

# to the editor

## Industrial democracy?

In the letter Ralph W. Muncy wrote about an "industrial democracy" (SN: 7/29/72, p. 67) he states that all of the world's problems can be solved as soon as the working people "of society declares its independence of the capitalist class and its governmental agents and establishes an industrial democracy." In this so-called "industrial democracy," the "goods and services will be produced for the use and benefit of all the people."

Muncy seems to feel that people are either exploited or are exploiters and that there must be a total overthrow or there will be no change. Muncy's ideas are very similar to the ideas of Karl Marx. He seems to be calling for the working people to start a revolution against the business and governmental leaders to siege control of production and distribution for the establishment of a Socialist or Communist government.

I find it deplorable that a letter full of political propaganda, like Muncy's, is printed in such a very fine *science* reporting magazine as SCIENCE NEWS.

Tom Lash  
Stone Mountain, Ga.

## Schizophrenia

The article on schizophrenia (SN: 7/22/72, p. 58) is, by and large, well done. Of course, I would take issue with any statement that denies a role to heredity in schizophrenia. The fact that neither Kaplan nor anyone else has been able to locate the chromosome along which the culprit gene or genes may reside proves nothing at all. We could make the same statement about Huntington's chorea or many other genetic diseases, but that does not rule out the genetic evidence with respect to those diseases.

With respect to birth complications, all the best evidence suggests that such factors do not in and of themselves cause schizophrenia. What they may do is make gene carriers more vulnerable to the disorder. But that's all.

David Rosenthal, Ph.D.  
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National Institute of Mental Health  
Bethesda, Md.

## Energy solutions

In the wake of your informative articles on solar energy and hydrogen as a fuel, your readers may be interested in an in-

triguing method of energy collection in which significant rates of hydrogen production may be attained by direct thermal dissociation of water (using inexpensive plastic Fresnel lenses), and the subsequent preferential diffusion of hydrogen through palladium windows. (Palladium and some alloys allow surprisingly high "flow" rates of hydrogen only, while excluding other gases.)

The authors of this proposal, Dr. Norman Ford and Dr. Joseph Kane (BULLETIN OF ATOMIC SCIENTISTS, Oct. 1971, p. 27-31), found it to be comparatively uncomplicated and to have significant economic merit in terms of construction and operation. In fact, their rough estimates put construction at about half that of a currently proposed 1,000-megawatt nuclear plant and with the elimination or reduction of some of the latter's disadvantages such as dangerous by-products, thermal pollution, high transportation costs and energy storage.

However, even if this scheme is not the "Wankel engine of energy production," I hope that SN will continue its journalistic search for solutions to our energy crisis.

John Bluege  
Multitec  
Amherst, Mass.

## Skyjacking

I hope the measures suggested in the article on skyjacking (SN: 7/22/72, p. 52) will be put into effect. As an occasional air traveler I would like to know adequate measures were being taken to control these crimes.

The article states that more than 450 passengers and crew members have been murdered. Is that figure accurate?

Richard P. Storrs, M.D.  
St. Vincent's Hospital  
Los Angeles, Calif.

*(The figure actually was for the number killed during aircraft sabotage incidents world wide since 1947. According to the FAA, the total is now up to 512. The number of skyjacking victims is much lower: 5 passengers and crewmen in the U.S. since 1969 and an estimated 14 elsewhere—Ed.)*

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# films OF THE WEEK

**BIGHORN.** 16mm, color, sound, 10 min. The bighorn sheep of the Rocky Mountains are the subject of this brief exploration of their habitat and their habits. The close-up and telephoto photography capture these beautiful creatures in candid poses, and in slow motion we see their unusual custom of ramming each other in head-on collision. Audience: high school, general. Purchase \$145 or rental \$14.50 from Contemporary Films/McGraw-Hill, Dept. SN, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N. Y. 10020.

**RIO GRANDE: WHERE FOUR CULTURES MEET.** 16mm, color, sound, 15¼ min. The cultural and economic interdependence and interaction of Mexican, Spanish, Indian and Anglo-American peoples of the Rio Grande Valley are explored. Each culture contributes to the unique characteristics of the region through which the Rio Grande flows. Some of the contributions of the Mexicans and Indians are crops, cattle ranching, architecture, arts and crafts, food and language. Political and economic cooperation between the United States and Mexico has resulted in major irrigation and flood control projects encouraging maximum utilization of resources to the benefit of both countries. Audience: elementary, junior high. Purchase \$200 or rental \$8.50 from BFA Educational Media, Dept. SN, 2211 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica, Calif. 90404.

**TO SEEK . . . TO TEACH . . . TO HEAL.** 16mm, color, sound, 28 min. A film about the suspense of trying to save the life of a three-year-old boy afflicted with a baffling blood disease. The protagonists are the medical heroes as portrayed in television dramas but brought to life by actual physicians, scientists, technicians and nurses fighting mankind's common enemy, disease, in the laboratory battlefield. The film shows one doctor's painstaking search from one end of the country to the other enlisting the aid of colleagues to find a life-saving solution to the three-year-old's virulent disease. Audience: general. Free loan to adult organizations from Association-Sterling Films, Dept. SN, 866 3rd. Ave., New York, N. Y. 10022.

**THE TREE THAT PUT THE CLOCK BACK.** 16mm, color, sound, 51 min. When doubts about the accuracy of radiocarbon dating arose, scientists began to work with the bristle-cone pine tree found in the White Mountains of California. This pine can live for thousands of years, and when its annual growth rings are counted, its exact age can be determined. By calculating the precise age of the bristle-cone pine, then analyzing samples of its wood by radiocarbon dating, scientists determined the discrepancies in the carbon 14 dating method and adjusted the time scale previously in use. The new dating system reveals that various cultures were independently developing either before or concurrently with the Middle East. The new dating system indicates that Maltese culture predates Egypt, and Stonehenge was built 400 years earlier than previously supposed. Audience: general. Purchase \$500 or rental \$50 from Time-Life Films, Dept. SN, 43 W. 16th St., New York, N. Y. 10011.

**V.D., A NEW FOCUS.** 16mm, color, sound, 16 min. Through subtle combinations of reality and drama, young people from locations throughout America present the problem themselves, and outline the answers for treating venereal disease. The film presents the entire scope of the problem—the medical facts, the myths and the attitudes of young people concerning VD that often prevent prompt treatment. Audience: high school. Purchase \$235 or rental \$25 from American Educational Films, Dept. SN, 331 N. Maple Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210.

*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.*