AAUP Annual Meeting, June 1972

Remarks by Herbert S. Bailey, Jr., Director, Princeton University Press
and President-Elect (1971-1972) of
The Association of American University Presses

I'm going to be brief, as it says in the program, and I have really only
two things to say. One is that the purpose of this Association is to help
its members publish scholarly books. It is a mutual self-help Association.
Its work is carried on by quite a large number of devoted people on commit-
tees, and I'm happy to say that to a large degree the committees for next
year have already been designated. They will be announced. From the
response that I have had so far, I feel very confident that there will be
a lot of very good and very helpful work done during the coming year.

The other thing I have to say is that in adversity--and we have been hearing
a lot about adversity--sometimes one finds friends, other people who are in
trouble, too. Our trouble is that we are having a lot of difficulty pub-
lishing scholarly books. As I have talked with scholars over the past few
months, I think there's an increasing awareness that this isn't just our
problem. It's really the problem of higher education. It's the problem
of scholarship.

We have heard over the years a lot of rubbish, I would say, about publish
and perish. This is not to say that some books have been published that
shouldn't have been published, or that some books have been written for
the wrong reasons. But really scholars write books because they have some-
thing to say, because they want to participate in the onward flow and growth
of their scholarly disciplines. And if we can't publish their books, those
disciplines will not be able to progress.

A man doesn't write without some prospect of publication. Since writing
is a form of thinking, if a man doesn't write, he doesn't think in the same
way about his subject, and some fields that are becoming so difficult to
publish in will perhaps die if publication ceases. This is not just a matter
of concern to us; it's a cultural problem, a problem for our whole society.
It's a problem for scholars. It's a problem for the scholarly associations,
and one thing I think we might do this coming year is to make common cause
with the scholarly associations. I'm going to discuss with the new Board
at the first opportunity the idea of appointing what might be called a Common Cause Committee to explore with some of these scholarly associations how we and they in our adversity, which we share, can work together to do the things that really do need to be done, that are important to be done, and that we are all here to do.