

P.O. Box 85
Campbell, Calif.
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Draft on TWA Flight 63

Memo: John J. Halsey
Walt Keeshen, Jr.

Subject: American Society for Cybernetics

As you probably know, I am a charter member of the American Society for Cybernetics. The November 19th Cybernetics and Society Conference at Georgetown University will now be sponsored by the three universities in cooperation with the American Society for Cybernetics. I enclose a copy of the Innaugural Dinner program and list of attendees.

I am scheduled to give a talk on "Cybernetics and Public Order" at Georgetown, November 19th. On my recent trip to Harrison and Armonk, I discussed the problems of concern to IBM in regard to the potential overlap of my "philosopher's hat" and my "engineer's hat." The policy questions were discussed with Dr. Ed Hulbregtse, Dr. Tom Horton, Mr. Chet Hansen, and Mr. Arnold Lerner. Mr. Bill Ewald joined in some of the discussions. I gave an explanation of my basic philosophical outlook to Dr. Ormsby Robinson. I discussed the relevance of negative entropy to sociological problems with Mr. Charles R. Bowen. Mr. Bowen also attended the Innaugural Dinner in Washington, D.C.

I talked briefly with Dr. Douglas Knight, FSD, Rockville (Public Relations) about my Georgetown paper. I suggested to Dr. Peter Castruccio, FSD, Rockville, that he re-examine the potential usefulness of some ASDD projects to new federal interests coincident with the founding of the American Society for Cybernetics. Dr. George Sponsler, FSD, was at the ASC meeting, but I did not get a chance to talk to him.

At the American Society for Cybernetics dinner, I happened to be seated at a table with Walter N. Munster, representing the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, who indicated that there is considerable interest in the philosophical implications in some of my socio-engineering problems reports prepared in the course of my hobby. Saturday afternoon Dr. Paul S. Henshaw of the Atomic Energy Commission Staff reviewed some of my notes in detail. Dr. Henshaw indicated that some of the philosophical concepts I have developed are of great importance to the AEC, but their charter does not allow them to grant contracts on such philosophical problems. I pointed out that the formation of the American Society for Cybernetics on October 16, 1964, in Washington, E.C., was in a way similar to the meeting of an informal committee of U.S. Government scientists and administrators on Jan. 1st, 1900, in Washington, D.C., where the plans were laid out for the bringing into being of a series of books on Sociology to help our country face the complex problems of the Twentieth Century. The American Society for Cybernetics has the potential role of mobilizing the resources our country needs to face the growing complexity of social organization we will be facing in the next few years. I perceive this to mean also an increasing market for data processing and information retrieval equipment for federal agencies, which should mean new opportunities for IBM expansion.

As I develop details of my Georgetown paper I will let you have copies so you can determine if there are any public relations problems. I have already given S. R. Lazarto copies of the plan for the meeting.

F. B. Wood

on TWA Flight 63