



Background Notes on the Presidents of Pugwash

Earl (Bertrand) Russell, 1950 Nobel Prize in Literature, a founder of the movement, was its natural head in its initial years.

The formal office of the presidency was established at the Quinquennial Conference in Ronneby, in 1967. The president's role was to "preside over the Annual Pugwash Conferences and, in addition, between Conferences, to offer his counsel and advice to the members of the Continuing Committee and the Secretary-General, and thereby assist them in the execution of the activities of the Movement."

Sir John Cockcroft, joint recipient of the 1951 Nobel Prize in Physics for pioneering work on the transmutation of atomic nuclei by artificially accelerated atomic particles, was elected as the first president in 1967, though he died suddenly ten days later.

Lord Florey, who shared the 1945 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for extraction of penicillin, was then invited to become president, though he also died within weeks.

At that point the Continuing Committee decided to have a rotating presidency for a term of one year, to have that office held by a distinguished person in the country where the annual conference would be held each year.

Francis Perrin (1968), had worked with Frederic Joliot's team to establish in 1939 the possibility of nuclear chain reactions and nuclear energy production.

Mikhail Millionshchikov (1969), an eminent physicist who later became Speaker of the Russian Parliament.

Eugene Rabinowitch (1970), American biophysicist who worked on the Manhattan Project and was co-author with Leo Szilard of the Franck Report and co-founder in 1945 of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

In September 1970, the Continuing Committee switched back to the initial idea of a permanent office of president, with a five year term.

Hannes Alfvén (1970 - 1975), recipient of the 1970 Nobel in Physics for work on his theory of magnetohydrodynamics.

Dorothy Crowfoot Hodgkin (1976 - 1988), recipient of the 1964 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for her determinations by X-ray techniques of the structures of important biochemical substances.

Sir Joseph Rotblat (1988 - 1997), physicist, one of the founders of the Pugwash Movement, co-recipient of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize.

Sir Michael Atiyah (1997 - 2002), a mathematician, was awarded the 1966 Fields Medal, for his work in developing K-theory.

Prof. M.S. Swaminathan (2002 - 2007), agricultural scientist, one of the pioneers of the Green Revolution and recipient of the World Food Prize and the UNESCO Gandhi Prize.

Amb. Jayantha Dhanapala (2007-present), former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs (1998-2003) and career diplomat of the Sri Lankan Foreign Service.