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Letters

Another twist in the info highway

Although I am against government involvement to the extent of establishing a "telecommunications authority," as proposed by a recent gubernatorial nomination candidate, I disagree with the readers who object to government involvement in the information highway (Letters, SN: 7/30/94, p.67).

The interstate highway system instituted during the Eisenhower administration should be viewed as a model for the information highway, from the perspective of how all the stakeholders — government, carriers, vendors (services, hardware, software), educators, business, and the public at large — will benefit. The interstate system was conceived primarily as a means of providing more efficient access to markets. It turned out to be a creator of markets. For example, the price of commercial real estate decreases (almost exponentially) with distance from the closest interstate access ramp.

At this stage in the growth of the informa-

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Cover: Positron emission tomography (PET) scans obtained during a simple mental task reveal considerably more brain activity in a mentally retarded individual (left) than in a person with above-average intelligence (right). This finding and other new PET data explore how intelligence derives from an interplay of efficient brain functioning and greater information-processing capacity. (Image: Richard J. Haier)



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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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tion highway, it also must be viewed as a market generator.

*Darwin L. Hatheway
Augusta, Maine*

Findings of fluid jet technology

I am not sure I see anything in the work of Nagel *et al.* ("Cascades from a dripping faucet," SN: 7/30/94, p.79) that expands on the work of Lord Rayleigh. As to the question, "Can we control the noise and do something to the drop?" it has long been answered.

Controlled perturbation of a fluid column or jet is the basis of ink jet (fluid jet) technology. I have worked on continuous-flow fluid jet systems used to produce high-resolution printing on paper and lower-resolution printing on fabric. Both of these were perturbed by piezoelectric devices.

Drop-on-demand fluid jet systems have been designed to dispense picoliters of reagents, adhesives, solder fluxes, solder, and other materials. There are many patents extant in the field. The volume of research done in industry

on all aspects of fluid behavior in jetted applications is mountainous. Countless studies have addressed the characteristics of wetted materials, ambient air flow effects, influence of electrical fields, effects of temperature, pressure, and contaminants, and so on.

*Hal Bayman
Plano, Texas*

Nasal radium hotline number

The article "Reassessing Radium's Risks" (SN: 9/10/94, p.172) was of special interest to me because I received that gross nasal radium treatment as a boy.

I tried but was unable to find a phone number for the Submarine Survivors Group. I'd like to contact the group so that I can stay informed on the latest news on this subject. Would you please tell me how I can reach them?

*Pete Fisher
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

Many readers have asked us for the hotline number. It is (617) 471-5647.

— The Editors

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