

branch of military service, are college graduates) often provide an equitable income. However, men with advanced degrees are in many cases receiving less credit for pay and promotion purposes than officers of the same age who received a bachelor's degree in the same year but who, immediately upon graduation or soon thereafter, entered on active duty. Contrary to popular belief, a very small percentage of officers obtain advanced degrees at government expense. Thus, the majority obtain their additional degrees through their own initiative, only to be penalized by the system when they enter on active duty.

With the exception of the officers in the Medical and Dental Corps, who receive additional pay and promotion credit, and the officers in the Veterinary and Nursing Corps, who receive promotion credit, the young Ph.D. on active duty is, in addition to his military duties, performing the same job as his civilian counterpart, at an income one would expect with a bachelor's degree.

If it is difficult for the government to retain its civilian scientists in the federal service, it is obvious that the number of individuals of the same caliber retained in the military service will remain negligible until the discrepancy in pay and promotion is reduced by action, rather than words, and professional recognition becomes routine rather than a statistic on file.

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Collision Course

I struggled through the news article "The civil defense debate: Neither side is talking the other's language" by H. Margolis [*Science* 135, 776 (1962)], and I wondered what sort of language the author was talking. His reasoning was so labored, his suppositions so resplendent, his mood so subjunctive, his use of the passive voice so unrestrained that he himself apparently had trouble, so that in paragraph 5, for example, we find either a unique construction or an adjective modifying a nonexistent noun. Of course, he *did* have a difficult job. He had somehow to present "all" the arguments on "shelters" with meticulous objectivity. It would appear that he failed.

Nonetheless, I am grateful for his discovery of a means of quantitating

the sincerity of a politician on any particular issue by use of what might be called the Coffee Confidence Test (CCT). One has only to determine the ratio of volume of coffee dispensed to number of pickets. Perhaps a refinement would include a colorimetric analysis of the coffee to determine the depth as well as the breadth of this sincerity. One can only guess, for example, how much coffee the President might dispense to pickets demanding executive action in discrimination in federally supported housing.

While I am a strong believer in quantitating everything, I will, however, go on, as I have, placing a null premium on sincerity, as history has done in its evaluations.

One gathers that the *main* point H.M. makes is: "Why pick on shelters? They are no worse than the whole damn arms race and probably better than many aspects of this deadly business."

Ah yes, but "shelters" are worse. No one I know has ever seen or heard a missile or a nuclear explosion, but if such a "shelter" program were to come

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into being we would not only see these "shelters," we would undoubtedly before long be forced, under threat of imprisonment, to enter and remain in them during public participation drills. In a word, then, this would bring nuclear war home; way home. H.M., in a lesser point, argues that this may be good; perhaps it will alert people to the horror. Strange then, is it not, that precisely those newspapers and politicians undistinguished in their advocacy of peace are pushing "shelters" with something akin to panic.

Speaking of distinguished advocacy and of the arms race in general, which appears to be what H.M. wants to do, as a latter-day romantic I am easily stirred to passion, yet I find in all the issues of *Science* I have read in the past several years no clarion calls on any particular facet of the arms race. I do find bemoaning aplenty and cynical denigration of the efforts of some frequent (as in the editorial on the Report of the Committee on Science in the Promotion of Human Welfare).

As for the analogy H.M. presents in his final paragraph, I too, along with other irrational folk, would be vastly disheartened if, in addition to seeing the extensive lifeboat preparations, I knew that for some time this ship had been steering a course, with increasing speed, that would lead it to collision with another ship and that the "rational" passengers on both liners were doing nothing to force their captains to change course.

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General-Purpose Computer

The issue between Reitman and those he represents and certain statements in *Computers and Common Sense* which he says "are simply untrue" [*Science* 135, 718 (2 Mar. 1962)] can be summed up in Reitman's reiteration that "it [the General Problem Solver machine] does in fact exist, even as you and I." Since "you and I" certainly exist as something other than a program in a general-purpose computer (or the mind of God), the question, "Whose statements are untrue?" resolves itself.

To bring this point home, let me say that we are prepared to buy a general problem solving machine and are most anxious to secure the franchise for



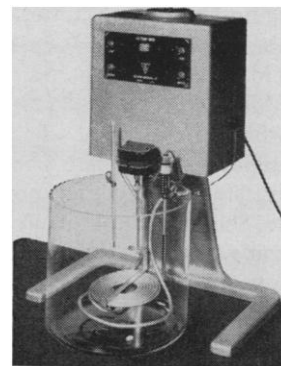
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