

MATHEMATICS AND THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

(A statement by the policy Committee for Mathematics based upon a report of the Committee on the Needs of Mathematics which can be met by a National Science Foundation.)

It is essential that the greatest flexibility be maintained in the administration of the funds which are made available for mathematics by the National Science Foundation. We feel that the charge of the Mathematics Division of the National Science Foundation, and of any advisory committee which is established should be to advance the welfare of mathematics. The means of doing this should remain a constantly evolving process.

With this in mind we make the following recommendations.

I. Immediately mathematicians should, through the Policy Committee, take steps to insure:

A. That persons are appointed to Foundation posts—both on the Foundation itself and in the responsible Civil Service positions—who are competent and persons of good judgment. We recommend that the Policy Committee inform the proper authorities in Washington, that the Policy Committee holds itself ready to consult with them on matters affecting mathematics connected with the establishment of a Foundation, is concerned to see that competent persons are appointed to the posts in the two roles mentioned above, and in particular wishes to suggest suitable nominations for Membership on the Foundation.

B. A Division of Mathematics of the National Research Council is established whose principal jobs with respect to the Foundation would be to:

1. take whatever steps are appropriate to secure a proper budget for mathematics. Here an assessment of the need should be made carefully, taking account of available talent, and of fields which lie outside the principal interests of organized mathematics, but will not receive support elsewhere;

2. provide for the appointment *in consultation with* the Policy Committee of an Advisory Committee for Mathematics consisting of active mathematicians;

3. maintain proper contacts with other divisions of the National Research Council and with the Social Science Research Council, in order to secure an alert awareness of their needs for mathematics.

II. One of the most acute problems facing mathematics today is the publication problem. We strongly urge that explicit provision be