

## REMARKS BY RALPH GOMORY

Gail has quite rightly assured me that the most interesting subject that I can talk about tonight is not my views on science, nor my views on industry studies as an observational science, or my views on globalization, or even my favorite subject - the need for a microscope to see things too large to see. Gail has assured me that although people have some mild interest in some of these things there is one subject whose cosmic significance dwarfs all these things that I have named combined.

What is this remarkable subject alongside which physics, engineering, economics, and sociology all pale into insignificance? The remarkable subject consists of one simple question: "Will the Sloan foundation continue to support industry studies?"

Simple answers are best. I have always admired the simplicity of  $E=mc^2$  from which so much has flowed. So I will give a simple answer. The answer to this cosmic question is yes. The Sloan Foundation will continue to support industry studies. Steve Brown who will become chairman in a few months has made clear his intention to build on what is there; he has said that "the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation has built on our founder's vision to create and develop a grant program that has made a real difference and significant contribution to our society... We look forward to building and expanding upon their remarkable success in the years to come."

While no one can bind the future we can measure present intent, and the present intent of those responsible for the future is yes.

Having thus dealt with the main subject I will return to the lesser ones. And to the need for industry studies. In the rapidly changing world in which we live there is an ever-greater

need for real industry studies for real observation and, for real understanding of what is really going on. And that is not easy. The world of companies and industries, like the natural world, is not simple, but full of remarkable organizations.

Those who observe in the natural world we are not surprised if animals, intent on food and survival try to look different from what they are. What looks like a leaf may not be a leaf. We should not be surprised if in the industrial world firms and industries try to look different from what they are in the interests of survival. If it is their interest they will claim shortages of labor or blame their woes on foreign dumping to disguise a less attractive reality and to survive. And we should remember that the press itself does not live by truth alone, but by advertising and a large daily diet of classified ads. And in defense of that diet they too can, if that diet becomes thin, they too can respond in unexpected ways.

No-one is totally disinterested, but there is a real need for relatively disinterested observers, and when it comes to disguises it is much harder to fool a knowledgeable and experienced observer than the casual and almost totally uninvolved novice.

The country and the world need thinkers who can think about the complex industrial events of today with minds containing realistic pictures of what is going on based on what they themselves or others have observed.

I think we have many in this room who are both reasonable and informed. And I am confident that we will have more in the years to come. And the world needs every one of you - thank you very much.