

Editorial

In Forrester's "Churches at the Transition" this issue of *Zygon* reveals a clear picture from a systems-dynamics viewpoint of the supreme importance of religion for maintaining the long-term values necessary for the survival of a society. This issue also unveils in the "Proposal" a new step by one of the two institutions which sponsor *Zygon*, a step that may be needed to help religious institutions meet their responsibilities for maintaining long-term values in the hearts and minds of men in the new age of science and technology. The third article, "Evolving Cybernetic Machinery," provides an example of how man's long-range values or ultimate concerns can—even in the midst of contemplating the greatest threat posed by his scientific developments—be seen to be the same ultimate concern long expressed at the peak of religious culture.

All three papers suggest that new survival requirements stemming from our use of science and technology pose upon the cultural institutions that engender man's ultimate concerns the greatest challenge in their million years of evolving. The "Proposal" suggests one way, perhaps historically a crucial way, to salvage for a new scientific age the traditional and necessary functions of these institutions. We hope that *Zygon* readers will be interested in this proposal for a new Center, that they will respond with critical and constructive evaluations, and that some will want to participate actively in making it a vital reality. The future of *Zygon* itself is tied to the new Center.

In a forthcoming issue we shall present a detailed story about the other agency currently sponsoring *Zygon*: the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science (IRAS), established in 1954 "to formulate dynamic and positive relationships between the concepts developed by science and the goals and hopes of man expressed through religion." The IRAS is a membership society, open to those who share its basic aims. There are other significant societies concerned with the relation of religion and science, and we plan to report on these also.

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