

To the Members and Friends of the Oriental Institute

ROBERT M C C. ADAMS, DIRECTOR

As this is written, raiding and shelling across the Suez Canal in the wake of the Arab defeat by Israel still is continuing sporadically. The drumfire of UN debate also continues, although the threat of general war seemingly has been dispelled by the Great Powers' mutual avoidance of an explosive confrontation at Glassboro. Modified for the worse by the advances of modern technology, the agonizing theme of conflict remains as characteristic of the Near East as ever.

It is a poor time to comment on the lasting impact of recent events upon our program. Some signs of returning normalcy encourage us to hope for the best. The patient work of building scholarly contacts over generations can wither, however, not only in the heat of war-inspired popular passions but as a result of calculated acts of diplomacy. With the emergence of an overriding consciousness of nationhood, the encouragement or disruption of such contacts too easily is submerged in the arsenal of fair means and foul by which governments signal to one another in the realms of "higher" policy. Scholarship, we like to think, is international in spirit and cumulative in content. A crisis like the present one brutally reminds us how thin is the veneer of civility on which an institution like this must be founded.

In an immediate sense, it is a source of relief that those of our expeditions whose members were caught in the field by the onset of hostilities were able to terminate their work and depart in good order. Relief but not surprise; our people, after all, are old hands at this business. Effective field programs, however, are not turned off and on at will. Funds, students, assistance from specialists in related disciplines—all must trace their way down the pipeline for an extended period and, once diverted, are not quickly or easily regained. More fundamentally (if also somewhat more surprisingly, in light of popular stereotypes of what archeologists do) interruptions of almost any kind have an adverse effect on the caliber of research.

Good field work does not involve merely a mindless grubbing in a particular ancient site while painstakingly recording everything that is encountered. Keen observation and integrity of recording are essential, but equally essential is the creative tension between evolving theoretical concerns and the ways which are found to amplify or replace them by carrying them “back to the drawing board” which in our discipline only field excavations can provide. Man being pre-eminently a problem-solving animal, once a particular chain of this type is broken, attention shifts to other issues. Uncertainties aroused by crises like the present one threaten to leave scholarly projects like great tree stumps, giving evidence of their vitality in a host of new shoots but for many years leaving a gap in the forest canopy.

Having just returned myself from an extended period of field reconnaissance, I have been made more acutely aware than ever of how vulnerable we are to shifting tides of official policy and popular opinion. To some degree this is entirely beyond our control, particularly in the wake of a major political upheaval. But it is also clear that there are respects in which we in this country have failed heretofore to take what steps are possible to accommodate ourselves to the unfulfilled but rising aspirations and general political ferment that have become permanent characteristics of the area in which we work.

Rising educational costs and costs of travel, for example, have virtually ended the flow of Near Eastern students and postgraduate scholars into our disciplines in American institutions. Not unreasonably, their governments tend increasingly to train them at home or at most send them to Europe, except for engineering and the natural sciences, where American leadership is undisputed. Yet without such students we are deprived of friendship and understanding in the generation to come, as well as gradually becoming isolated from the real conditions under which research in the area must be conducted. Equally important, pressures of time and funds generally have led us into a shortsighted view of the Near East as only the locus for the pursuit of our own research projects. Now the demand is growing in many countries for our participation there in seminars and training programs, as well as for various forms of cooperative research undertakings which serve the same purpose.

Undeniably there are costs and problems associated with meeting these demands. But unless we learn to do so in a positive way, we soon may find that our potential educational contribution is no longer sought or valued—and that the opportunity to conduct research on our own initiative has been lost in the process.

At a time when news reports endlessly reiterate the fragility of international understanding, it is a pleasure to report even the modest efforts in this direction that can be made within the framework of humanistic scholarship and an institution like ours. In August, 1967, the United States is scheduled for the first time to be host to the International Congress of Orientalists. Ann Arbor is the locus that has been chosen for the twenty-seventh of these great triennial gatherings, and an attendance of more than two thousand national representatives and individual scholars is expected. Needless to say, the Oriental Institute will be well represented on that occasion. At its conclusion, furthermore, we will be hosts here in Chicago to the *Rencontre Assyriologique*, one of the important functional groupings of specialists in our field for whose deliberations the Congress itself would provide much too massive and formal a setting. For the *Rencontre* also, the forthcoming meeting of a hundred or so scholars will be its first on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

International understanding of a different sort was at least one goal of the “Turkish Trip” undertaken last October by a group of Oriental Institute supporters under the initiative of a member of our Visiting Committee, Mr. W. Press Hodgkins. While main emphasis was placed on visiting some of the splendid ancient sites with which Turkey is so richly provided, the group’s preliminary preparations included lectures ranging over the development of the country during all time periods. In the sequel, their journey led them deep into the Anatolian countryside, striking off from both the comforts and the clichés of the usual tourist itineraries. They and we owe a debt of thanks to Professor and Mrs. Hans G. Güterbock and to Dr. Ufuk Esin, who jointly provided leadership for the group, and to Dr. Richard L. Chambers, who joined it for a time as a specialist in Ottoman studies.

The sections of the report that follow largely speak for themselves. Since I

have been engaged on a field research problem in Iraq for the entire latter half of the period it covers, there is little I can add from personal knowledge to introduce most of them. My heartfelt thanks are due to Professor George R. Hughes, who took over as Associate Director during my absence and hence made that research possible.

Before turning to the substance of our recent activities, however, note should be taken of the loss during the year of two old friends and former colleagues. Carl H. Kraeling, Professor Emeritus of Hellenistic Archeology and my predecessor in this office from 1950 until 1960, passed away on November 14. More than to perhaps anyone else save for James Henry Breasted himself, the Institute owes its present strength of staff and program to Professor Kraeling's leadership during that critical decade, and it is entirely fitting that a Memorial Fellowship Fund has been inaugurated in his name by a number of his former friends and associates. Contributions to the fund have now reached a total of more than four thousand dollars, giving reason to hope that it may have a significant effect on the critical shortage of fellowship aid for graduate students in archeology from the Near East as well as the United States.

Another loss, later in the year, was that of William A. Irwin, who died on April 22, 1967, at the age of eighty-two. After earlier graduate work in Chicago, Professor Irwin returned to join the Oriental Institute staff in 1930 and served here until his retirement in 1950 as Professor of Old Testament Language and Literature.

It is appropriate also to note with regret at this time that this has been the final year of active service of our Museum Curator, Professor Pinhas Delougaz. In addition to his almost single-handed academic responsibility for the exhibition and growth of the Institute's museum collections, Professor Delougaz has continued the publication series on our pre-war expeditions to the Diyala area in Iraq, has maintained field programs in Iran and Israel, and has served as chairman of the University of Chicago's Committee on Archeological Studies. He plans to continue with not a few of these activities in his retirement, but we shall have difficulty in carrying on without him even in those that remain.

It is a pleasant duty to report a generous grant from the Lassalle Foundation of New York owing to the interest of Dr. Edmundo Lassalle. The major portion of this grant in the area of ancient Egyptian and Coptic studies is making possible in 1966/67 and 1967/68 the publication of *The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II* in fulfilment of a part of our terminal obligation in the Nubian salvage program, and it is providing Lassalle Fellowships for two young men who are completing the work on their doctoral dissertations.

Finally, I should like to express our gratitude to Mrs. John Livingood and the group of volunteers she has organized, for the splendid contribution they have been making to the outreach of our Museum program into schools, clubs, and social groups, and the wider community. The growing interest reflected in membership and attendance figures, as well as the immediate success of the *Suq* or gift bazaar they have opened, are convincing enough, but the spirit of the group is not something which can be conveyed by figures alone. We are all in their debt for an infusion of purpose and vitality that demonstrates anew the importance of genuine two-way communication between the Oriental Institute and the society at large.

