

ASTD In 1974: New President Comments

the Journal interviews Vincent A. Miller

Journal: Every new ASTD president seems to call for better or more communications within the Society. What's your position on this?

Mr. Miller: There was much improvement in communications in 1973. I hope to continue the work started by John Connors and the ASTD staff into 1974.

In 1973, for the first time in ASTD history, a formalized set of policies was compiled. These policies will be published for all members early in 1974.

Role identification of the Board, Executive Committee, staff and top elected officers is in process.

The *Training and Development Journal* has been changed greatly in the last year and now is more readable and has more current, up-to-date news that is of interest to the members.

Personal contact is the best form of communication. John Connors and I, along with your Regional Vice Presidents and many other elected officers, attended meetings throughout the United States last year. At many of these, in addition to speaking at a formal session, we held informal rap sessions with chapter officers, with Regional Councils and with the total attendance at chapter meetings and Regional conferences. Also, we held sessions at the National Conference. I plan to

continue the personal contact in 1974.

Trainers are communicators. My pledge to you is that I and the staff will work on better methods of communication in 1974.

Journal: What would you like to see ASTD accomplish in government affairs this year?

Mr. Miller: Even though our 1974 budget will not provide for a Washington representative, I want to maintain close contact with Washington and provide information about happenings in the nation's capital to the total ASTD membership.

For several years I have been trying to gain support from people in Washington for a President's Conference on Training and Development. That is still my top goal. However, much training and development influence has been shifted to state and city governments. I would be happy if we could have a Governor's Conference on Training and Development or even several Mayor's Conferences in 1974.

We recognize that much of the governmental control is at the state and local level. As a result in 1974, the ASTD Government and Civic Affairs Task Force will be the group appointed to work with all government agencies. My charges to the task force will include:

- Establishment of a reporting procedure with the ASTD staff so

that information affecting training and development people originating at all government levels can be channeled to the ASTD membership.

- Identification of those ASTD functions or areas of expertise which can be used to improve the Society image in the eyes of government agencies.

- Identify and recommend the ASTD members who can serve on government committees relating to training and development or human productivity.

This task force will also take over the task of producing a handbook of guidelines for the formation of local industry, labor, education *action* councils as approved by the ASTD Board of Directors last February.

Journal: Much has been said, pro and con, about the size of ASTD's membership. How do you feel about this?

Mr. Miller: ASTD's membership will grow, but before the membership grows we have to make it a society that meets the needs of broad-base membership. One of the most important ASTD task forces in 1974 will be headed by John Connors. The work of the Membership and Leadership Task Force can best be described by revealing some of the presidential charges.

- First and foremost, the task force should concern itself with



nization membership, an agency or corporation can maintain a constant number of ASTD members. If one trainer moves from the job, the replacement takes over that part of the membership. We need more people under 25 in the organization. We need more women. We need more minorities. There are many trainers in this group who have never heard of ASTD; who do not know what our organization can do for them. Once they become members, we have to make them first class members. In other words, we have to use them, include them in our activities or we will lose them.

Journal: Beyond what you've just said, how are you going to increase the Society's membership base?

Mr. Miller: I would be dreaming if I thought that I could increase the membership base by appointing a task force or by launching a membership campaign. I'd like to impress upon each member that it is as much his or her responsibility to convince others to join ASTD as it is the responsibility of those whom I specifically charge with membership promotion.

Every member should have an ASTD application blank or know where to get one quickly. Every member should search out potential ASTD members. How can you get a person interested? Share your *Training and Development Journal*. Hang your membership plaque where it can be seen. Share information which you acquired at chapter meetings and tell where you got it. Invite your prospect to attend the next chapter meeting.

Journal: What about the less-experienced trainers; what kind of programming will ASTD offer them?

Mr. Miller: Much of the programming at the National Conference in San Francisco will help the less-experienced trainer. Attending

such a conference is an education in itself for the new trainer. This year's conference is planned to be a real educational experience. In fact, there will be college extension credit available for those who attend. If you add to that the great amount of experience which can be gained by seeing the exhibits and talking to the exhibitors and other trainers, the new trainer will find the conference a truly broadening educational experience.

There will be more opportunities for development at the Summer Institutes in Madison and in articles which appear in the *Training and Development Journal* throughout the year. Next month the *Journal's* theme will be "back to basics." I commend its contents to every newer trainer.

I must add while discussing the inexperienced trainer, that we do not intend to lose sight of the Society's long standing members. There will be plenty of opportunities for them to continue their development.

Journal: What are you doing to help the trainer do a better job of influencing management on the efficacy of training programs?

Mr. Miller: I do not believe that any one person can take credit for helping the trainer do a better job of influencing management. Your question points toward the reason for the existence of ASTD. The Society is constantly working, as are many of its members, to upgrade the image of the trainer.

A strong national Society with strong, active, and growing Chapters, plus active Divisions and individual members who are working to upgrade the training image, will go farther toward helping the trainer to influence management than anything else. My contribution to this effort will be to work toward a stronger ASTD organization.

identifying the membership base needed by ASTD to make it a viable, growing organization. Occupations which need the services and relationships ASTD provides should be specifically identified (Examples: clergy, first line supervisors, students, community trainers.)

- The task force should also concern itself with ways that ASTD can hold the interest of the veteran member and use the talents of life members and other retired or part time trainer members.

- It should suggest and initiate action which must be taken to expand membership. To increase our membership we need to pay close attention to several areas of membership. More emphasis must be placed on organization memberships. Through use of an orga-

Articles in the *Journal* and seminars will give the trainer some assistance in 1974 and help to influence management. One seminar program which I would highly recommend is scheduled for March 4-6. In this seminar, Robert Hays, Dugan Laird and Geary Rummmler will show the trainer how to get management at all levels to support the things you do as a trainer. They will show trainers how to prepare proposals and reports which will influence management. The title of the seminar is, "Getting Management Support for Your Training."

Journal: The training profession world-wide was given a significant boost by the formation of the International Federation of Training and Development Organizations (IFTDO). What will ASTD's role be in this new federation?

Mr. Miller: Our role in the International Federation of Training and Development Organizations will be Secretariat. In other words, ASTD will serve as the information gathering and disseminating agency to assist IFTDO in running smoothly. ASTD has also accepted the responsibility of preparing the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws for this new world organization of trainers.

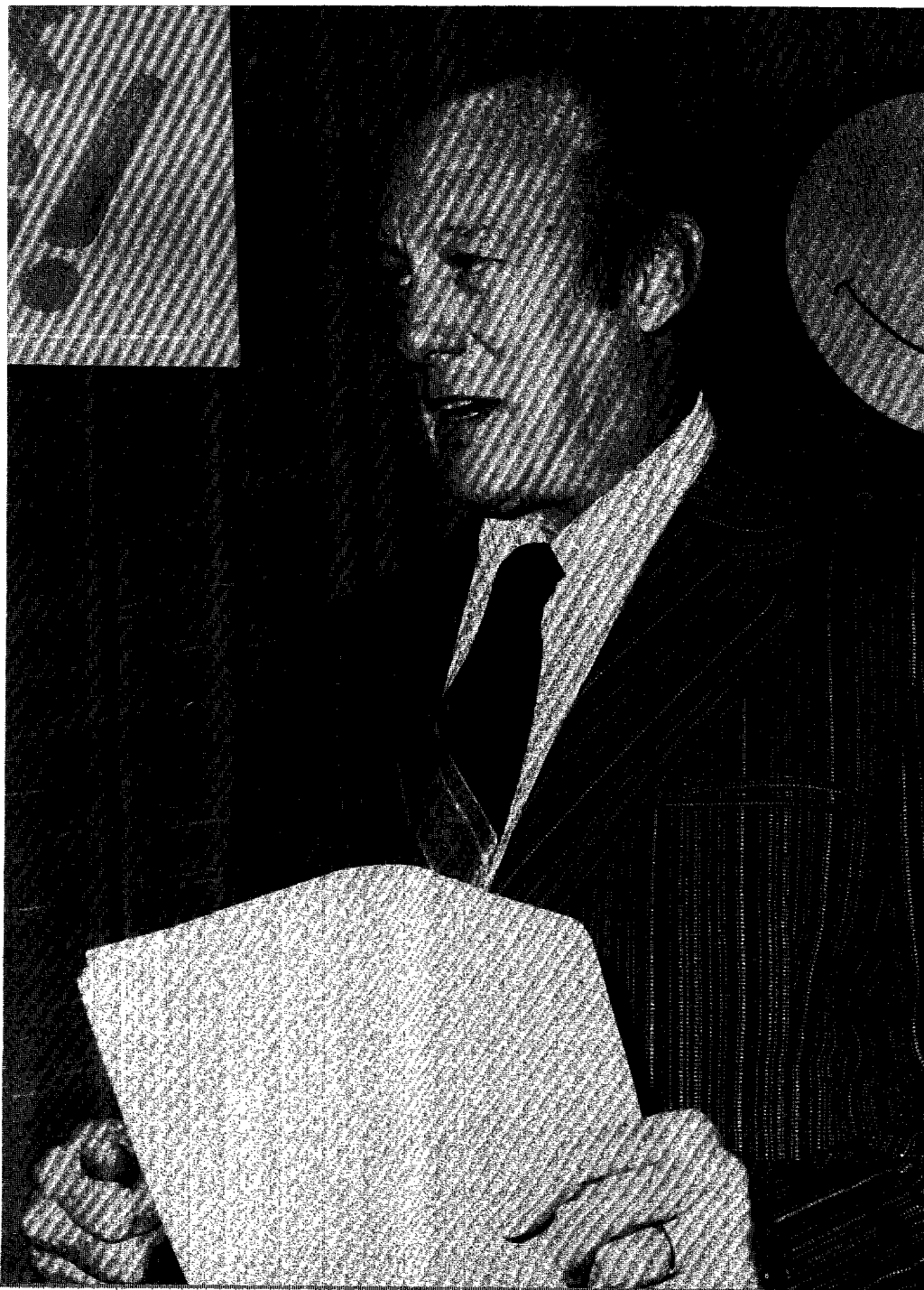
Perhaps this is the first news that some of our members have heard about our organization efforts and affiliation with IFTDO. Therefore, a brief explanation is in order.

Our Society has been active for many years in promoting the development of training organizations in other countries. Forrest Belcher, John Connors and Jim Pearson have been leaders in ASTD's international activities over the past few years. They were instrumental along with the U. S. Agency for International Development in organizing the first International Training and Develop-

ment Conference in Geneva, Switzerland in 1972. Unfortunately, none of them could attend the Second International Conference in Bath, England, so I became the ASTD representative on the steering committee which completed the organization plans for IFTDO. I was assisted by Darius Van Fossen.

On Oct. 2, 1973 representatives of 22 training organizations signed a document indicating that their organizations would become mem-

bers of IFTDO. A meeting of the Council was held to choose a president and executive committee. Tom Jaap, President of the Scottish Training Society was chosen IFTDO president. His society automatically became a member of the Executive Committee. Six other organizations were voted onto the Executive Committee. They were ASTD and training organizations from Norway, India, Israel, Mexico and Australia. The Executive Committee chose me as ASTD



representative to be IFTDO's treasurer.

As you can see, IFTDO is an organization of training societies. It will provide a contact and information system for members of participating societies as they travel throughout the world. It will support a system of exchange training and development information between training societies and their members.

Journal: We understand you are going to pursue and expand on some of the goals and objectives your predecessors initiated. Could you elaborate on these?

Mr. Miller: One of the weaknesses of societies which change presidents each year is the failure of the new president to place emphasis on completing some of the plans which the predecessor in office had made. In ASTD we recognized this weakness. That is why the President-Elect is chosen almost two years before he or she actually assumes office.

Some projects which started even before the presidency of Jack Jenness in 1972 have continued in the development stages through John Connors' administration. They will finally become visible to the membership in 1974. The Professional Development program is a good example. Phase I of this program is nearing completion. A manual outlining the skills needed by the trainer will be available to the membership early this year. Phase II, dealing with a curriculum for trainers, is proceeding according to plan. You will hear more about Phase II in 1974. These two phases must be completed before Phase III (recognition of the professional trainer) can be accomplished. This program will carry on into 1975 when Don Kirkpatrick will be your president.

Another carryover is the Organization Review Task Force. The task force was proposed by John

Connors during Jack Jenness's presidency. The final report of the task force will be made in 1974. Its recommendations will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. Implementation of the recommendations which are accepted will surely carry over into 1975.

The Training Resources Information Service (TRIS), has been in development for several years now. In 1974 progress is being made and the program will be functional to the point where information can be obtained on a demand basis.

Journal: Is there anything we haven't covered which deserves comment from you?

Mr. Miller: Yes, there is. You did not ask me to comment on the reason for the dues increase which became effective January 1.

The Budget and Finance Committee, along with the presidents or president-elects for 1971 through 1975 and the ASTD staff, have been checking into ASTD finances since early last spring. We knew we had to take a close look at some of the profit centers such as the National Conference, exposition and ASTD seminars. Also, we had to take some economy measures in the national office operation.

The printing department was closed down in June because it was more economical to have ASTD printing done by outside sources. By July, printing employees were gone and also one exempt staff employee was gone. These terminations resulted in a salary reduction of \$27,000 for the remainder of 1973.

On August 15, at one of many Budget and Finance Committee meetings, it was decided that an additional five members must be cut from the staff. This was done. In addition, staff travel was curtailed and other economies planned.

We were positive that ASTD could end the year with no more than a \$24,000 loss for the year. John Connors and I were sure that the measures taken were sufficient to keep ASTD on a solid financial base. I, for one, was positive that we would not have to ask for a dues increase.

It was not until October 31 that I learned that the projected deficit for 1973 would be \$87,000. You know the rest of the story. The Board deliberated two days before passing the dues increase as it now stands.

I believe we are now in a solid financial position. The 1974 budget does not have any frills. Reporting procedures have been established to keep us aware of the financial picture. A total accounting of 1973 income and expenses will be published for all members to see. If there are any questions about the ASTD finances, they should be directed to the ASTD staff. However, if there is any difficulty in getting the information you request, I want to know about it.

USE ASTD

Vincent A. Miller is general manager of consumer affairs training at Whirlpool Corporation's Service Training Center, Benton Harbor, Mich. A native of Evansville, Ind., he began at Whirlpool in 1956 as a product service engineer. Before joining Whirlpool, he had been a field service representative for Servel, Inc. A member of ASTD since 1961, he has held every office with the Michiana Chapter, ASTD and has also served as an ASTD regional vice president and national secretary. During his 1973 tenure as ASTD president-elect, he served as chairman of the Administrative Committee, served on ASTD's Executive Committee and developed the first ASTD policy manual. He has also been instrumental in organizing the first world training organization -- the International Federation of Training and Development Organizations.