

unwise and thoroughly illiberal to hope for international agreements under which the United States would decline to accept scientists and engineers as immigrants. The United States Government has probably done as much as can be expected by laying it down that student visas cannot be replaced by immigrant visas for at least two years.

This is why the committee must reckon to spend much of its energy worrying about more distant solutions. For one thing, it is important to find ways of making it more attractive for scientists and engineers to return to where they came from. In the long run this implies that countries like Britain must learn to use industrial scientists in more satisfying ways, and that they must provide academics with still better and—unhappily—more expensive facilities. (There are some pursuits, such as some forms of space technology, so esoteric that those determined to indulge in them might profitably be sent packing, not tempted to stay at home.) More immediately, there is much to be said for schemes like that being tried out by the Science Research Council and other British institutions for offering intending emigrants jobs to come back to. There is also likely to be much profit in a consideration of how links with other countries than the United States might be improved. Certainly, as things are, the traffic across the Atlantic is far heavier than the traffic between Britain and the rest of Europe. It is at least conceivable that more scientists and engineers would settle down to careers in Britain if they were able to satisfy their postgraduate wanderlust in Europe rather than in North America. Finally, on the principle that the traffic in scientists is a consequence of the integrity of the intellectual community spanning the Atlantic, it would make sense to encourage a compensating eastward flow. Fortunately salaries in Europe and the United States are not now outrageously out of line, which suggests that money spent in buying eastward passages for American scientists and engineers could take some of the edge off European discontent. There is even a possibility that the United States Government, now apparently anxious to help, might contribute that part of the cost. Whether it would go as far as to acknowledge that, in an international market, other countries than itself have a right to protest at science policies such as the space programme which artificially inflate the demand for scientists is another matter. That, too, is something that Dr. Jones's committee may care to ask.

NO RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT POWER

PROFESSOR P. M. S. BLACKETT, the President of the Royal Society, will find a wide welcome for his declaration that the Royal Society must play a fuller part in helping the British Government to make a meaningful policy on science and related affairs. The need of such an intervention is now plain. Although the

government's machinery for the administration of science is also an effective way of gathering the opinions of scientists about the spending of money on research grants and on development, the hierarchy of grant-giving committees is more suitable for administering policies handed down than for breaking new ground. It is true that the Royal Society has always been influential behind the scenes, but this, too, is more often a way of dissuading governments from folly than of persuading them to do things that nobody has done before. What is necessary now is a channel for communicating to the government a coherent and developing view of how public administration can best serve the scientific community—and how the scientific community can best serve the public. With all its prestige and with its strategically placed fellowship in Britain and elsewhere, the Royal Society could if it wished become the pacemaker of policy on science in Britain.

But is it enough to be represented on the committees the government sets up? Professor Blackett was justly pleased to record the presence of representatives of the society on the committees which determine policy at the Department of Education and Science and at the Ministry of Technology, but committee work is often thankless and can be empty. Indeed, it can even be a way in which participants are made to connive at policies of which they do not thoroughly approve. This, no doubt, is why some fellows of the Royal Society will not be as pleased as they should be at the prospect of fuller participation in public affairs. The way to meet their doubts, and at the same time to ensure that the Royal Society wields its full power, is to arrange that the committee work behind closed doors in Whitehall is accompanied by a great deal of public activity. Indeed, the Royal Society might do well to take a leaf out of the book of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, which has increasingly in the past ten years produced such a reasoned and constructive spate of comment on public affairs that it is now regarded almost as a fountain-head of all wisdom. In Britain, the Royal Society has tended to the view that as a society it should refrain from public pronouncements, and everybody will appreciate the difficulty in pretending that even innocuous statements on public policy were genuinely representative of the views of all the fellows. The real need, however, is not to produce a series of solemn opinions on matters of public interest but to take the initiative in stimulating discussion among professional scientists on matters of mutual interest. The reports of well informed but independent committees are a splendid way of doing this, and would occasionally have the extra value of identifying matters of such great concern that the Royal Society's representatives on the committees in Whitehall would hear themselves speaking with doubled confidence. To plagiarize, there would be important occasions on which they would not be compelled to go naked into the committee rooms. As things are, or promise to be, they may find themselves endowed with responsibility but no power.