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Letters

Gallo faults ORI, Pasteur Institute

The Office of Research Integrity (ORI) report cited in "AIDS codiscoverer censured for misconduct" (SN: 1/9/93, p.20) was written by nonscientists overturning an earlier draft written by scientists. The negative findings had to do with a single sentence in our paper published in SCIENCE in 1984. Nonetheless, the ORI report clearly stated that our findings were of great value. It recognized that our laboratory provided the key data that led to the conclusion that HIV was the cause of AIDS, was the first to properly grow HIV in cell lines, and was key to the development of the blood test that has by now saved countless lives. Regarding the controversial statement, it was at most ambiguous. There was never an attempt to mislead anyone.

Michael Epstein, the lawyer representing the Pasteur Institute, claims that I and the U.S. government made false statements in 1986 in

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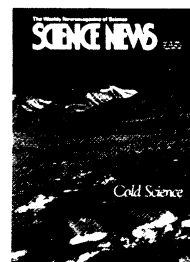
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Cover: Since the early days of Antarctic exploration, scientists from all disciplines have flocked to the frozen continent to study sites such as Taylor Valley (shown here). But decades of environmental mismanagement in Antarctica have caused problems that today's polar researchers must address. (Photo: Richard Monastersky)



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Science Service, which publishes SCIENCE NEWS, is a nonprofit corporation founded in 1921. It gratefully accepts tax-deductible contributions and bequests to assist its efforts to increase the public understanding of science, with special emphasis on young people. More recently, it has included in its mission increasing scientific literacy among members of underrepresented groups. Through its Youth Programs it administers the International Science and Engineering Fair, the Science Talent Search for the Westinghouse Science Scholarships, and publishes and distributes the *Directory of Student Science Training Programs for Precollege Students*.

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connection with the AIDS blood test patent dispute. This is completely untrue and simply represents an attempt by the Pasteur to reopen the 1987 patent settlement between the United States and France and obtain more royalty money — regardless of the adverse impact on AIDS research.

Robert C. Gallo
Chief, Laboratory of Tumor Cell Biology
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Md.

Unintended consequences?

Your brief article on Hexaflumuron ("Long-term protection from termites," SN: 1/9/93, p.27) sent me into a panic. How do we manage to prevent this "time bomb" from going off in sowbugs, ants, springtails, centipedes, and other insects that are attracted to rotting wood? How is it prevented from being carried by water or the work of earthworms to other areas to affect other insects not part of the decomposition team? As it washes out of the

soil or is spilled in transport, are we to expect crab, shrimp, and prawns to also cease to molt? Have I heard a story like this before?

Janet M. Bingham
Powell River, British Columbia

Fatty acids and gene expression

Regarding "Awakened Gene Aids Inherited Anemias" (SN: 1/23/93, p.52), the flavor enhancer butyrate may have uses besides ameliorating the effects of sickle cell anemia and beta-thalassemia. As fetal hemoglobin has more oxygen-carrying ability than postnatal hemoglobin, it may be possible to use butyrate, which switches on the gene responsible for making fetal hemoglobin, to treat illnesses caused by reduced lung function, such as emphysema, silicosis, and black lung syndrome.

James G. Parsons
Rapid City, S.D.

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