

. . . letters

awkward position. Second, some of my phraseology, such as "blow the election" has been interpreted as an intolerable political hostility to the President. I cannot deny the awkwardness created by my talk, but we are all dealing with problems that are awkward, or worse, and must bear the discomfort. If there was real confidence that I could be effective at NSF, I believe that a determined effort should have been made to work things out. Some people in Washington were eager to do so, but not all. For my own part, I would have been willing to work especially hard to fulfill the duties of the NSF post, even in the face of political disagreement, because I believe in principle that this must be done.

If my words were intemperate, I bear the responsibility. However, nothing I said can possibly rate as more than minor league in comparison to the provocative language of some members of the present Administration. It is amusing to note that my talk was regarded by some people in our campus community as disgustingly bland.

We are in serious jeopardy if the nation's leaders can not work constructively with people who disagree with a particular judgment and oppose them politically. This does not mean that a person should have a license for unrestrained political activity while he holds a Government appointment. This could obviously render him entirely ineffective in his appointed post. In my own case, I did not hold an appointment on May 1, and do not consider that my remarks were unrestrained. In the cases of the men involved in the shuffle in Health, Education and Welfare, it appears that the victims have made a tremendous effort to both show restraint and work effectively with the system. If those efforts have been unsuccessful, I conclude that there is something desperately wrong with the system.

*George S. Hammond, Ph.D.
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, Calif.*

No exaggeration

The June 6 issue of SCIENCE NEWS contained a short article on page 554 relating to some of the information I had presented at the Toronto meetings of the American Chemical Society and Canadian Institute of Chemists. I would like to indicate that it is essentially correct in all respects. I appreciate the accuracy of such reporting which is in contrast to the wide dissemination of press comment exaggerating (and probably misleading the readership) a single aspect of the entire paper on anti-androgens and male pattern baldness.

This exaggeration of inferences made regarding a minor part of my presentation was enough to elicit a huge mail response from persons looking for a miracle hair grower which does not exist.

Again thank you and your reporting staff for accurately reporting some of the comments made in Toronto.

*Leonard J. Lerner, Ph.D.
Senior Research Fellow
Squibb Institute for Medical Research
New Brunswick, N.J.*

Blood donors

Re: your brief report "Volunteer blood donors present risk" (SN: 7/4, p. 14) of the paper I presented at the recent meeting of the American Medical Association in Chicago.

I was pleased that you saw fit to pick up and further publicize this important information. Your summary, in my opinion, is adequate and accurate.

*Dr. John B. Alsever
Vice President for
Medical Affairs
Blood Services
Scottsdale, Ariz.*

Essential membranes

Miss Culliton wrote a very superior article on our work "Moving molecules across membranes" (SN: 7/11, p. 42) and I must congratulate her for extracting the essence of our investigations. The electron micrograph on the cover was reproduced superbly.

*Dr. David E. Green
Institute for Enzyme Research
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wis.*

Vesta report

I wish to compliment you on the short article "Pigeonite in Vesta" (SN: 6/27, p. 617). The summary of our study of the asteroid Vesta was concise, accurate and informative. I wish other media would take the care to read our articles that your staff must have taken.

*Dr. Thomas B. McCord
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology
Cambridge, Mass.*

Tests for devices

I have read with considerable interest the article on Regulating Medical Devices (SN: 5/23, p. 500).

The article is factual and indicates

an excellent grasp of the problem by the writer. Personally, I would heartily subscribe to the research testing concepts as discussed by Drs. Hastings and Ream of NIH. There is a very definite need for such test facilities in this as well as in many other device-product areas. In my opinion, this will open up entirely new fields for research on various types of medical devices, both therapeutic and diagnostic.

While the necessary legislation for adequate review of medical devices by FDA may be slow in enactment, hopefully we can encourage scientists to accomplish the much-needed research on such products.

*Joseph B. Davis, M.D., Director
Clinical and Medical Devices
Food and Drug Administration
Rockville, Md.*

Results, intent and aim

I read the articles (SN: 7/11, p. 37) describing certain papers presented at the New York Academy of Sciences conference on Drug Metabolism in Man. The articles are very well written and are entirely accurate. It is remarkable how well the author has captured the results that the various investigators presented at the conference. Not only are the findings accurately and fully described, but even the intent and aim of each scientist are well conveyed. It is exceedingly rare to find a reporter covering a science meeting in this extraordinarily competent manner. I wish that more examples of such accuracy in science reporting were evident in our daily newspapers.

*Elliot S. Vesell, M.D.
Pennsylvania State Univ.
Hershey, Pa.*

No prototypes?

It is doubtful that "stiffening opposition from environmentalists" is a reason why utilities will fall short of their goals (SN: 6/6, p. 550). The principal factor in the present power shortage is the failure of nuclear plants to be ready when scheduled, and the slippage is likely to grow because no prototypes for the big reactors coming along were built. The dangers to the public and enormous costs of this forced-draft nuclear development should persuade us to have a sober second look at the peaceful atom.

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of the Environment
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