

# SCIENCE NEWS®

The Weekly Newsmagazine of Science

A Science Service Publication  
Volume 126, No. 9, September 1, 1984

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Subscription Department  
231 West Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302

Subscription rate: 1 yr., \$27.50; 2 yrs., \$47.50;  
3 yrs., \$67.00. (Foreign postage \$5.00 additional per  
year.) Change of address: Four to six weeks' notice is  
required. Please state exactly how magazine is to be  
addressed. Include zip code. For new subscriptions  
only call (1) 800-247-2160. Printed in U.S.A. Second  
class postage paid at Washington, D. C. 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)  
ISSN 0036-8423

## Letters

### Burning issue

This is a response to Mr. Ring's letter concerning our coal burning pulsating combustor ("Coal burns best in pipes that hum," SN: 5/5/84, p. 278), which appeared in your June 30 issue. We have spent a great deal of time during the last several years trying to understand the intricacies of the complex fluid mechanical and combustion processes which occur inside our pulsating combustor. While we have made much progress in this search, we cannot say that we fully understand all of the processes. We do know, however, that the intensification of mass, momentum and energy transport processes by the pulsations within the combustor

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Cover: Most of the cars in this 1963 photograph have already made it to the scrap heap, and many were grist for the recycling mill. When today's cars, which contain up to 400 pounds of a mixture of plastics and fibers, reach the end of the road, recycling the materials will be much more difficult. Although methods for recycling polymer mixtures are being developed, few markets exist for recycled plastics.



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is primarily responsible for the attainment of superior combustion and heat transfer processes. Contrary to what is stated in Mr. Ring's letter, the pulsations do not result in vibrations of the grid that supports the coal particles and, in general, they do not result in the shaking of the layer of ash that accumulates on the metal grid.

The phenomenon which Mr. Ring observed while barbecuing in his backyard can be readily explained by simple combustion principles and it has nothing to do with the operation of our pulsating combustor.

Ben T. Zinn  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Atlanta, Ga.

### 'A disgrace and a betrayal'

"Enforcing the Law: EPA's Toxics Problem" (SN: 7/21/84, p.36) is an impressive article and calls proper attention to this most distressing problem. Many of us feel that the current federal administration policy relative to toxics and other environmental problems is a disgrace and a betrayal of the entire American public. The President's representatives are in direct contrast to the actions of the federal government in this field.

Luther L. Terry, M.D.  
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SEPTEMBER 1, 1984

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