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Published as a public service in cooperation with The Advertising Council and the Council for Financial Aid to Education



LETTERS

To the Editor

Indian Education

Sir:

Your article, “Indian Education” (SN: 6/3) was of great interest. The lack of progress in education of the American Indian is common knowledge to all who have worked with American Indians.

The “basic reforms” which were called for in your article cannot be representative of the desires of the American Indians. Robert A. Roessel’s research was limited to a small number of the total population of the American Indians.

Suggestions by Roessel for educating the American Indians are dangerous. The greatest aims of the Papago Indians can only be met through education. This education must far exceed a vocabulary of 50 words, courses in cooking and automechanics.

A curriculum suggested by Roessel is aimed at keeping the American Indians in “chains of ignorance” and dependent upon the “great-white-father” for guidance. If this is the course that is to be taken in Indian education, then the only criticism that can be aimed at the Bureau of Indian Affairs concerning education is that they have over-educated.

H. W. Merchant, Superintendent
Indian Oasis School
Sells, Ariz.

(see *Indian Education*, p. 13)

Blind Hope?

Sir:

The work of Drs. Bach-y-Rita and Collins on a tactile visual prosthesis (SN:5/13) represents another in the steps in bioengineering launched after World War II to aid the blind. I should like to give the general reader a bit of information, in the spirit of encouragement, but also caution the scientist who wishes to aid the blind.

Some history of efforts to provide a visual prosthesis can be found in Paul Zahl’s book, *Blindness: Modern Approaches to the Unseen Environment*, Hafner Publishing Company, New York, 1962. Tactile and auditory information from “electronic eyes” have been investigated quietly by many scientists and engineers during the last 20 years both here and abroad.

Concomitant research and development in reading machines has also gone a bit further than was mentioned in the *SCIENCE NEWS* article, since in at least one design words and sentences are the

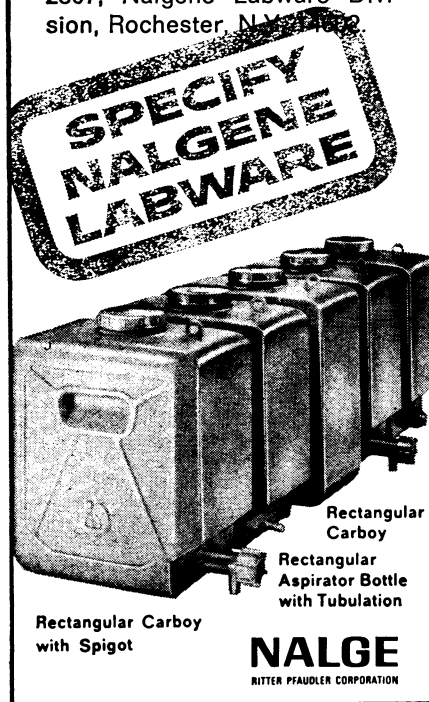
(See p. 6)

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