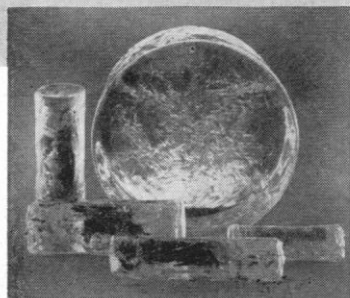


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## Letters

### Role of Scientific Societies

I was interested in the editorial in the 10 January issue of *Science* [127, 57 (1958)]. We are particularly sensitive to the point which you mentioned of the difficulty of knowing just what one can say for science as a whole. It seems to me, however, that there are certain things which can be said upon which all scientists agree—things that should be said.

I have in mind, for example, the importance of a rigorous basic education in science, which a large portion of our informed citizenry should have. Further, all scientists will probably agree on the need for greater emphasis on basic research and a better understanding on the part of the public of the importance of basic research. Unless the scientist, or an organization representing scientists, speaks out for such things, scientific progress is very likely to suffer. In other words, it seems to me that scientists, with the special training and talents that they have, should combat, in some form or other, the great anti-intellectual forces which seem to develop almost automatically in a free society.

ELMER HUTCHISSON

American Institute of Physics,  
New York, New York

### Double Standard?

The recent editorial in *Science* entitled "The Horse's Mouth" [127, 57 (1958)], which distinguishes, by inference at least, between the validity of scientific data and the theories logically derived from them and the validity of opinions of scientists concerning the social and other nonscientific implications of their observations, is most timely indeed. Unfortunately, preeminence in science may lend unwarranted weight to the publicized opinions of scientists on completely nonscientific matters regardless of the subject or the qualifications of the individuals who are expressing their views.

Despite the propensity of some members of other professional groups to make ill-considered and inaccurate statements to the public press concerning matters in which they have no special competence, we might reasonably expect scientists, who are supposedly trained in the discipline of objectivity, to restrain themselves in this respect. Unfortunately, this is not the case, as is witnessed, for instance, by the recent address given at the meeting of a national scientific society to the effect that now that man has launched a world satellite, man can dis-

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