

OF THE WEEK

research budget for '75 . . .	
. . . science: largest ever	84
. . . energy: nearly doubled	84
. . . space: slight increase	84
mariner views venus	85
chemical boost to immunity	86
alaskan oil spills	86
40 top young scientists	87

RESEARCH NOTES

energy	90
physical sciences	91
aerospace	91

ARTICLES

tackling tropical diseases	88
variable-gauge universe	92

DEPARTMENTS

letters	83
books	94
films	95

COVER: Indian health workers stalk malaria-carrying mosquitoes in forests and marshes—one of many projects being undertaken throughout the world to eradicate tropical diseases. See p. 88. (Photo: WHO)

Publisher E. G. Sherburne Jr.
Editor Kendrick Frazier
Senior Editor and
Physical Sciences Dietrick E. Thomsen
Senior Editor and
Behavioral Sciences Robert J. Trotter
Biological Sciences Joan Arehart-Treichel
Science and Society John H. Douglas
Space Sciences Jonathan Eberhart
Writer/Copy Editor Lisa J. Shawver
Assistant to the Editor Esther Gilgoff
Production Manager Davida Daemon
Books Margit Friedrich
Circulation Manager Lawrence Cope
Advertising Scherago Associates, Inc.
11 W. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10036
Fred W. Dieffenbach
Sales Director

Copyright © 1974 by Science Service, Inc.,
1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.
Republication of any portion of SCIENCE NEWS
is strictly prohibited.

Subscription Department
231 West Center Street
Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$10; 2 yrs., \$18; 3 yrs., \$25. (Add \$2 a year for Canada and Mexico, \$3 for all other countries.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is required. Please state exactly how magazine is to be addressed. Include zip code.

Printed in U.S.A. Second class postage paid at Washington, D.C. Established as Science News Letter © in mimeograph form March 13, 1922. Title registered as trademark U.S. and Canadian Patent Offices.

Published every Saturday by SCIENCE SERVICE, Inc., 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. (202-785-2255). Cable SCIENSERV.

Ode to Kohoutek

Here is something that materialized at the time of Comet Kohoutek's closest approach to earth:

Yes, Lucy, Comets Are Made of Snow!
Has anybody here seen Kohoutek,
The comet with the great P.R.?
We've all got comet-watcher's neck
But we've seen no comet so far!!
We've strained our eyes for that
shining tail—

Looked for the glow that was not a star;

Taken a high-priced ocean sail
To find comet-tail glow in a cocktail bar.

O, the public gets snowed by cereal,
Toothpaste, nail polish and glamor cars;

And now by such things immaterial
As off-again, on-again shooting stars!!
O, Kohoutek, thy name is legion,
'Specially in the Mad. Ave. region!!

*James Fanning,
Mount Kisco, N.Y.*

The quest itself

I am rather surprised at one of the points made in L. Stevenson's letter (SN: 1/19/74, p. 35). He says that if conclusive results in physics research are not to be found (at least quickly), then the research is uninteresting, merely hard work. A good part of the excitement of research, any research, comes from the research per se, not from the final results.

Furthermore, only a handful of physicists contributed to relativity and quantum mechanics. This certainly shouldn't imply that the majority of physicists involved in more "mundane" fields find no reward.

*Larry Paul
Flushing, N.Y.*

'Review,' yes; statistics, no

I would like to commend you for your "Science News of the Year" carried in the Dec. 22-29 issue. It helped to reinforce many of the science achievements made over the last year which might otherwise easily have been smothered and forgotten in the voluminous news coverage presented. I cast my vote for making the summary a regular annual feature.

I wish, though, that your otherwise fine

reporting would show a little more concern for statistics. Take, for example, the article "Russians now in space too" in the same issue, in which you state ". . . Soviet space planners, however, have been less reluctant than their U.S. counterparts to send all-rookie crews into orbit. Of the 30 U.S. manned space flights, only 10 have included an astronaut who has flown one or more times before. . . . Only six of the 20 manned Soviet flights have carried a 'veteran'."

A simple 2x2 test on the proportions shows them to be significant only at about the .90 level (only about 1 chance in 10 that there is a true difference)! In short, the numbers could be reported as news but the remainder of the conclusions should not.

*Frederick P. Kent
Xerox Statistical Analysis
El Segundo, Calif.*

Oil-crisis article

The article entitled "The oil crisis: A whodunit for the great Holmes" (SN: 1/19/74, p. 36) is very poor reporting. At best, it is very naive.

It is nothing but a cute scenario based on the assumption that a conspiracy must exist. It certainly is not an objective piece of reporting such as one might expect from a science-oriented publication presumably trying to get at the true facts.

You have lost your credibility and I am canceling my subscription to SCIENCE NEWS.

*Dayton H. Clewell
New York, N.Y.*

If Science News must editorialize ("The oil crisis") please assign topics to qualified personnel. We have enough Jack Andersons without SN joining the ranks.

*D. N. Penton
Penton & Penton
Oil and Gas Properties
De Quincy, La.*

One thousand thanks to both SCIENCE NEWS and John Douglas for the oil crisis article. From where I sit it has been established for years that the country is run by big business. . . . Are we supposed to believe that the largest and wealthiest industry in the world is incapable of forecasting or planning ahead in such a way as to avoid this catastrophe?

*Ben Drisko
Camden, Me.*

SCIENCE SERVICE

Institution for the Popularization of Science founded 1921; a nonprofit corporation

Board of Trustees—Nominated by the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE: **Athelstan Spilhaus**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; **Deborah Partridge Wolfe**, Queens College of City University of New York; **Bowen C. Dees**, The Franklin Institute. Nominated by the NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES: **Frederick Seitz**, Rockefeller University; **Gerald F. Tape**, Associated Universities; **Allen V. Astin**, National Academy of Sciences. Nominated by the NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL: **Glenn T. Seaborg** (President), University of California, Berkeley; **Gerald Holton**, Harvard University; **Joseph W. Berg Jr.**, National Research Council. Nominated by the JOURNALISTIC PROFESSION: **O. W. Riegel** (Secretary), Washington and Lee University; **Norman Cousins**, "World"; **Julius Duscha**, Washington Journalism Center. Nominated by the E. W. SCRIPPS TRUST: **John Troan**, Pittsburgh Press; **Milton Harris** (Treasurer), Washington, D.C.; **Edward W. Scripps II** (Vice President and Chairman of the Executive Committee), Edward W. Scripps Trust.

Director: E. G. Sherburne Jr.; Assistant Director: Dorothy Schriver; Business Manager: Donald R. Harless; Things of Science: Ruby Yoshioka.