In the course of a career most of us have multiple opportunities to contribute something to the Annual Meeting of The Endocrine Society. Usually these opportunities take the form of ten-minute papers concerning some recent discovery. At this moment I wish I could tell you about the discovery of a new steroid associated with high blood pressure, or the discovery of a new peptide hormone, or the discovery of some new clinical entity, or the discovery of a new treatment for some old clinical entity. But such things as these can be presented at any meeting, and the opportunity to address you from the perspective of the President of The Endocrine Society comes only once in a lifetime. Tradition forbids that this occasion be devoted to the announcement of scientific discoveries and requires instead that it be used to say something about the state of the Society.

I could gladly use the occasion to rhapsodize the Society that means so much to so many of us. I could gladly reminisce . . . to glory in the golden history of endocrinology. I could gladly paint with broad strokes what I foresee as the future of endocrinology. Or I could pretend to be a philosopher and discuss a subject which I like to call "clinical epistemology" . . . How does an endocrinologist legitimately arrive at the notion that there is such an entity as an "endocrinopathy?" I could gladly try to convince you that there is no better career than that of the endocrinologist living in a time when the fruitful union of basic and clinical science gives daily new insights into life processes . . . a union that gives us powerful tools with which we can make meaningful measurements . . . provides us with methods of perturbing biological systems for heuristic or diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. I could gladly attempt to analyze what it is that makes The Endocrine Society thrive, grow, attract ever increasing numbers of scientists and practitioners; it is a truly vital organization with a genuine sense of identity, a genuine esprit de corps. To learn contemporary endocrinology well is to acquire an education that is broad and deep, liberal and practical.

Instead I shall address myself to a very practical issue facing the Society. As a matter of fact, this year The Endocrine Society has had to meet several major issues. Most of these can be dealt with more suitably at the business meeting than at this moment. I should like to use this moment to discuss the purposes for the existence of The Endocrine Society, and, in particular, the purposes for holding this Annual Meeting.

According to our By-laws, the purpose for which The Endocrine Society exists is "...the advancement and promulgation of knowledge concerning the internal secretions..." In pursuing this purpose, The Endocrine Society, in 1917, began publishing the journal, *Endocrinology*, now in its 95th volume. In 1941, the Society added a second official publication, *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, which is now in its 39th volume. Since their inception both journals have been leaders in the field.

Ever since The Endocrine Society was organized it has held Annual Meetings, in each of which the majority of time was devoted to papers presenting the results of recent endocrinological research. Since 1948, The Endocrine Society has also sponsored an annual Postgraduate Assembly . . . a week-long course designed to bring clinicians abreast of the best of scientific endocrinology. Finally, in 1971 The Endocrine Society undertook the sponsorship of a series of workshops on radioimmunoassay. The
educational nature of each of these functions of The Endocrine Society is so obvious as to require no elaboration.

But now I should like to face a question that has been asked many times by many people for many years: Does our Annual Meeting actually fulfill the purpose of providing a meaningful educational experience for all who wish to attend?

Until a little more than a decade ago, it was possible for anyone attending the Annual Meeting to hear all the papers that were presented, inasmuch as there was only one general meeting, extending over a period of three days, composed principally of short communications covering all aspects of endocrinology. I remember feeling that an era was coming to an end the year it was announced that the format of subsequent Annual Meetings would consist of two or more simultaneous sessions of short communications. The reasons for simultaneous sessions were easy to understand: they would permit the presentation of a larger percentage of submitted papers, and they would recognize the reality of subspecialization within endocrinology. By "horizontal specialization" I mean the kind that differentiates the clinician from the molecular biologist. By "vertical specialization" I mean the kind that differentiates the thyroidologist from the steroidologist. One could easily show that we have third and even fourth dimensional specialization as well. By encouraging greater and greater specialization within the various sessions of our program and by restricting speakers to ten minutes in which to describe their discoveries, we have made it difficult for our speakers to communicate with anyone other than specialists working in their respective fields. Herein lies the problem: we have large numbers of endocrinologists who come to these meetings every year hoping to learn "what's going on in endocrinology" and going away disenchanted because they heard only fragments of science and those in the diverse languages of unfamiliar technology.

The Importance of Short Communications in Presenting New Discoveries

I believe all would agree that short communications of new discoveries should continue to occupy the central position in the format of our Annual Meetings. Science, after all, advances by mincing steps, and it is important that we provide a forum in which investigators can present their new ideas and fresh data. The prospect of presenting new material at meetings such as this provides an important stimulus to scientific accomplishment. The act of offering, discussing, and criticizing new material represents the consummation of the scientific process, for science is not science until it has been communicated. It is entirely proper for those who present new discoveries to address themselves to other experts in the field. But, because the short communication presents new material, because it must deal with technicalities, and because it is circumscribed in time and content, this format does not lend itself well to the enlightenment of those who are unfamiliar with the field. Nevertheless, those who present short communications will be better appreciated by the Society if they will make every effort to communicate clearly and simply and if they will provide statements of perspective whenever possible.

The Importance of Lectures and Symposia in Providing Perspective and Understanding

In view of the inherent limitations of the short communication as an instrument of education, many members of our Society have expressed a desire to have the scientific programs of our Annual Meetings laced with "state of the art lectures." Ideally these should be presented by people who
are expert not only in the science of endocrinology but also in the art of teaching. Such lectures should be liberated from the severe time constraints and the necessity to deal with technical details which are imposed upon short communications; they should not only be permitted to but be obliged to provide historical and other appropriate perspectives. The marvelous series of Eli Lilly Lectures we have had over the past several years could serve as models for future “state of the art” lecturers to follow. Fresh topics should be covered each year, but any topic might be eligible for recycling whenever a new or different statement of perspective seemed desirable. Other formats should also be considered, including symposia and “poster sessions.” The objective is to educate; the methods should be developed with imagination and resourcefulness. Balance should be maintained so that broadening and regularizing of the educational activities of our Annual Meeting will not diminish the importance of the Meeting as a forum for presentation of new discoveries. All this takes effort, forethought, and ingenuity on the part of the Program Committee; and the Committee for this year’s program, headed by our Vice-President, Dr. Cahill, merits our full approbation.

The Importance of Maintaining an Integrated, Comprehensive, Vital Eclectic Society

From time to time one or another subdivision of endocrinology develops a heightened sense of identity. This usually stems from the excitement surrounding a cluster of related discoveries with the further promise of rapid advance of this area of science or practice. Occasionally, those who are interested in such an area organize themselves politically and sponsor meetings and publish journals separate from those of The Endocrine Society. There is much ambivalence on the part of individuals involved in these subspecialty groups. On the one hand they can see the value of organizing in order to accelerate progress in an area of science. On the other hand, they dislike having their associations with The Endocrine Society become attenuated. Ultimately, they complain about the inconvenience of having to attend so many meetings. There is also the potential danger that a particular subdivision might lose its scientific vitality but linger on indefinitely as a political organization.

It is my view that The Endocrine Society should not, and indeed cannot, stand in the way of the emergence of new societies devoted to the cultivation of thriving new disciplines. However, The Endocrine Society should view itself as the grand, comprehensive, eclectic organization which fosters the development of all science that is related to internal secretions. It should view itself as the organization that provides a forum for the presentation, discussion and criticism of new discoveries having to do with any aspect of endocrinology. It should view itself as the organization that is responsible for the continuing education of endocrinologists of all persuasions throughout their careers. In order to maintain its position The Endocrine Society must keep abreast of the shifting currents of science. We cannot allow those who are interested in an emerging branch of endocrinology to secede from the Society with consequent scientific impoverishment of those who remain. But in order for The Endocrine Society to avoid such splintering, it must be certain each year that it attracts to the program of its Annual Meeting good contributions from good workers in every area of endocrinology that has any vitality. The Vice-President traditionally solicits the assistance of a large, diversified, knowledgeable Program Committee to advise him in the selection of abstracts, lectures, and symposia. It would seem wise for each Vice-President to study contemporary trends in endocrine research so that he can identify newly emerging areas that merit representation on the Program Committee. It would also seem desirable to work out some mechanism whereby subspecialty groups
that have identifiable organizations (such as the diabetologists, the reproductive physiologists, the neuroendocrinologists, and others) could nominate representatives to the Program Committee. These representatives would, of course, be members of The Endocrine Society and their final selection would be the responsibility of our Vice-President. In this way vigorously creative branches of endocrinology could be assured appropriate roles within The Endocrine Society; rather than seceding, they would have good reason to remain identified with the larger Society where they could contribute to the enrichment of the scientific programs and in turn enjoy the enrichment of associating with representatives of other subspecialties of our many-splendored discipline.

A year ago an ad hoc committee was formed to give deliberate consideration to the purposes and forms of our scientific programs. Acting upon suggestions made by this committee, the Council has now established a Standing Program Committee, to be chaired by the Vice-President, charged with continuing responsibility for seeing that our annual Meetings are attractive to all branches of endocrinology and that they are both scientifically excellent and educationally valuable.

The existence of this Program Committee will provide an avenue through which any member of The Endocrine Society can make his wishes known concerning the form and content of our scientific programs. For example, I myself intend, for the next several years, to urge the Program Committee to arrange for symposia relating to practical clinical endocrinology. I know there are those who would like to hear what various experts consider to be the best available approaches to the treatment of acromegaly. There are those who would like to have various experts bring us up to date on the clinical uses of pituitary releasing factors. There are those who would like to be told how one can best perform the role of consulting endocrinologist within a group of physicians caring for patients with mammary carcinoma. There are those who would like to hear how the endocrinologist can contribute most effectively to a hypertension control program. And so forth. In this way it is to be hoped that the educational needs of one large and important segment of our Society, the clinical endocrinologists, will be perennially satisfied.

As I began these remarks I reluctantly turned away from the opportunity to conduct an analysis of what it is that makes The Endocrine Society thrive, grow, and attract ever-increasing numbers of scientists and practitioners... or to say why it is a truly vital organization with genuine esprit de corps. Now I realize that I turned away from the opportunity only rhetorically, not in fact. For, surely, the force that unites us as members of The Endocrine Society is the attractiveness of the scientific program of our Annual Meeting. It is here that we come to tell of our discoveries and share the excitement of learning of the discoveries of others. It is here that we annually reaffirm the astonishing fact that the monumental advances that have been made in endocrinology have been made and are being made by our own kind of people. Here it is that we have the best opportunity in the world to learn "what's going on in endocrinology." If the Endocrine Society is to realize its potential as a unique educational institution, it must continue to serve as the forum where investigative endocrinologists describe their discoveries to their peers; but, in addition, it must offer comprehensive discussions of perspectives in endocrinology that all of us can understand; and it must be a vital, integrated, eclectic Society concerned with, and expert in, all aspects of science having to do with internal secretions.
Annual Awards

Selection of recipients of the awards of The Endocrine Society is made by a Committee appointed by the Council of the Society. These awards carry no obligation by the recipient to the Society or to the donors. Endocrine Society awards are limited to citizens of the United States and Canada.

Fred Conrad Koch Award

In 1957 a substantial legacy was bequeathed to the Society by the late Elizabeth Koch for the purpose of establishing the Fred Conrad Koch Memorial Fund in memory of her late husband, Distinguished Service Professor of Physiological Chemistry at the University of Chicago and pioneer in the isolation of the androgens. This is the highest honor of The Endocrine Society and is represented by a medal known as the Koch Medal of The Endocrine Society. The medal, as well as an honorarium of $3,500, is to be given annually to an individual for work of special distinction in endocrinology. The recipient shall be chosen from nominations presented by members of the Society.

This Award was first presented in 1959 to Dr. W. W. Swingle, in 1960 to Dr. Emil Witschi, in 1961 to Dr. Lawson Wilkins, in 1962 to Dr. Eleanor H. Venning, in 1963 to Dr. Dwight J. Ingle, in 1964 to Dr. L. T. Samuels, in 1965 to Dr. Thomas F. Gallagher, in 1966 to Dr. Harold L. Mason, in 1967 to Dr. E. B. Astwood, in 1968 to Dr. Roland K. Meyer, in 1969 to Dr. Robert W. Bates, in 1970 to Dr. Seymour Lieberman, in 1971 to Dr. Roy O. Greep, in 1972 jointly to Drs. Solomon A. Berson and Rosalyn S. Yalow, in 1973 jointly to Drs. Charles H. Sawyer and John W. Everett, and in 1974 to Dr. Alexander Albert. The Koch Medal has replaced the medal of The Endocrine Society which was established in 1954.

The Ernst Oppenheimer Memorial Award

The Ernst Oppenheimer Memorial Award, sponsored by the Ciba-Geigy Corporation, is given in recognition of the meritorious accomplishments of an investigator in the field of basic or clinical endocrinology who has not reached his forty-first birthday before July 1 of the year in which the Award is presented. This Award was established in 1942 as the Ciba Award and first presented in 1944. The honorarium is presently $2,500.

Nominations

Forms for the Fred Conrad Koch Award and the Ernst Oppenheimer Memorial Award may be obtained from the office of The Endocrine Society, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20014. Completed forms and nominations should be submitted no later than October 15 of each year.

Ayerst Award

The Ayerst Award, sponsored by the Ayerst Laboratories, is to be given in recognition of distinguished service in the field of Endocrinology. Nominations are to be made in letter form to the Secretary of the Society.

The Eli Lilly Lecture

The Eli Lilly Lectureship is sponsored by the Lilly Research Laboratories. The Eli Lilly Lecturer will be selected by the Awards Committee. The lecture will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society. The honorarium consists of $1,000 and all traveling expenses. Nominations are to be made in letter form to the Secretary of the Society.

The Distinguished Leadership Award in Endocrinology

The Distinguished Leadership Award in Endocrinology was established by Dr. Robert H. Williams in 1970. The award is presented annually in recognition of outstanding leadership in fundamental or clinical endocrinology as exemplified by the recipient's contributions and those of his trainees and associates to teaching, research and administration. Distinguished leadership in endocrinology and metabolism may be manifest in a variety of ways and activities (international, national and local). The awardee shall be chosen by the Awards Committee from nominations submitted by members of the Society. The award consists of an executive chair bearing an engraved plaque and a certificate. The Distinguished Leadership Award will be given as the highest award for leadership in Endocrinology and the Koch Award as the highest award for research achievement in Endocrinology.