I envision the subject assigned to me by John L. Rhoads, your program director of a year ago, as encompassing a reporting task, which in itself should avoid all areas of controversy. I know, however, that you will forgive me if from time to time in my remarks I stray to a slight degree from my rôle as “reporter” and perhaps express a shading of opinion that might be deemed to be prejudicial on certain of the subjects discussed. It is somewhat difficult to talk authoritatively on “current” trends in corporate reporting so early in the year because when this paper was prepared we had not had an opportunity of reviewing many of the crop of calendar year 1959 reports, which are blossoming in profusion right at this time. However, based on the few latest reports seen, developments in accounting thinking over the past few years, and the prior year reports available, one can arrive at certain conclusions regarding the most recent trends in the reporting of accounting information. Incidentally, it is assumed that we are concerned with reports by corporations to their stockholders and outsiders and the accounting principles that influence the financial statements included in such reports, and not with the multitudinous reports prepared internally for the information and guidance of management.

As a practicing public accountant, I hope you will forgive me for first referring to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants as background for future references to “generally accepted accounting principles.” As most of you know, for many years the AICPA has had a Committee on Accounting Procedure, composed of prominent members of the accounting profession who have served the Committee with distinction for varying periods of time. Since 1938 the American Institute has issued 51 Accounting Research Bulletins formally stating certain principles of accounting that, in the opinion of the Committee, had authority with the accounting profession and the business public concerned with such matters because of their general acceptability. Many of us from time to time have disagreed with some of the conclusions of the Committee, as have individual members thereof, but over the years it has rendered a valuable service to