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image of geology

An ad hoc Committee for the Promotion of the Science of Geology has been established by the Council of the Geological Society of America 'in response to letters from Wilmot H. Bradley and William H. Freeman and an oral report presented to the November 1967 meeting by Frank Press'. The report of the committee, chaired by Allan V. Cox, was adopted at the June 1968 Council meeting. However, it is my opinion that some of its contents provoke discussion.

Objections could be raised as to the theme on which the report kept pondering. I disagree with the claim that 'there exists a crisis in geology'. Nor do I believe that 'the image of the Society is one of stately conservatism'.

The report repeatedly contrasts the GSA and *Bulletin* with the AGU and *Journal of geophysical research*, intimating that they are in competition. In doing this, the report fails to indicate that emphasis in the Society and GSA *Bulletin* is placed on 'classical' geology because the Society is the main forum for justifiable emphasis on the basic science. Media for emphasizing special branches of geoscience are numerous and those with particular interests are well aware of their existence. The fact that one may encounter reports on the climatic conditions of a specific

region, a remote-sensing technique for planetary missions, or on the detailed mineralogy of a unique stony meteorite in the *JGR* but not in the GSA *Bulletin* is indeed irrelevant. Such reports, while they fall within the scope of AGU publications, may not be of considerable value to the whole of the *Bulletin* readership. Occasional summary reports of recent developments in the *Bulletin* may be a solution, but to give priority of any one or a group of specialized fields over 'classical' geology should not be a general policy of the Society.

Such recommendations as the improvement of *Geotimes* to a level 'with which all earth scientists can identify', the speeding-up of publication of articles submitted to the GSA *Bulletin*, and the invitation of such societies as the Seismological Society of America to hold their annual meetings concurrently with that of the GSA, are welcome improvements. Other comments concerning the need of a new image for the Society are somewhat dramatized.

Finally, it must be added that I am interested in astrogeology. This, however, does not mean that I would like to see the Society place emphasis on this 'timely' and 'exciting' field over any of the basic and classical fields of the science.

Let us keep in mind that most of those who promoted modern astrogeology, as well as many of the specialized fields of geoscience, started as good, old-fashioned, down-to-earth classical geologists.

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