

Dr. BLAIR. Yes, sir. The pooling has enabled us to hold planning conferences. There are additional ones at least planned, but it does not support research. It has been very successful in getting people together to make plans for research, but it certainly cannot support the research projects themselves.

Mr. MOSHER. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DADDARIO. Mr. Mosher.

Mr. MOSHER. Is there any specific reference in the present budget proposals for fiscal year 1968 to this program?

Mr. DADDARIO. My understanding is there is not, Mr. Mosher, but we can check it to make sure.

Dr. BLAIR. Also I would like to say that in my own opinion the most logical place for this money—assuming money does become available as a line item—is the National Science Foundation. The National Science Foundation as the one organization for basic science in Washington would be the logical place for this.

I know there is strategy in perhaps sort of spreading it out but perhaps NSF is the place for it.

Mr. BROWN. May I interrupt at this point?

Mr. DADDARIO. Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. Isn't it quite within the realm of the National Science Foundation to spread this money out through their systems of grants and contracts to provide for its maximum use in connection with this program? This would conceal it, and I don't think we are interested in concealing it.

Dr. BLAIR. No.

Mr. BROWN. But we do want to make sure that it gets out to the stream where it can be the most useful. Isn't it perfectly feasible that NSF can provide this kind of channeling?

Dr. BLAIR. Yes, sir. This is what I had in mind, really.

Mr. DADDARIO. Well, if that is so, it is something we have to take into consideration. I thought this was one of the points Dr. Ripley touched on very well. That it would simply be detracting from funds being used presently in what we feel to be worthwhile enterprises.

Dr. BLAIR. I am thinking of new funds. I am referring specifically to new funds.

Mr. DADDARIO. Although Mr. Brown's point is well taken, the National Science Foundation could swing some of its grant support in this direction.

Mr. MOSHER. Could the National Science Foundation, if it had a line item appropriation for this mission, enter into a contract with the Smithsonian for some specific research?

Dr. BLAIR. I expect Dr. Ripley could speak to that better than I can, but it is my understanding they do this now.

Mr. MOSHER. I don't think Dr. Ripley heard my question.

Dr. RIPLEY. I am sorry.

Mr. MOSHER. My question was: If any new money, say \$80 million or \$50 million for 5 years, became a line item in a Presidential budget, and if it was assigned to the National Science Foundation, are there precedents which would allow the National Science Foundation to contract with the Smithsonian Institution to do a certain amount of work with that money?