Dr. Hoagland, are you asked whether we should merge with the ACM and leave the IEEE?

Yes, occasionally. The 1971 AFIPS survey, based on a sample of about 1800, indicated that approximately one third of our members also belong to the ACM. Data from the IEEE indicates that close to 75% of our membership also belongs to other societies or groups within the IEEE. Obviously the majority of Computer Society members find the opportunity to receive transactions and journals from other groups for a small additional membership fee an important aspect of IEEE membership. For them, our IEEE affiliation is highly advantageous.

It is clear that we have an overlap with the ACM in both software engineering and certain applications areas (e.g., pattern recognition). Therefore, we are attempting to work out a publications offering with the ACM which will benefit both memberships. Although our societies have mutual areas of interest, we don’t compete directly with the ACM, nor should we – you need only look at the number of AFIPS constituent societies to realize the breadth of professional activities oriented around computers.

The IEEE is a massive institute (over 160,000 members) and it has recently recognized the stresses engendered by size and the merits of decentralization. I don’t believe a “conglomerate” computer society would better serve the diverse interests of professionals in the field, although the bureaucratic potential may appeal to some. The main expense of a professional society is in its publications and, unless there is appreciable duplication, and publications can be merged, it is very doubtful that a “two for the price of one” advantage could occur.

Our job is to provide services that will be of direct and lasting benefit to our members and the computer profession. We must strive to excel; growth should be accepted as a consequence of excellence – not be an end in itself.

Is a dues increase likely?

An analysis has been started to better understand our financial situation. This study will take into account the most recent projections of JCC revenue (a prime source for us), and other factors that affect our budgets.

Frankly, I’m sure a dues increase in 1973 is an option the Governing Board will debate and resolve during this year. I personally see little reason to be optimistic that an increase can be avoided.

One last question, do you want to hear from our readers?

Absolutely! I would like all of you who are reading this column to let me know the topics you would like to see discussed in COMPUTER.* Let us have your opinions on issues affecting the computer and information processing profession. We feel this is important enough to warrant the creation of a new column in Computer (see page 66) so that the comments and opinions of our members can be published.

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