

Governing Board to present

In response to concerns expressed by a substantial number of AOCS members, the Governing Board at the fall 1973 meeting in Chicago approved an *Ad Hoc* Committee to study the frequency of AOCS national meetings. Robert Reiners, chairman of the committee, reported to the Governing Board in Mexico City with the recommendation that the Society hold only one national meeting per year. The Governing Board voted to adopt that recommendation, setting the stage for a possible change in the AOCS Bylaws later this year.

The Board action does not automatically effect a change in meeting schedules since Article IX of the Bylaws (see AOCS Directory of Membership) must be amended before change can take place. By adopting the committee's recommendation, the Governing Board has made it possible to present this important question directly to the membership.

As the Governing Board prepares to present the amendment to the membership, they request that any and all members with convictions about the issues communicate with them through the AOCS national officers. Comments should be mailed to the Executive Director, AOCS, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820. Comments will be distributed to the entire Governing Board.

To aid the membership in the consideration of the question, the deliberations and recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee are summarized below.

This is not the first time the Society has considered the frequency of AOCS national meetings. The most recent in-depth study of the question took place in 1963. At that

time, the results of the deliberations were printed in *JAOCs*. (See March, 1963, page 7.)

In considering the question, the *Ad Hoc* Committee attempted to weigh carefully all the possible *pros* and *cons* of one and two meetings per year. The energy crisis was considered as a possible reason for cutting back to one meeting, but this was dismissed as a minor issue since the change to one meeting could not be effected for at least three years.

The committee felt that existing problems of poor attendance at some scientific sessions would not necessarily be alleviated if there were only one larger meeting per year. It was felt that even with twice the meeting attendance some scientifically worthy sessions would still fail to draw large audiences.

In considering the effect of reducing the number of national meetings on the quality and quantity of papers for *JAOCs* and *Lipids* the committee determined, with advice from the Director of Publications, the AOCS publications would continue to attract as many good papers as in the past if there were only one national meeting per year.

A number of committee members expressed concern about the economic feasibility of the question, both for the individual and for the Society. Members from the industrial and academic sectors of the Society expressed concern about the rising costs of travel, hotels, meals, etc., to attend meetings. It was determined that the savings to the individual would potentially be substantial if there were only one meeting per year.

Notice of special AOCS business meeting

The Governing Board of the American Oil Chemists' Society gives official notice of a special business meeting of the Society at 8:30 A.M. Monday, September 30, 1974, at the Sheraton Hotel, Philadelphia.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider amendments to Section IX of the Society Bylaws. These changes would change the language of the Bylaws to eliminate references to spring and fall meetings of the Society. The new Bylaws would read:

Section 1. *Meetings*. There shall be at least one general meeting of the Society each year for the presentation of papers and discussion of scientific interest and conduct of business as required by the Articles of Incorporation.

Section 2. *Time and Place of Meetings*. The Governing Board shall decide the time and place of the meeting not later than the time of the previous meet-

ing. The Governing Board may change the time and place of the meeting if in its opinion the change may serve the best interests of the Society or may cancel a meeting in time of emergency.

Section 3. *Notice of Meetings*. No change from present language is proposed in the amendment.

Section 4. *Organization of Meetings*. The Governing Board shall select a general chairman for each meeting. The general chairman, with the approval of the Governing Board, shall establish such committees as he deems appropriate and appoint the chairmen. Tentative budgets shall be submitted to the Governing Board in ample time to allow revision by the Governing Board. The various committees shall be responsible for arranging the place, date, program, entertainment, industrial trips, hotel reservations, meeting room arrangements and other details, all subject to the approval of the Governing Board.

Section 5. *Postponement of Meetings*. No change in the language of this section is proposed in the amendment.

Rules governing the amendments to AOCS Bylaws are contained in Article X of the Bylaws. (See page 98 of the 1973-74 AOCS Directory of Membership.) Comments regarding the proposed amendments can be made in writing to the Executive Director, AOCS, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Ill. 61820. ■

meeting per year?

bylaws change to membership

Separate projections by the chairman of the committee and the AOCS national office indicated that the financial impact of the change to one meeting would not seriously affect AOCS resources. Using past attendance records, it was determined that of nearly 1000 registrants for technical sessions at two meetings, the overlap of attendance between spring and fall was less than 20%. The lower costs of promoting, printing, staff travel, etc., for one meeting only would help reduce the loss because of small attendance. Also, it was felt that a larger meeting would attract more exhibitors and, thus, more revenue.

Regarding attendance, the committee agreed that more people would attend a single meeting than now attend either of the present meetings. It was not felt that attendance would double, and some members from industry expressed concern that companies would send fewer people to one meeting than they now do to a combination of two. Attendance projections are at best difficult. Using the overlap in attendance does set a reasonably accurate maximum, however. Projections by the chairman indicated that a nominal increase of \$5.00 in registration fees would offset the potential financial "losses" incurred by lower total attendance under a one-meeting-per-year format.

Those members most strongly favoring a one-meeting format see a larger, better balanced technical program as a strong plus in their arguments. The rationale is based on the premise that: (1) Many volunteered papers are submitted prematurely, sometimes at the urging of a program chairman. Since more papers would be available for a meeting, less pressure on the program chairman would be necessary to obtain ample papers. This also could result in better presentations; (2) Program chairmen currently feel the need to encourage symposia because of a dearth of volunteered papers; thus the result is too many symposia, some poorly attended. There would be a larger number of volunteered papers; (3) The longer time between meetings would help ensure better balanced programs. In some areas it is difficult to round up enough papers twice yearly for even a half-day session. Longer time for planning by the program chairman with help from the National Program and Planning Committee and the absence of competition from another meeting close in time to the current meeting would make it easier for a program chairman to develop a program using all sectors of the Society.

A larger program would result in a larger number of concurrent sessions, possibly as many as 10-15. Some members felt it may be desirable to limit the number of papers accepted, especially in areas already well covered in the program.

Offsetting the arguments in favor of one meeting as it affects the technical program were several points made by the proponents of semi-annual meetings: (1) No practical way exists for keeping poor papers off the program. Such judgments cannot be made on the basis of abstracts; (2) Although some people feel there are currently too many symposia, the National Program and Planning Committee, which approves them, evidently does not; (3) Balanced programs can be achieved at semi-annual meetings by careful planning, hard work and close cooperation with the National Program and Planning Committee; (4) The probable need to reject papers will result in some good papers being bypassed simply because the abstract was submitted after the area of the program dealing with that topic has been filled.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee also considered the effect of one meeting per year on AOCS committee work. A majority of the committee felt that such work would go on as well as in the past with increased use of the mails and the telephone. They felt that other societies find this to be true. Some felt that one meeting a year would improve attendance at committee meetings since committee members would be apt to attend one meeting per year; a larger number of committee members would get together at one time than is now the case. One point made was that the effectiveness of many committees depends more on the enterprise of the chairman than on the attendance at meetings. Note: AOCS committee chairmen are being surveyed to determine their thoughts on this part of the question.

Several members commented that the efforts of volunteer workers who contribute so much to AOCS meetings should be conserved. Though such efforts are often taken for granted, they do involve considerable personal sacrifice and company assistance. One meeting per year would reduce the pressure on such volunteers. It may also be argued that the strength of the Society is enhanced by a larger involvement by more people; more meetings, in a variety of new locations, would increase that involvement.

The *Ad Hoc* Committee also gave some consideration to alternate types of proposals but chose to restrict itself to the question of one versus two meetings per year in its recommendation. These included: (1) If one national meeting per year were held, the Society could support other nationally advertised meetings such as one- or two-day symposia on topics of current interest; (2) The Society could sponsor a series of regional meetings, possibly in cooperation with local sections; (3) A compromise proposal would be to alternate the one-meeting and two-meeting formats; (4) Hold an AOCS national meeting every eight months.

Based on these considerations, the *Ad Hoc* Committee presented to the Board the following recommendation:

"... that our Society have only one national meeting per year. This meeting should be held in the fall and should be limited to about three days of technical sessions."

The recommendation included a summary of the most commonly expressed reasons favoring the recommendation:

1. Increased attendance. An estimated 850 people would register for technical sessions.
2. Better exhibits. More registrants would attract more exhibitors.
3. The longer time between meetings would make possible better and more effective promotional campaigns and will reduce AOCS headquarters meetings costs.
4. A better selection of papers, appealing to all sectors of the membership, will be presented at all meetings.
5. Revenues to the Society will not be adversely affected especially if a nominal five-dollar increase in registration fees is established.
6. The 3 to 3-1/2 day meeting format is more desirable to a longer format.
7. Fall meetings are preferred because many biochemical societies, competing for AOCS attendance, meet in the spring.
8. Work of Society committees would not be impeded because of the ease of telephone communications. ■