

### Ominous Note

CPR, the Committee on Professional Relations, investigates reports of terminations. While the committee hears about a fair number of potential cases, they appear to be having greater difficulty getting sufficient numbers of chemists to file reports. This is important, because the committee can't act, they can't publish a report, unless they hear officially from at least three affected chemists. One possibility is that secrecy agreements are becoming more common, and termines are reluctant to respond to ACS requests for information. Does anyone have any information on this?

—Dennis Chamot

REMARKS BY  
CLAYTON F. CALLIS  
RECIPIENT OF THE HENRY A. HILL AWARD  
ACS DIVISION OF PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
AUGUST 28, 1990

I am indeed honored to be named the 1990 recipient of the Henry A. Hill award for contributions to professional relations. Henry Hill was a major force on the ACS Board of Directors when I first joined in 1977. I feel privileged to have known and worked with him. I am proud to be joining the group of previous winners of this award, *all* interested in the professional well-being of the *members* of the American Chemical Society.

In the Fall of 1988, Past President Gordon Nelson and I sponsored a Presidential Conference on the professional policies of the ACS. Under the headline "ACS Role in Professionalism Reassessed," Mike Heylin wrote in *C & E News* as follows:

Proper professional recognition for the bachelor-level chemist. The need for better instruction for chemistry students on careers, especially in industry. Wider awareness of, and better compliance with, ACS's employment guidelines. The need to attract more minorities and handicapped people into chemistry as a career. These were but some of the issues and topics that were identified as important to the American Chemical Society at a weekend conference at the Society's headquarters earlier this month.

I learned a great deal from that conference. And that is we *together* have a lot to do. Since I can't resist a captive audience, I'm going to give you some examples of concerns of my own—some that were not given much attention at that conference.

The regulation of chemicals has and is experiencing explosive growth. There are over 15,000 pages of regulations in the Code of Federal Regulations for environmental protection. The volume of regulations has doubled in the last five to seven years. You would expect this to be "boom times" for chemists. But it is not. The work that should be carried out by chemists is being done by non-chemists.

The first example: On July 5, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed regulations for 24 additional chemicals in drinking water. Currently 34 are regulated. The EPA anticipates by 1992 the number will increase to 85. Over 80,000 public drinking water systems nationwide will be required by federal statute to monitor their water. If the water is analyzed only once a year, that's nearly seven million determinations. You would expect that qualified chemists would be involved. Not so. The General Accounting Office, in a recent audit of the program, found many errors and falsification of data. They recommend opera-



Left to right: Dr. Attila E. Pavlath, Dr. Clayton F. Callis, DPR Chairman Dr. Bela S. Buslig.

photo G. Borowitz

tor certification programs, but were strangely silent on ANY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHEMICAL TRAINING.

Many chemists cannot sign their own reports. A licensed engineer must sign for them if they involve public health and safety.

A second example. EPA estimates that there are 4,100 local emergency planning and response committees formed under the requirements of the Community Right-to-Know Act. Is there any provision that chemists or chemical engineers be named to these committees? Not that I can find.

In the aftermath of the Bopal tragedy, one of the provisions included in the Community Right-to-Know Act was the listing and regulation of the most hazardous chemicals handled in the country. Would you believe that one material on that original list was 'solutions of sodium sulfate.' Was that checked by a chemist? Obviously not. Believe it or not, it took the legal types three years to get the sodium sulfate removed from the list.

I can go on. Another example concerns the poor recognition of the value of persons trained in chemistry. The Community Right-to-Know Act requires owners of facilities handling 10,000 pounds of any one of approximately 300 commercial chemicals to report each year the releases from the facility to the environment. In the Act authorizing the release reporting, Congress asked the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate the utility of requiring these facilities to report *additional* information about chemical processing in the form of mass balance around the entire facility or around each process. The Academy asked me to chair the study.

Our work has been completed, and the report is available from the Academy Press. The committee does not believe that the additional information will be useful to the public—in fact, it may be confusing and detrimental to the goal of a cleaner environment—unless there is a requirement that an expert panel, including chemists, is used to interpret the raw data for the public. This point of using people with knowledge was stressed hard in the *major* conclusion of this study. Recognition of the value of chemists is a problem needing our attention, whether it be for public understanding as I have just described or for getting the attention of those who employ chemists for development and production of new and better chemically-based products.

Don't you think it's time that we stand together to see that qualified persons be required to handle technical problems? The first priority *could* be those areas where the well being of the public is at stake. But a general mandate is needed for our technology-based society.

Don't you agree we have a lot to do?

### Jackson Honored

Dr. Jo-Anne A. Jackson, former Chair of DPR, has been selected by the American Political Science Association as a Congressional Fellow. One of fewer than 30 federal executives chosen in a national competition, Dr. Jackson will leave the Department of Commerce for nine months to work as a professional staff assistant to a U.S. senator or congressman. Congratulations, Dr. Jackson!

# PROFESSIONALS, PROFESSIONALISM, AND UNION REPRESENTATION

David C. Jacobs  
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American labor is in a tremendously weak state these days. From a high of about 35%, the proportion of the workforce that is unionized has dropped to less than 15%. Employers fire union organizers with near impunity, despite the Wagner Act, which was expressly designed to secure organizing rights. Managers are permanently replacing striking workers and leaving workers with few effective weapons, worsening the imbalance between the powers of employer and employee.

Still, effective representation is an imperative for groups within a pluralistic society. However benign a corporate bureaucracy appears to be, it cannot regulate itself and assure equity to its employees. Professional employees, who will constitute the largest single group in the labor force by the year 2000, according to sociologist Daniel Bell, can also benefit from organization. Indeed, despite the hostile environment, the proportion of unionized professionals rose from 14% to 27% between 1974 and 1986.

Increased international competition in the chemical and other industries, which threatens the economic security and professional concerns of chemists, should motivate chemists and other professionals to consider the virtues of employee associations or unions as means to articulate their own interests. In a period of economic restructuring, the interest of chemists as employees and their corporate managers may increasingly diverge. Foreign ownership of chemical companies has been increasing, and now represents one-fourth of the industry. While the late 1980s brought an impressive rebound in production and profits from the slump of the early 1980s, it is not at all clear that employees will benefit with better salaries or greater job security.

The American Chemical Society (ACS) was among those organizations exploring the relevance of unions to chemists in the era of the Great Depression. Given a wave of union organizing in the mid-thirties, resulting from a crisis of confidence in the managers of the industry, and from newly supportive New Deal policy, chemists were faced with the prospect of amalgamated unionism representing both professional and blue collar employees. The Society was formally opposed to amalgamated unions. It was and is composed of both employees and employers, corporations and individuals. It was legally barred from acting as bargaining representative; the

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Wagner Act prohibits company-supported unions. The Board of Directors of the Society opposed the affiliation of professional chemists with any organization favoring promotion primarily on the basis of "seniority," or that insists that they join any labor organization where they would be in a minority, with no power to protect themselves. The Board did acknowledge that some members had benefited in financial terms from collective bargaining even within units of lesser skilled workers. In general, the American Chemical Society found membership in blue collar unions to be inconsistent with professional status.

ACS concerns were only partially addressed by a National Labor Relations Board policy requiring majority support from professionals for inclusion in any blue collar bargaining unit. The Taft-Hartley Act (1947) also deprived managerial employees (e.g., supervisors and foremen) of any protection for organizing. (Employers had been very disturbed by the emergence of foremen's unionism in the early 1940s.) The assumptions of ACS policy were that professional credentials and the confidence of management were shields protecting chemists that would be forfeited by alliance with manual workers. It should be noted that the ACS did not oppose "non-adversarial" collective bargaining by exclusively professional organizations, and supported efforts by chemists and others at the Shell Development Company to form an independent union of "industrial scientists" in 1941.

The emergence of Quality of Working Life (QWL) and related programs for manual and lesser skilled workers, with their strains and tensions, underscores the common need among rank-and-file and professionals for effective representation. QWL programs are ordinarily group-oriented mechanisms for involving employees in decision-making on the shopfloor. (Consider in particular QWL at General Motors, Employee Involvement at Ford, Basic Area Work Groups at Xerox.) They are implemented in order to enhance employee performance and firm competitiveness. According to scholars Murray and Reshet, "the basic idea of QWL is that workers contribute to the design of the production process. . . . [they] . . . are drawn into the decision-making processes that traditionally have been management's responsibility". In a sense, QWL professionalizes blue collar work.

QWL programs potentially minimize the distinctions between professional and non-professional labor. There is no necessary distinction in the treatment of professional and

non-professional labor. The privileges of the professional do not issue automatically from their academic credentials or society membership. Managers may just as easily deprive professionals of their discretion on the job as extend privileges to blue collar workers.

Job design is management's strategic decision, constrained by labor market conditions and any union role. The poor market position of academics in many disciplines in the 1980s extinguished the customary benefits of academic employment for many; temporary contracts without any prospect of tenure were common. Management's commitment to white collar privileges or QWL innovations is fragile in a volatile economy, with its tremendous pressures on labor costs.

The collaborationist rhetoric of QWL has too often obscured the potential for conflict. Management advocates of QWL in particular stress an emerging "consensus" on the shopfloor. However, the deliberations of work groups and supervisors on the shopfloor are not free from considerations of conflicting interests. There is no reason for unions to abandon their "adversarial" role as they confront QWL programs. Similarly, professional labor is not without potential conflict with management. The chemist's membership in a broader scientific community provides a possible basis for conflict with enterprises with far narrower interests.

The existence of QWL does not imply that management has become so sophisticated that independent employee representation is superfluous. As QWL provides workers with more discretion over their work, they identify increasingly with the product, but this does not necessarily result in increased identification with management and the firm. The stake of the craftsman or professional in his or her craft may at times require that he or she contest management decisions that imperil the quality of the product. While some employers may seek greater employee commitment to their enterprises through employee involvement, the investor's focus on return renders any involvement programs and even continued employment of uncertain duration.

Unions can and must frame an approach to QWL that allows them to take advantage of employers' occasional willingness to experiment with job design, organizational design, and information-sharing without surrendering their adversarial role. Professionals may learn from unions' efforts to bargain about job design, since professional privileges may be ephemeral and are no substitute for effective representation.

*(continued)*

