REPORT OF AIBS MEETING OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY PRESIDENTS
Robert Buchholz, AMCBT Representative to AIBS

The meeting was held on December 2nd and 3rd in Washington, D.C. Sixty of the member societies of AIBS were represented. The purpose of the meeting was to update the societies on the activities of Congress, and to meet administrators of National Science Foundation (NSF), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and National Institute of Public Health (NIH). AIBS is keenly interested in being a voice for biologists to the members of the federal government, both the Congress and the Administration. In fact, I think AIBS tops the AAAS in this task. When Congressmen and Administrators want biological information they are turning more and more to AIBS to give names of biologists who can give this information, or do the research to get the information.

AIBS is very concerned about having biologists present with other scientists at the national level. I sense that AIBS is now becoming a "do something" organization and I would urge that AMCBT remain as a Member Society.

The meeting had four sessions which were:

(1) The Biological Sciences and the Decision-Making Process in Congress. During this time reports were given by Congressmen or their staff. The Committee on Labor and Public Welfare (Subcommittee on Health), the Committee of Merchant Marine and Fisheries, and the Committee on Science and Technology were represented.

(2) The next session was on the Activities of AIBS which was chaired by Richard Trumbull, the AIBS Executive Director. The following topics were reported on:
(a) Why Belong to AIBS; (b) Education and Project Biotech; (c) AIBS Meetings;
(d) AIBS Membership; (e) AIBS Publications; (f) AIBS Public Responsibilities;
(g) and AIBS Special Science Programs.

(3) The third session was given by Frank J. Rauscher, Director of the National Cancer Institute.

(4) The fourth session was called Biological Sciences and Management in Government Agencies. In this session reports were given by (a) NSF; (b) Science, Space and Technology Office of Management and Budget; (c) and Theodore Cooper, the Assistant Secretary for Health of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

After each session many questions were asked by us and it was quite interesting to get the behind the scenes view. Before the meeting was over the Congressmen or their staff knew about AIBS and its function. We all had a better idea of how decisions are made in government and how biologists can be more involved in the process.

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All free governments, whatever their name, are in reality governments by public opinion; and it is on the quality of this public opinion that their prosperity depends.

James Russell Lowell

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