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20th Annual Meeting of the Brazilian Society for Progress of Science.

1. The Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science held its 20th annual meeting in São Paulo during the week of July 8-12, 1968. The Society prepared a report on the results of the subjects discussed during the meeting and will submit it for the consideration of President Costa e Silva. (The following paraphrases the Portuguese text of the report.)

2. The document, which was published in several newspapers, says that the 4,000 Brazilian scientists who met in São Paulo having in mind the necessity of a reformulation in the Government's policy on science and education in Brazil, the dissatisfaction of students, professors, scientists and intellectual people toward the archaic structure of the Brazilian educational system, the lack of funds and decent working conditions for scientists in Brazil, the brain drain, not only from less developed areas in the country, such as those of the Amazon and Central Brazil, which are exposed to the ambition of developed countries, to more developed areas as well as to foreign countries, decided to present the following suggestions to the Government with the aim of helping it solve or at least remedy the problem of underdevelopment in the country:

(A) Education.

The Brazilian scientists who participated in the meeting are of the opinion that at least 30% of the national budget should be allotted to education. They add in the document that no country in Latin America spent less money on education in percentage of its national budget in 1967 than Brazil which spent less than 10%. The document criticizes any measure intended to make students pay for their own education for this, it says, "will lead to a greater concentration of power in the hands of a small number of rich families and make it difficult to carry out reforms

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which are basic and essential to development." It adds that "the percentage of 7.4% of the national budget which is allotted to education in Brazil should be gradually but rapidly increased to at least 30% if Brazil does not wish to be listed as one of the most backward countries in the world." It suggests that each municipality immediately devote 40% of its budget to education and that the Government prepare a law making this compulsory in the future. The following additional measures have been suggested by the Brazilian Society:

(a) that universities may have conditions to offer courses to the people during vacation periods, especially in the fields which directly or indirectly affect production, so that these institutions may operate all year around;

(b) that communication media such as radio and television be compelled to devote daily at least one hour of prime-time to educational programs under the orientation of educational, scientific or cultural organizations.

The Brazilian scientists who signed the document are of the opinion that the secondary educational system should be developed by national educators. They are against "any renovation program in the various levels of education which may result from any attempt to impose foreign schemes and models on it." The document expresses the scientists' support to the majority of students' demands, pleads for private and public support to education, and adds that "no independent country can assign the maintenance of its educational system to foreign governments or organizations." It pleads for complete and effective scientific, didactic, administrative and executive autonomy to state universities, representation of professors and students elected by their respective organs in the direction of universities, and abolishment of life tenure jobs for university professors. "These professors," the document says, "should not be linked to a given subject but should participate in the units related to their speciality. It is fundamental, however, that the life tenure job be replaced by a criterium of stability and freedom of thinking and expression which may permit them to carry out their work in full."

(B) Scientific Research.

The document states that, while developed countries spend 3% of their gross national product on scientific research, Brazil spends only 0.18% on it. It pleads for more money for research and development and says that industrial investments in this sector must be increased as a first measure for the scientific and technological independence of Brazil. The Brazilian scientists present in the meeting complain about bureaucratic obstacles to importation and say that they have jeopardized scientific research in Brazil. The document defends industrialization of scientific equipment in the country, but says that total and automatic exemptions of customs duties should be given to the CNPq and other

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scientific institutions to import foreign equipment which is not produced in Brazil. The Brazilian scientists praise the Government's efforts in stimulating the return of Brazilian scientists who are working abroad and suggest that any judicial charges of a political nature which may exist against researchers, educators and other intellectual people be shelved. They also suggest that salaries to scientists be increased by at least 250% of their basic salary and plead for greater support to national scientific societies. They are of the opinion that every Brazilian tax payer should be allowed to invest 10% of the taxes he has to pay in national industries which carry out research; that industries be allowed to deduct 5% of the taxes they have to collect and invest it in the CNPq to be applied to industrial research; and that national and foreign industries which use foreign patents and pay royalties or use imported technical assistance be compelled to contribute 10% of what they send abroad to the CNPq.

(C) Application of Results of National Research.

The participants of the meeting ask for laws to protect national inventions and which may stimulate their use in the national territory and say that research can be only useful to Brazil if the results are rapidly utilized. For this purpose, they suggest that the National Development Bank and the Ministry of Planning give priority attention to projects of research which aim at the application of inventions developed in Brazil, that loans only be granted to industries which have researchers and research laboratories and that all organs of production of the Government be compelled to spend 3% of their gross income on research and technological development. It adds that "any industrial organization which does not have a good team of engineers and physicists is bound to be sold to foreign organizations or go bankrupt." They conclude by suggesting that similar conditions which are given to national scientists be given to foreign scientists wishing to work in Brazilian universities and scientific institutions.

(D) Development of the Amazon.

The scientists present in the meeting are worried about the Amazon which they say has been "improperly explored and may become a semi-desert." They suggest the use of efforts to develop agriculture and stimulate cattle raising, and recommend the installation of an adequate industrial complex for the regional conditions. Participants in the meeting ask for greater support to Indians who live in the area and condemn all mistakes and crimes which have been committed against them. They suggest that all judicial charges against those responsible for these crimes be speeded up and that the guilty be punished.

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(E) Atomic Energy.

The Brazilian scientists present in the meeting show their concern over the energy situation in the country in the next 20 years, and say that the existing energy supply plan for this period "will only maintain the present stage of underdevelopment which already places Brazil in inferiority in relation to various countries in Latin America concerning the consumption of power per capita. They add that "with this intention we wish to express our support to programs which aim at a wide development plan of utilization of atomic energy with the participation of national industry such as that which has been elaborated in main lines by the Radioactive Research Institute of Minas Gerais." The scientists go on to say that "we consider that the mere acquisition of a power reactor, which has been considered by Eletrobrás, represents nothing as a contribution to our inductive scientific development. We find that only a nuclear program based on our determination to develop it by autonomous means may bring the solution for the problem. This attitude is in full agreement with the Brazilian Government's patriotic position in disavowing the agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This position deserves our unrestricted support."

They conclude by pleading for measures of protection to the Brazilian pre-historic reserves and saying that the suggestions which are presented in the document, in addition to others which the Government has planned, will contribute to reduce the enormous distance which nowadays separates Brazil from the developed peoples.

3. According to the "Folha de São Paulo", the document was originally drafted by the former scientific director of the Foundation of Support to Research in the State of São Paulo and former advisor to the IDB in Washington, Professor Warwick Kerr, who based his work on letters received from scientists all over the country. The paper further says that in drafting the report he also had the collaboration of the Dean of the University of São Paulo, the President of the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science, and a group of 10 scientists from various fields of science. Amendments to the text were also proposed during the meeting by six groups from scientific and educational sectors.

4. Comments will follow in a separate airmail.

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