

to the editor

Science legislation

A science legislation section such as the one described in the letter by Joanne Ashley (SN: 6/3/72, p. 354) would be a *tremendous* service. I can't tell you how much time librarians spend trying to track down bills from the vague descriptions ordinarily given in the public press. Details such as the name and number of the bill would speed up the process by a factor of ten.

Please do it! We would all be most grateful.

*Mrs. Phyllis Browning
Librarian
Beckman Instruments, Inc.
Palo Alto, Calif.*

I wish to cast a hearty vote for Ms. Ashley's proposal. As a health scientist, I am most interested in legislative news on medicine. However, I have little or no access to an overview of legislative news in other disciplines. Please consider this suggestion strongly.

*James T. Griffith, M.T. (ASCP)
Microbiologist
Union Hospital
Fall River, Mass.*

I wish to express my strong approval of Miss Joanne Ashley's excellent proposal. This proposed column would add to the publicity which all pending legislation should have. Too often such legislation is allowed to die in committee because interested people may not know about it.

May I suggest that not only should the points Miss Ashley proposes be included in the column, but that it contain a definite editorial stand in favor or against each House or Senate bill.

I am enclosing a copy of S.1184 which ideally fits all the requirements of the column. It proposes a new Department of Science and Technology in the President's Cabinet. It is now before the Senate Committee on Government Operations. It would transfer certain existing agencies and functions to the new department.

Unfortunately, the bill as now written is too limited in scope. . . .

We simply must go to the general public with a defense or even a counter-attack against the humanists and literati who are blaming most of our ills and problems on science and technology. Is it that we think we are secure in our "ivory towers" or too pure to descend into the public squares? Or is it that we are happy to prostrate ourselves before the gods of war and commerce? Whatever it is, we must explain to the masses and defend ourselves or our civilization will crumble even as the Mayan did.

*Byron M. Taylor
San Diego, Calif.*

I agree with Ms. Ashley's suggestion. A comprehensive tabular listing of science legislation is badly needed. By starting

one, you could help make democracy work.

*Ms. Egan O'Connor
Washington, D.C.*

Astronaut dismissals

I read in SCIENCE NEWS of the apparent firing of some of the astronauts (SN: 6/10/72, p. 374). Many of the 1965 and 1967 scientist groups hoped to land on the moon, but only one 1965 scientist will. Most of the 1966 pilots will have flown by the end of Skylab but none of the 1967 group will fly. These men had it toughest of all: limiting research while spending a year at flight school, only to get kicked out a few years later. Surely those astronauts have had their dreams shattered, the hope and high expectation of going into space completely extinguished. What should be done is to remove those that have flown three and four times and make room for the others that have not had a chance to fly. The rookies who have waited five or six years should be regarded as the spacemen for all future programs.

*Bob Kozon
Seymour, Conn.*

"It's like being tossed in the garbage can!"

About these space heroes or prima donnas! Have them stand up on that garbage heap, shake off their bewilderment and dismay, open their eyes, and they will see they are not alone. There is the assembly line worker, the mechanic, the machinist, the teacher and many others on that garbage heap with them. They too must grin and bear the same headache. Not just NASA, but the whole industrial complex must hopefully find a cure and preventive medication for this class of disease.

Being unemployed for two and a half years I have empathy for these heroes, but that's the way the ball bounces.

*Vernon Fierre
(unemployed electronics technician)
Monrovia, Calif.*

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films OF THE WEEK

ANTIMATTER. 16mm, color, sound, 14 min. With the use of full character animation, the film explains what antimatter is, how it was discovered, and discusses the more recent postulations that large quantities of antimatter are existing in space. In addition, the film demonstrates the meaning of Einstein's famous equation, $E=MC^2$, the annihilation process (the result of matter and antimatter colliding), and the significance of the Tunguska meteor. Approaching its subject in a light manner, the film creates an atmosphere for discussion not only of basic science but of philosophical questions dealing with the importance of pure research in society today. Audience: elementary, high school, college. Purchase \$200 or rental \$25 from American Educational Films, Dept. SN, P.O. Box 5001, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210.

THE CELL: A FUNCTIONING STRUCTURE, PART I. 16mm, color, sound, 30 min. Presents a look at the cell, the basic unit of life. Emphasis is placed on the cell as a dynamic, functioning entity as well as a stable, reproductive structure. Dr. David Suzuki, University of British Columbia, Canada's leading geneticist, is featured. Included are live action sequences and discussions on mitosis, cell structure, cell membrane structure and function, and the aging of molecules as a part of life and death. Audience: high school, college, graduate, professional. Purchase \$325 or rental \$30 from CRM Productions, Dept. SN, 9263 W. 3rd St., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210.

THE CELL, A FUNCTIONING STRUCTURE, PART II. 16mm, color, sound, 30 min. Concentrates on chemical events taking place within the cell. It details protein composition, leading to a discussion of the genetic code and DNA. The structures of the nucleotides that make up the two chains of DNA are illustrated. Sickle cell anemia is used to demonstrate how a single mistake in DNA can result in bodily malfunction. The film features Dr. David Suzuki, Dr. Richard McIntosh, and Dr. Lynn Margulis. Audience: high school, college, graduate, professional. Sale \$325 or rental \$30 from CRM Productions, Dept. SN, 9263 W. 3rd St., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210.

A MAN'S REACH SHOULD EXCEED HIS GRASP. 16mm, color, sound, 23½ min. Presents the story of flight and of man's reach for a new freedom through aviation and the exploration of space. From the Wright brothers' flight at Kitty Hawk to the landing on the moon and future missions to the planets. Through the use of multiple images, the creative role of research is emphasized. Voices of scientists and statements by writers, poets, and philosophers document man's search for knowledge. Purchase \$99.75 from National Audiovisual Center, Dept. SN, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C. 20409 or rental information from Office of Public Affairs, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Washington, D.C. 20546.

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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