

## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Resolutions committees of the Wilson Society and similar organizations are usually appointed at the annual meeting on an *ad hoc* basis. Their chief duty is to prepare the traditional resolution of appreciation addressed to the local committee and sponsoring organizations. Additional resolutions are sometimes prepared from information supplied to the committee at the meeting; the subjects vary, but usually concern current conservation issues. The chairman normally reads these resolutions at the second business meeting, the presiding officer asks for a vote, and the resolutions are approved by the members present. The Secretary receives the written report, and sends out copies of resolutions as appropriate.

Readers who were present at the 1973 meeting will recall that several resolutions were offered from the floor after the committee's report had been read. Some of these were carefully prepared, whereas others were merely suggested in a letter read aloud; the members were asked, in effect, to approve subject matter upon which the *ad hoc* resolutions committee would then have to draft resolutions that would become a part of the written record without any mechanism for final approval by the membership. These resolutions were, quite properly in my opinion, voted down—not because of lack of merit in the positions represented, but simply because the members that were being asked for approval (thus placing the Society on record as favoring a particular position) were not fully informed about all facts in these issues, some of which are controversial. A similar incident at the 1972 meeting of the Canadian Nature Federation led the Directors of the Federation to abolish resolutions completely.

I believe it appropriate for the membership of the Wilson Ornithological Society to address opinions to individuals and agencies through the mechanism of resolutions, but this action should clearly be taken only after careful consideration of the issues. I am therefore changing the Resolutions Committee from an annual *ad hoc* to a standing committee. Any member who wishes the Society to take a position as expressed by a resolution should send a summary of the facts in the case to a member of the Committee. Before the next annual meeting, the Chairman will send the Secretary a written report, which will be presented to the Council for approval. The report (possibly amended by Council) will be posted during the meeting, and read aloud at the second business session, and approval by the membership asked. No resolutions from the floor will be accepted. During the annual meeting, the Committee will presumably prepare and add to the report the usual resolution addressed to the local groups.

Resolutions to be considered at the 1974 meeting should be sent by 15 April (to allow time for study and circulation among the Committee) to any of the following: Dr. Robert D. Burns (Chairman) (*Department of Biology, Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio 43022*); Dr. Sally Spofford (*Aguila Rancho, Portal, Arizona 85632*); Dr. Sidney A. Gauthreaux, Jr. (*Department of Zoology, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina 29631*).—KENNETH C. PARKES