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Letters

A complicated case

You report incorrectly that District Judge Adrienne Duplantier found that the Louisiana creation-science law violates the First Amendment of the Constitution ("Creation law voided," SN: 12/4/82, p. 358).

The case is more complicated. The judge ruled that the statute violates the state constitution. Specifically, the court held that pursuant to the state constitution, only the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and not the legislature had the power to fix curriculum. This issue was raised by lawyers representing the BESE, which had switched sides from that of defendant to plaintiff.

The decision will undoubtedly be appealed by the state's Attorney General. If the original finding is upheld, well and good, if it is struck down, the case will return to Judge Duplantier's court for resolution of the federal constitutional claims.

While not as dramatic as the Arkansas victory, the decision is significant because there are many states with similar constitutional provisions which remove curriculum decisions

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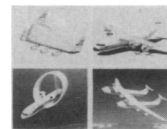
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26 The Shape of Wings to Come

Cover: With the help of new materials and technologies, future airplanes may look radically different from current aircraft designs. The dual-fuselage and delta-wing aircraft are designed to carry large cargoes, while the ring-wing concept offers potentially lower drag and lighter weight. New propeller designs also promote fuel efficiency. (Illustrations: Lockheed-Georgia Co.)



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from the influence of political pressures. NABT is pleased with the decision and the role it has played as co-plaintiff.

Wayne A. Moyer, Executive Director
The National Assn. of Biology Teachers, Inc.
Reston, Va.

Readers should know that the judge noted that the Louisiana Supreme Court might uphold the Balanced Treatment Act under the state constitution. Lawyers are appealing Judge Duplantier's immediate decision without trial, and are requesting court certification of the Balanced Treatment case to the Supreme Court of Louisiana, which means that a full trial still is expected.

John N. Moore
Professor Emeritus, Natural Science
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Mich.

Misused words

In the article "Reagan's MX 'Peacekeeper' Draws Fire" (SN: 12/4/82, p. 356) a word is used, possibly repeating Reagan, which I think should have been avoided. It is: christened, as in "Rea-

gan christened them his 'peacekeepers.'" If it is a direct quote, it should have been set off in quotation marks, as the word "peacekeeper" was so aptly done. If not, a different word could have been used.

Many present-day Christians take affront at usage of this word in connection with a weapon of potentially terrible mass destruction and find it to be insensitive, callous and unnecessary. Yes, I know, it is frequently used in naming battleships or even pleasure boats, but that does not make it any more acceptable.

Another word much misused lately is "defense," as in "defense" spending, when "military" or "Pentagon" would be much more accurate and appropriate.

Words induce pictures in peoples' minds. Used often enough they may lead to actions, which some perhaps deliberately want, but which others decry.

Karl E. Buff
Mtn. Home, Ark.

Correction: The article on changes in properties of deep water in the North Atlantic (SN: 12/18 & 25/82, p. 392) should have specified a slight decrease, not increase, in temperature.

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