

to the editor

Military projects

H. W. Adams' letter (SN: 10/3, p. 282) questioned the need for a task force of submarine rescue vessels (SN: 9/12, p. 231) considering that the money might save many more lives if spent on other projects (for example, reducing infant mortality). You answered that the same kind of argument could be applied to the question of whether to put up a traffic light at a busy intersection or add onto the county hospital. Need I point out that there is a tremendous difference in scale (in fact, in basic philosophy) between a traffic light and \$480 million.

Your answer was symptomatic of the kind of thinking currently applied to matters concerning the military or spectacular projects such as space exploration. Many people in the military, the civil government, upper echelons of industry (including communications), etc.—few of whom are starving or suffering from diseases whose cures are well known, but expensive—seem to feel that the people have an obligation to pump billions of dollars into their pet projects. A broader perspective might help these people see the desperate need of the vast majority of the world's people. I agree that setting

priorities is very difficult. Many pressure groups are active, and the average person has an obligation to support his immediate responsibilities. But, when vast sums of public money are involved, the responsibility is broader. Many of those who set priorities frequently seem to see only their own narrow interest, while making no attempt to become familiar with the needs of the millions.

*George F. Kite
Springdale, Pa.*

Credit cropped

In your article "Earthquake and avalanche" (SN: 8/1, p. 94) there is one unfortunate error in credit, due to cropping of the photograph of the Huascarán avalanche. This photograph was supplied to us by the Servicio Aereofotografico Nacional of Peru. If the photo is used in other publications, it should be credited to that organization, not the USGS.

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films OF THE WEEK

WORLD OF THE BEAVER. 16mm, color, sound, 50-min. version or 32-min. version. Presents the life cycle of the beaver by following the development and activities from birth through life with his mate. Underwater footage presents this champion swimmer in an environment to which he is superbly suited. The longer version of the film presents the swimming styles of other animals who use the beaver pond—badger, muskrat, otter, skunk and snake. Particular emphasis is placed on the beaver's ecological role. Audience: elementary, junior high, senior high. Purchase 50-min. version \$650 or 32-min. version \$425 from Media Dept., Dept. SN, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 383 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y. 10017.

ANIMALS AND SWIMMERS. 16mm, color, sound, 28 min. Indiana University's Olympic gold-medal winner in swimming, Charlie Hickox, is seen training under the direction of his coach, who studies the swimming movements of animals and applies these to swimming techniques of his championship teams. He is shown using various research techniques such as studying a swimmer's hand motion underwater during training sessions. The food swimmers eat is also very important, and the basic food groups that his athletes concentrate on are explained. Audience: intermediate, high school. Purchase \$315 or rental \$11.50 from Indiana University, Dept. SN, Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

GROUND WATER: THE HIDDEN RESERVOIR. 16mm, color, sound, 18 min. Starts by explaining the hydrologic cycle—evaporation, rainfall, runoff into streams and oceans, and percolation into the ground—as the way our underground supply of water developed and is continually replenished. Points out that our ground water supply is 35 times greater at any one time than our surface fresh water, and that U.S. ground water would cover the nation to a depth of 100 feet if it were above the ground. Basic terms are defined, including aquifer (water-bearing formation), permeability, zone of saturation, water table and artesian. A section of the film is devoted to unique underground conditions, such as hot springs, geysers and the formation of limestone caverns. Audience: industry, schools, colleges. Purchase and loan information from Ground Water Resources Institute, Dept. SN, 221 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill. 60601.

THE THREE LEGGED STOOL. 16mm, color, sound, 20 min. Shows the three cultures of Fiji and Tonga, islands in the South Pacific—the Fijian, the Indian and the European. The Fijians own most of the land, and adhere largely to old patterns of villages and tribal life. The Indians operate sugar cane plantations or own small stores and businesses. The Europeans have developed mines, commercial enterprises and tourism. All three are dependent on each other for understanding of movements for independence among the South Pacific countries. Audience: high school, adult. Purchase and rental information from ACI Films, Dept. SN, 35 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. 10036.

CELLS: A FIRST FILM. 16mm, color, sound, 11 min. Living things are made of building blocks called cells. Cells are not all the same shape. But all cells have a nucleus, streaming material called cytoplasm, and a membrane. In addition, plant cells have a tough outer covering, the cell wall. Living things may be one cell or many cells in size, but all living things begin life as a single cell. Audience: elementary. Purchase \$140 or rental \$8 from BFA Educational Media, Dept. SN, 2211 Mich., Santa Monica, Calif. 90404.

Listing is for readers' information of new 16mm and 8mm films on science, engineering, medicine and agriculture for professional, student and general audiences. For further information on purchase, rental or free loan, write to distributor.

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