

# NEWS AND NOTES

## PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

### *Forty-fifth Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association: the Program\**

The Forty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association was held December 28-30, 1949 in New York City. Headquarters were at the Hotel Roosevelt. Most of the sessions relating to international relations were scheduled at the Hotel Astor. Total attendance was in the neighborhood of 1500, several hundred in excess of any previous annual meeting. The number of persons simultaneously attending the various sessions was approximately as follows: First afternoon, 1015; second morning, 1275; second afternoon, 830; third morning, 650; third afternoon, 625.

The program in terms of the number and diversity of the individual sessions was by a substantial margin the most extensive in the history of the Association. This was probably an important factor in attracting the larger attendance. Over 80 separate events were scheduled, and all of these were held as planned. Apart from three or four instances the attendance at each of them was substantial. Except for those held in the five large rooms, the great majority reported "standing room only," and in a considerable number of instances it was impossible even so to accommodate all those desiring admission.

A program as extensive as this obviously demands a rationale. On a purely quantitative basis, the enlarged attendance is itself a reasonable criterion. More important is the fact that it was possible to schedule about 350 different participants, this in itself constituting something of an achievement. In general any member with a special subject interest could at all times find a section meeting or round table in his field.

Qualitative judgments are less easily arrived at, especially as no one person could possibly have attended more than a small fraction of the meetings. There is a presumption that such widespread participation could only be at the expense of quality, but the presumption is at least worth challenging. Other important factors enter into the problem of assuring high level papers and discussions—such as the possibilities of subsequent publication, the selection of challenging and important subjects for the meetings, the identification of participants who have something of high significance to contribute and the will to contribute it. It was the view of the Program Committee that section meetings with formal papers tended toward a somewhat higher quality product than the round table, and this former type was favored in the majority of instances.

There is always the alternative approach to program building—the adoption of a central theme and the scheduling of a few carefully chosen subjects bearing upon it. The American Economic Association, for example, followed this pattern this year. About 25 sessions listed approximately 125 different partici-

\* Mimeographed copies of the annual program for 1949, revised after the Annual Meeting, may be procured from the Secretary-Treasurer of the Association.

pants—slightly more than one-third the number listed by the American Political Science Association, although the economists have a considerably larger membership. Obviously this more conservative type of program building results in sessions at which the scheduled participants in a sense perform before an audience. The prestige implications in such participation are probably greater. The acute consciousness of conflicting sessions, and the sense of individual frustration through being unable to attend many sessions which one would desire, are held to a minimum. It would be worth-while from time to time for our Association to give this type of program a trial.

In building this year's program, the Program Committee adopted certain objectives. The most important was the search for subjects for the luncheons and individual meetings that in a very real sense represented the important frontiers of political science. Not only would such subjects provoke interest but their exploration at the Annual Meeting would advance materially the knowledge about the subjects and the analysis of them. The ones selected were chosen from a list of about 175 culled from many quarters—suggestions by members of the Association and the Committee, a study of earlier programs—both for gaps and for unfinished business. Ultimately the most fruitful source proved to be the areas and topics identified as important by the subject field panels sponsored by the Association's Research Committee. Thirty-four of the forty-eight themes were of such a nature. It can accordingly be said that the program rested upon a broad intellectual base and emerged from sustained group thinking. For example, the session on "Post War Constitutions" followed the recommendations of the Research Committee's Panel on Comparative Government in that the approach was not by the separate constitutions but by consideration of the cardinal aspects of all the constitutions—the cabinets, the electorate, the legislatures, functional and local autonomy. Among the many other subjects which may be traced to the same origin are: "The Nature of National Strength," "Religion and Democracy," "Mass Media and the Study of American Politics."

A second objective was to make the program especially worth-while to the younger members. Each chairman of a section or round table was urged to include at least one such among the participants. The result was highly gratifying, not only because of the number so included but also by virtue of the worth-whileness of their contributions. The participants in one entire integrated sequence—"The Bases of Political Science"—were largely made up of the younger group.

The most striking expression of this second objective was the institution on an experimental basis of informal discussions, each led by two of the "senior members" of the Association and open to not more than fifteen of the younger men. Seventeen such discussions were simultaneously scheduled and all of them were well attended. Subsequent canvassing of the participants indicated virtually unanimous and frequently enthusiastic approval of the innovation. Some of the groups passed resolutions requesting a continuance of the practice. The favorable response from among the senior members to the initial invita-

tions to participate was unanimous as regards those planning to attend the Meeting. Thus was restored at least a small measure of the intimate quality of the meetings in the Association's earlier years.

A third objective was to obtain diversified participation—by regions, by age and sex, and by occupation. It should be mentioned that no less than 35 participants were from the West—itsself an evidence of the success which has attended the efforts of our membership in that part of the Nation to advance the interest in political science and to contribute toward its development. Sustained pressure was exerted in the direction of increasing the amount of time available for audience participation, but with only moderate success. In part this effort was frustrated by the chronic malady of late starting times. Chairmen were requested to limit severely the number of formal papers and discussants, but were often unable to withstand the exigencies of other pressures—internal and external—looking toward the addition of a person or a sub-topic.

The Association's Committees on Research, the Advancement of Teaching, Participation in Politics, and Political Parties each assumed responsibility for a panel discussion or open meeting, at which progress reports were rendered. It seemed to the Program Committee that the occasion of the Annual Meeting lent itself to this type of recognition of committee work, and that the membership, as a whole, would appreciate the opportunity thereby afforded. Where these sessions were carefully organized in advance, they were highly successful. Those which relied upon a more informal give and take between committee members and audience were less satisfactory.

The policy of providing a certain number of integrated sequences permitting sustained attention to one topic or related topics was reasonably successful. This was most noteworthy in the case of the series on "Liberty vs. Authority in an Age of Revolutionary Change," which owed much to the fact that it had been planned in detail as an integrated whole before the chairmen of the individual meetings were invited. The series of sessions on the "Hoover Commission" and the "Role of the United States in Its World Setting" were more topical in nature. As such they made less demand upon their audiences and participants for continuous attendance. The fourth sequence on "The Bases of Political Science" revealed such a fundamental cleavage between the positivists and the philosophers as to impair its original broad objective. While most participants seem to have felt it worth-while in some measure, it is now clear that these sessions could have succeeded in the short time available only if the participants had shared certain common assumptions. The device—used probably for the first time—of continuing the subject of the luncheon address in a meeting immediately thereafter was apparently completely successful. Four subjects—"Post War Constitutions," "The Effective Scope of State Activity and Autonomy," "Judicial Organization and Administration," and the "Democratization of an Occupied Country"—were selected as warranting and requiring two sessions each.

Apart from the anticipated criticism of "too many meetings," unfavorable comment was largely confined to the inadequacies of accommodations and ar-

rangements relative to the unprecedented strain imposed upon them. Suggestions of this sort belong, not to an account in the REVIEW, but to memoranda to next year's committees.

Certain other aspects call for some comment. The opening general session again vindicated itself and may now be regarded as established practice. The tea for women political scientists was a pleasant occasion. The general session the first evening was marked not only by a worthy presidential address, but also by the awards for works of distinction in a ceremony of dignity and educative value. The following awards were made:

Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award for the best publication of the year in the field of government and democracy, to V. O. Key, Jr., for *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York: Knopf, 1949), on the recommendation of a panel headed by Professor William Anderson.

Wendell Willkie Memorial Building Award for the best publication of the year in the field of international relations, to Leo Pasvolsky, as the Director of the International Studies Group of the Brookings Institution, for the direction and editing of *Major Problems of United States Foreign Policy, 1949-1950* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1949), on the recommendation of a panel headed by Professor Kenneth Colegrove.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Foundation Award for the best publication of the year in the field of government and human welfare, to David E. Lilienthal, for *This I Do Believe* (New York: Harpers, 1949), on the recommendation of a panel headed by Professor John M. Gaus.

Liaison with the high schools was maintained through again scheduling two joint sessions with the National Council for the Social Studies.

Did the Annual Meeting reveal anything as regards the broader trends in political science? In so far as the subjects considered were carefully and democratically chosen they may be regarded as themselves some indication. Attendance at the respective sessions sheds some additional light, although such attendance was undoubtedly affected by considerations other than subject interest—considerations such as the presence of certain “drawing cards” among the speakers or the chance of a convenient location. Even after discounting such considerations, it seems unmistakably clear that the interest in political theory, in political behavior, in public opinion and political parties, and in the current American-Soviet clash, is exceptionally strong. The panel meeting on “The Future of the Parties” was the best attended single session, apart of course from the general sessions. No field seems to be without a considerable following, although state, local and municipal government, comparative government and public law, and even public administration, may have lost ground relatively speaking. International relations and law, the legislative process, regional and country studies were all well supported. The diversified and stimulating joint meetings in the border line fields all attracted their share of political scientists, although the attendance was naturally greatly augmented through joint sponsorship by the sociologists, economists and geographers. The really great interest in relating religion and politics doubtless surprised many. The

luncheon meeting on "Religion and Democracy" was the best patronized of the three, and the section meeting on "Church and State" could not accommodate all those wishing to attend. Entirely apart from the meetings jointly sponsored, there were many other instances of the use of scholars from sister disciplines to enrich the subject at hand by their own special insights.

The Annual Meeting at its highest and best should be the Association publicly and cooperatively facing the important and difficult problems of the contemporary political world. This year's program, and any subsequent program, must be judged by the extent to which it accurately identifies these problems, examines the tools with which they must be analyzed, and enlists a constantly rejuvenated stream of creative minds in these tasks—not only during the sessions themselves but also in the years ahead.—ERNEST S. GRIFFITH. *Program Chairman, 1949.*

*Forty-fifth Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association:  
Transactions of the Executive Council and General Business Meeting*

The Executive Council of the American Political Science Association convened at the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City at 9:00 A.M. Tuesday, December 27, 1949, with the following members present:

*President*

*Vice-Presidents*

*Managing Editor*

*Managing Editor Elect*

*Secretary-Treasurer*

*Executive Council*

Quincy Wright

Carl J. Friedrich

Charles M. Kneier

Donald C. Stone

Frederic A. Ogg

Taylor Cole

Harvey Walker

George Graham

Llewellyn Pfanckuchen

John A. Vieg

Belle Zeller

H. F. Alderfer

Merle Fainsod

Joseph M. Ray

J. B. Shannon

Robert K. Carr

Albert Lepawsky

Harvey C. Mansfield

Carl B. Swisher.

President Quincy Wright opened the meeting by giving the Council an oral report of his activities as President during the year 1949. He emphasized particularly his activities in connection with the formation of an International Political Science Association under the auspices of UNESCO. He reported that eventually there would be 5 or 6 such organizations in the social sciences. There are now 5 national political science associations: Canada, India, Great Britain and France, in addition to our own. It is expected that similar groups will be formed in the near future in a number of other countries. The draft constitution adopted by a meeting in Paris at which existing national groups were represented