

BOOK REVIEWS

Selection of books for review is based on the editors' opinions regarding possible reader interest and on the availability of the book to the editors. Occasional selections may include books on topics somewhat peripheral to the subject matter ordinarily considered acceptable.



AS SEEN FROM A QUANDARY

Title Nuclear Energy for Water Desalination

Publisher International Atomic Energy Agency

Pages 133

Price \$3.00

Reviewer I. Dostrovsky

By sending me *Nuclear Energy for Water Desalination* for review, you have put me in a quandary as I am very critical of the value of publishing the reports of IAEA meetings in this form and even more of the value of reviewing such publications. I daresay a record of the meeting has to be made, but apart from that I feel interest in such a record is limited and of very short life.

Most of the material in this booklet has been published before in identical or very similar form. In addition, many of the contributions are represented by abstracts only. Another defect is the repetitiousness of the papers. This necessarily results from the international aspect of the Panel's operation, but does not add to the value of the publication.

Israel Dostrovsky has been with the Weizmann Institute of Science since 1948. He headed the Isotope Research Department there until 1965. He is at present the Director General of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission and a member of it. He also is one of the Directors of the National Council for Research and Development with the specific duty of coordinating desalination research in Israel. He has published extensively in British and American journals, in the fields of physical and nuclear chemistry. His Ph.D. is from London University.

TRUE LEADERSHIP

Title Science and the University

Editor Boyd R. Keenan

Publisher Columbia University Press, 1966

Pages 207

Price \$5.95

Reviewer W. F. Libby

This book is the outgrowth of a decision in 1964 by Purdue University to develop a special program in science and public policy. The Editor is Boyd R. Keenan, Chairman of Purdue's Department of Political Science. Its contributors include some of the leading scientific administrators and determiners of public policy in the support of science, in general, as well as at universities. It is particularly interesting to read the thoughts of these leaders and to see what they believe to be most important in this vital matter.

Edward Teller argues for PhD's in applied science; Leland Haworth pleads for the devoted teacher-scholar (or teacher-researcher); Sir Eric Ashby speaks of the English scene and how the University Grants Committee giving funds to the University as a whole has to be supplemented by the Research Councils who give to the individual scientist; two midwestern Congressmen, J. Edward Roush and John Brademas, plead for more money for their areas.

The whole collection of remarks is illustrative of the problem facing the world today: How can science be managed? Everyone agrees it to be of extreme importance. The question is "How?" No one knows very well, apparently. In our American way we spend money, but the question for us really is — Will money do it?

As one of the money-givers for five years (1954-1959 for the AEC), the reviewer noticed with interest that only brief and passing reference is made in this book to what seems undoubtedly the greatest single factor in scientific success—great and unusual ability — scientific genius. It would seem that scientific management should take this as point number one — How do you find the young Enrico Fermi, Gilbert Lewis, or Otto Hahn before he is well known, and then how do you maximize his productivity? How can diversion to other fields be avoided? These would seem to be very important questions for the main subject.

Considering the history of science, in contrast to technology and engineering, the course and rate of development both were determined by a few individuals. In our day, we have to think of teams a great deal, but no one doubts that the real breakouts and smashing new things will be due to single individuals. Thus our best effort should be to help such genius grow and develop, and our management policy should center on this.

The only true leadership must come from the select few and the whole question of relationship between science and society would seem to turn on the relationship between them and society. It probably is no less true now than in Leonardo's day.

Our fellowship programs and our postdoctoral policies all are most helpful but there is still enormous risk in the haphazard discovery process — this finding of the little Enrico while he still is a poor peasant's son in the south of Italy.

So it would seem to this reviewer that the book is incomplete. More should have been said about the great individual. The forms are important but the substance of science — the great and original idea — is more so. Perhaps another