

for the research being communicated. He had the courage to question the wisdom of the current censorship system that is intended to protect the "authors against themselves" rather than permitting readers to make their own evaluations and ignores "the personal biases or even the selfish interests of referees," which may be the basis for the rejection of manuscripts. His interim remedy was the substitution of informative abstracts with a national repository making available copies of the complete manuscripts, with an international computerized storage and retrieval system as the ultimate solution. In the area of the scientists' communication with the general public, he feared that allocations of large sums of money for specific practical results would unrealistically heighten the public's expectation of instant cures, whereas successful practical solutions to medical problems are based on years of preceding, painstaking, basic research (4), with the failure to achieve immediate results likely leading to the public's disillusionment and a consequent loss of support for science. Finally, he played an important role in permitting *Biological Abstracts* to continue functioning and in developing the program of *Annual Reviews*, and he personally conceived and was chairman of the committee that oversaw the production of the *Handbook of Physiology* series, which has proved to be a valued reference source the world over.

Turning now to Maurice Visscher, the man, he was a quiet thoughtful man of great compassion. He would take the time to help anyone who needed it and no request for help was ever turned down, be it assistance for an indigent student or funds for a physician's journey to aid the suffering in Chad. In discussing scientific matters, despite his vast knowledge, he was not at all intimidating, so that no one felt constrained to hold back ideas or judgements, with the end result that no new thought or idea was ever lost on his account. His brilliant insights, coupled with his selfless devotion, made the beleaguered participants of what appeared initially to be hopeless causes, such as the anti-Vietnam War effort, feel that their labors were not wasted. And he was often successful, in spite of the odds. The same courage that permitted him to stand apart from the crowd and go against current dogma in scientific matters pervaded all of his actions. When he thought something was the right thing to do, he was unshakable, and the greater the size of the opposition, its social rank, or political power, the more tenacious and steadfast he became in his beliefs. He was for the underdog, and no just cause was too small, no minority group too underprivileged or powerless, no individual too weak or inconsequential to merit his sincere whole-hearted support. And this support was not trivial. For example, where a senior Congressman's office and the Vice President's office were ineffectual, he succeeded in fashioning a strategy that prevented the Immigration Service from forcing a brilliant young graduate student to return to his native country, which was governed by an oppressive dictatorship and in which he might likely have come to harm. His friendship was warm and genuine, and he could always be counted on for encouragement and support in times of stress. Rather than list the numerous honors he was awarded, it is considered preferable to have detailed some of the reasons he deserved them. At the end he said he had no re-

grets—he had had a full life and the companionship of a wonderful family and had been fortunate in many other respects. Since one cannot imagine him refusing assistance to anyone in our society, in fact to anyone at all, or permitting injustice anywhere on the globe to go unchallenged, all the world's people have lost a friend. We will not see his like again soon.

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POSITION AVAILABLE

Executive Secretary-Treasurer (ES-T), American Physiological Society. The ES-T is the principal administrative officer of the Society and as such manages the Society's Central Office in Bethesda, MD. The duties and responsibilities of the ES-T are multiple and include governance and operations and interactions with individual members and external institutions. The ES-T must be a life scientist with a doctoral degree, preferably a physiologist, with proven administrative abilities and skills. Details of qualifications and job description can be found opposite the table of contents in the January 1984 issue of the *American Journal of Physiology*.

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