

## "A LOOK TO THE FUTURE" REVISITED

"It is the opinion of the Executive Committee that the philosophy and direction of the National Association of Biology Teachers should be maintained in harmony with contemporary developments in the biological sciences and science education throughout the nation." The year was 1979 and the quote was the beginning of the preamble to the document, *A Look To The Future*.

Earlier in 1979 I had written an editorial for *ABT* entitled, "Involvement and Commitment—A Partnership." The article concluded: "If you dare to share the burdens of creating and implementing the goals, objectives, and philosophy of NABT, you can take pride in your title—NABT MEMBER."

I was a part of the "Cripple Creek, Colorado" Executive Committee, who conceived the *LTF* document and my 1979 article was but another evidence of my support for that document. It is now three years later and my presidency of NABT is about to come to a close. My association with NABT has been an intimate one and this relationship will never end. Therefore, as I reviewed my years in office as both treasurer and president, I thought it important to share my reflections, hopes, and dreams with you. In effect, I will be asking you to continue the projects that I initiated and nurtured.

NABT is the *only* professional organization that speaks *only* for biology teachers. It is a small organization, currently consisting of about 6,000 members. Despite its small size, NABT has assumed enormous tasks. I have maintained that NABT's primary responsibility is to promote *your* professional growth and development in such a way as to maximize your effectiveness both in the classroom and in the community. *The American Biology Teacher* is probably the single most effective tool that NABT has to accomplish this goal for its *entire* membership. To this end, the number of departments in *ABT* has been increased, and indeed, the entire format has been altered over this past year. If you examine a recent issue of *ABT* you will note a section of quality articles and such departments as How-To-Do-It, Computer Center, Biology Today, Projector Center, and Transparency Master. You, the biology teacher, should feel free to contribute articles for any department in the journal. In so doing, you will help all biology teachers grow professionally.

Professional growth is also stimulated through attendance at national conventions. When was the last time that you discussed biology education with Paul Hurd or the effects of radiation with Rosalyn Yalow? When was the last time you had an opportunity to share your ideas and philosophies of teaching biology with teachers from other cities and states? A national convention helps to stimulate thinking and to initiate communication among biology teachers across the country. NABT believes in national conventions and spends time and money to provide the very best in conventions.

It's expensive for the average biology teacher to attend a convention. Recognizing this, the Board of Directors and I are currently examining college campuses as alternative convention sites to the large city hotels. In the meantime, during the course of this year I have worked closely with our regional coordinators in an attempt to develop and support regional and state activities for teachers. I know that we have been successful in this venture in several of our regions. However, we need the active support of state membership directors. I must confess that we have not been able to find a state membership director for every state. Does your state have one? If not, why don't you apply? (Just write to your regional coordinator.)

NABT has become the national voice of biology education. We have become visible in Washington. As President of NABT, I have attended meetings sponsored by the National Academy of Science and AAAS. We have met with Dr. Cecily Selby, co-Chair of the National Science Board's Commission on Pre-College Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology. We have a direct input to this Commission. Our voice has been heard on and in the media with respect to a variety of issues. Examine copies of *Education Week* (weeks of October 20 and 27, 1982) and you will sample some of the positive exposure received by NABT.

NABT has been very much involved in the Evolution/Creationism issue. We believe that we have a commitment to provide information, programs, and activities that will stimulate teachers to deal responsibly with issues regarding science and society. However, we are NOT a one-issue organization. NABT is concerned with *all* aspects of biology teaching. Our special publications emphasize this. Have you read *New Directions In Biology Teaching*? When was the last time you reviewed *Social Implications of*

*Biology Education?* Have you shared our *Careers In Biology* with your students and guidance staff? Have you rented from our videotape library to bring Stephen Gould and E.O. Wilson into your classroom? And, for those of you waiting for Compendium II, wait no longer than Spring '83! These are investments that we have made in attempting to fulfill our mandate to you. We are committed to your professional growth at a minimum cost to you.

Under the leadership of Dr. Jane Kahle, NABT has studied the role and status of women in biology education. This committee has reported its findings in the September issue of the *ABT* and also during the Detroit convention. The members of the committee have served as catalysts to foment constructive action and positive attitudes within the association.

NABT is concerned with developing guidelines for the professional certification of biology teachers. Under the leadership of John Ransom (Kansas) and Steven Lanphear (Wisconsin), NABT will shortly produce these guidelines based upon an extensive study currently being conducted. Numerous state education departments have written to NABT asking for these guidelines because "NABT speaks for the biology teacher."

NABT recognizes that different groups of biology teachers have different needs and yet want to be part of NABT. Thus, under the leadership of Betty Stump and Donald Emmeluth, Community College biology teachers have found a niche in NABT. Similarly, under 'Laine Gurley, so have the Animal Behavior biology teachers. This type of recruitment takes time, energy, and publicity. Our Executive Director, Dr. Wayne A. Moyer, the Executive Committee, and the complete Board of Directors have been committed to this pursuit. However, time and publicity cost DOLLARS.

During the past year NABT has developed and strengthened its ties with NSTA, AAAS, and AIBS. We are already working cooperatively with AAAS in pre-college science education and with AIBS in developing a career brochure. We are currently planning numerous cooperative ventures with NSTA for next year.

I am proud and pleased with the way in which I and the Board of Directors have served you. Certainly, we have a long way to go and we need and want your input and suggestions. We need your involvement and commitment if *A Look To The Future* is to have any meaning. However, NABT needs something else from you. If we are to continue the projects that I have enumerated (and others which time and space have not permitted), we will need *additional financial support* from you.

It is no secret that these are difficult economic times. It is also no secret that the number of biology teachers in this country has decreased. The flow of money has slowed to a trickle. It has become increasingly difficult for NABT, a small organization, to promote its activities on a small budget. Increases in journal costs, committee expenses, publicity expenses, OBTA expenses, NABT headquarters costs, and travel expenses have placed a heavy strain on our budget. It is also no secret that your membership dues are among the lowest for a national organization. Thus, if income is down and expenses are up, we must return to YOU, the reason for NABT's existence, for assistance.

Consider the new directions of NABT. Consider the role of NABT on a national level representing you. Consider that your low dues give you the benefit of an excellent insurance plan, an opportunity to receive *Science News* at \$15 per year, provides you with an outstanding journal, an opportunity to purchase new publications at a reduced cost, and an opportunity to participate in travel and study tours at a reduced cost.

As a President who has sometimes resorted to unorthodox means to achieve the best for the membership, I am now coming to you and asking you to send a VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION (tax deductible) to NABT. Send this contribution along with your renewal dues or, if you have already renewed membership, make your supplementary contribution now. I cannot stress enough the importance of this action on your part at this time. Your contribution will make you an active participant in the NABT path to new directions for the future.

I leave this month my office as President of NABT, confident that together we have made great strides forward. My successor, Dr. Jane Kahle, is equally committed to the goals of NABT as I am. As Past-President I shall continue to work with her to make *A Look To The Future* a reality. We will need your help, your guidance, and your involvement. Together, we can and will nourish and sustain NABT so that it may forever be the spokesperson for YOU, the Biology teacher.

Jerry Resnick, President, NABT