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JOSEPH V. SMITH		
WILLIAM S. FYFE	}	1965-1967
WALTER D. KELLER		
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Editor of the American Mineralogist  
 E. WM. HEINRICH  
 University of Michigan  
 Ann Arbor, Michigan

## MINERALOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

June 1, 1966

To the Fellows and Members of the Mineralogical Society of America:

At the meeting of the Council of the Mineralogical Society of America at Kansas City on November 3 last, Dr. George Switzer announced his intention to resign as Secretary effective November 1966, and Professor E. W. Heinrich announced that he wished to give up the position of Editor of "The American Mineralogist" effective at the same time. The Council accepted these resignations with regret and with expressions of appreciation for the sterling services performed by these men over a number of years. In order to have time to consider possible replacements, the Council met again in Washington in early December. As a result of that meeting, Professor Ralph J. Holmes of Columbia University has agreed to accept the nomination for Secretary, and his name will appear on this year's ballot for that office. Dr. William T. Holser of the Chevron Research Corporation (La Habra, California) has accepted the appointment as Editor of "The American Mineralogist," effective November 1966.

The Council has also instituted a new committee, to be known as the Program Policy Committee. The purpose of this committee is to examine the programs of the Society, to entertain and appraise proposals for new programs, and to consider activities, such as symposia, special lectures, special meetings, and institutes, by which the Society may most effectively contribute to the advancement of the science of mineralogy. This committee consists of the immediate Past President (as chairman), the Vice President, and three members each serving staggered terms of three years. The Program Policy Committee as now constituted is G. T. Faust (Chairman), F. Chayes, T. Zoltai (1966-68), D. B. Stewart (1966-67), and O. F. Tuttle (1966). Fellows and members of the society are urged to communicate with the chairman or any member of the committee regarding any matter under its preview.

The following amendment, to replace Section I of Article III of the Constitution, will appear on the ballot this year for a vote by the membership:

"The officers of the Society shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer. These four officers, the retiring president, and six fellows at large shall constitute the council. The president and the vice-president shall each be elected annually for a term of one year; no person shall serve more than one term in each office. The secretary and the treasurer shall be elected biennially, in alternate years, for a term of two years, except that the first election following adoption of this amendment shall be for both officers, the secretary to serve a term of two years, and the treasurer a term of one year. No person shall serve in either office more than two terms, whether consecutive or separated. A vacancy occurring in any office between annual election periods may be filled until the next regularly scheduled election and installation of officers by a past incumbent or other fellow, appointed by a two-thirds vote of the council. The six fellows at large for the council shall be elected two each year for terms of three years. No elected fellow shall serve more than one term."

This amendment has been proposed, in accordance with Article V of the Constitution, by a group of 45 fellows and members. The proposers of the amendment state its purpose in the following terms: "(the amendment) is proposed in the belief that the best interests of the Society are served when there is maximum membership participation in, and concern about, the affairs of the Society. The amendment, by placing reasonable limitations on the terms of office for the officers and Council members, will encourage the increased participation."

The principal effect of the amendment, if adopted, will be to limit the period of service of the secretary and the treasurer to a maximum of four years, since the other limitations stated in the amendment have been followed as a matter of custom.

This problem has been considered from time to time in the past. A "Committee on the Length of Officers' Terms" reported in 1957, and the introduction to their report contains the following statement:

"To state the problem in its broadest terms: there is feeling and justification in our Society for regarding all offices in the nature of honorary posts; and for considering that the scientific recognition that election to office inevitably brings, deserves to be as widely distributed as possible among the many well-qualified fellows of the Society; and for believing that, as a consequence, all officers should be on a one-year basis. At the other extreme there is feeling and justification for the point that while a president and vice-president may well be expendable in a one-year period, other of the important offices (Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor) call for experience and continuity, if consistency in policy and steady growth and development of the Society are to be achieved."

This committee recommended election of secretary and treasurer for three-year terms, with the possibility of reelection for not more than two additional three-year terms. The report was accepted by the then council, but no action was taken to implement the recommendation.

This is clearly an important matter for the Society, and I urge you to give it careful consideration before casting your ballot.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Mason,  
President