

COMMENTS ON
"NATIONAL SCIENCE POLICY"
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National Science Policy has become the subject of many opinions expressed not only in briefs to the Senate Committee but also in technical journals, the daily press and in public addresses. It is difficult to find in this discussion a common understanding of the kind of statement a National Science Policy might be and the form it should take. Perhaps this is not surprising, for the views reflect a great variety of backgrounds in economics, business, politics and journalism, and others. The suggestions which are made often carry the weight of long experience in these various professions. In such discussion the scientist also has a perspective that is peculiar to his profession, but the difficulties he sees in applying the objectives, the criteria, and practices of the business world to scientific research deserve some thought.

Cost-benefit

The Order of Reference of the Special Committee directing the committee to consider and report on the science policy of the Federal Government makes it clear that its interest in "science policy" is concerned with priorities, budget and efficiency. It contains no suggestion that "science policy" can be expressed as a simple formula for reckoning what should be spent in a particular scientific field or on a particular scientific project. In the pleas from many quarters, however, that the government should formulate and make known a science policy, the impression is unavoidable that some are looking for a guiding formula that would relate expenditure to