

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Room 37 - 501

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

November 20, 1970

Dr. Robert Socolow  
Physics Department  
Yale University  
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

Dear Dr. Socolow,

I am a graduate student in political science at M.I.T. specializing in Science and Public Policy. My doctoral dissertation is titled "Scientists and the ABM" under the direction of Professor George Rathjens.

I believe that the ABM issue was a precedent setting occasion wherein the scientific community took the lead both in informing the public and the Congress and also in mobilizing public opinion against the system. Such a role by scientists in the political arena, I feel, is becoming increasingly important and necessary. I hope, by my analysis, to indicate how the effectiveness of the scientists' participation in the policy process can be enhanced.

I am trying to interview each of the scientists who were active in the ABM issue either by doing grass roots work in their community or by lobbying with their elected representatives. Mike Casper gave me your name as being a physicist who lobbied with senators during the '69 APS meeting in Washington. Would you please be kind enough to write me briefly whether you were active in any other anti-ABM work before or after the APS meeting?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

  
Mrs. Anne H. Cahn

AHC/cab

Mrs. Anne H. Cahn  
Department of Political Science  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mrs. Cahn:

As I am eager to encourage your research on the impact of scientists on public policy, I will do what I can to help you.

My own involvement with ABM was not large, but I will ~~list~~ briefly what I did. I was one of the faculty members most active in organizing the "Day of Reflection" at Yale on 4 March 1969, helping choose the program and speakers. I managed to irritate the radical students with my insistence on a certain "responsible" style and the conservative faculty by my not calling the whole thing off. I remain pleased with the way the Day went.

In Washington, I had a long and probing private conversation with Senator Dodd's chief aide.

After the APS meeting, I led one formal evening session with students in May and joined a faculty member in political science for two classes in October. I read widely and contributed modest sums of money to relevant organizations.

The ABM issue has had a significant impact on my career as a scientist, for it hastened my decision to switch my major professional interests from high energy physics to problems of more ~~direct~~ social relevance. For the past year and a half, I have been developing my research abilities in geophysics and other areas of science related to environmental problems. I mention this, even though it goes beyond your letter, because I suspect that the impact of the American political scene on American science ought not to be neglected in your study, even if it is primarily concerned with the impact in the reverse direction. I wrote once about this subject (in Vista in 1968), stressing the impact on foreign students studying in the USA. I think research would be rewarding that addressed itself to the image of science among students at various stages in their education and its impact on career decisions. In particular, changes in various measurements in recent years ought to be traced. My own decision to change my area of professional

concern is motivated in part by a desire to influence students with a strong humanitarian impulse to prepare themselves with a scientific education. The ABM controversy exposed me to scientists and students who rejected the connection between science and social problems, and made me fear the day when such people might have a monopoly on scientific expertise.

Please let me know how your research progresses. For the narrower question of political impact which you pose, I urge you to talk with Jeremy Stone; you doubtless have done so already. Two people you may not have on your list but who know Washington and are likely to give you interesting reactions are Steve Ebbin, at the National Academy of Sciences, and Win Turner, General Counsel to the Committee on Intergovernmental Operations at the Senate. Both men worked with me on the National Academy's Jamaica Bay summer study last summer, and you may certainly use my name. Turner in particular will give you a reference point outside the circle of the preconvinced scientists and legislators.

With best wishes,

Robert H. Socolow