investigators working in nonprofit institutions. It would be disastrous were this system to change.

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Your past editorials have always struck a strong sympathetic response with me. However, concerning your effort of 25 October 1963, might I ask that you expand your arguments of the last two paragraphs into a full article. It is tempting to think that you might talk yourself out of some of this folly in considering more fully the possible results.

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. . . It is hard to separate prejudice for an established institution and an established investigator from prejudice for a specific proposal. Therefore, I propose the following change. . . . The scientific portion and the budget of the proposal should be easily separable from the identity of the individual principal investigator and the institution. . . . The study sections can then first weigh the scientific merits of each individual proposal and budget. The identity of the principal investigator and the institution can then be matched up with the proposal. The investigator and the institution can then be weighed. Some simple formula can be worked out whereby these three separate categories can be weighed together to yield an overall order for the proposals. . . .

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The Noble Gases

In an article entitled "Some predicted chemistry of group VIII elements; the aerogens" [*J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **85**, 2202 (1963)], R. M. Noyes suggests the generic name "aerogens" for the inert gases because the latter designation has been made inappropriate by the recent synthesis of many chemical compounds of these gases. He bases his suggestion on an analogy with the term halogens, which he translates as "formed [*or* derived] from the salt of the sea." This is an erroneous derivation. "Halogen" means salt-forming or salt-former and refers to the unique property of the elements in question of forming salts directly with metals. The names oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen likewise mean acid-, water-, and niter-former, respectively.

The term "noble gases" is a very good substitute for "inert gases." (i) This name already exists in English chemical literature, and its German and Dutch translation (*Edelgas*) is the only word used in those languages for the inert gases; in French, *gaz noble* is a known substitute-name for *gaz inerte*. (ii) These gases are "noble" in the sense in which gold, for example, is a noble metal; that is, they react only in isolated cases. (iii) The term "noble gas structure" is frequently used, especially in physicochemical text books, to designate an electronic structure with eight electrons in the outer shell (two in the K-shell), which is found in the zero-group elements.

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Virus and Pseudocowpox Disease

In the report by Moscovici *et al.* on the isolation of a viral agent from pseudocowpox disease [*Science* **141**, 915 (1963)] there is a lack of evidence that the virus, which was isolated in tissue cultures and characterized by various techniques, is actually the causative agent of the disease in question. It is evident that the new virus is capable of producing various effects in growing cells of bovine origin and is capable of surviving extensive passage through several generations in tissue culture, but these facts do not substantiate the suggestion of the authors that "the isolate is the etiologic agent of the pseudocowpox syndrome." The authors refer to an earlier report, "Milker's nodules: isolation of a poxvirus from a human case" by Friedman-Kien, Rowe, and Banfield [*Science* **140**, 1335 (1963)]. In the latter account there is likewise no evidence that the new isolate can produce pseudocowpox in cows or milker's nodules in man.

With the development of tissue culture as an instrument for isolation and study of viruses, many agents have been discovered in various animal and plant sources in complete absence of any disease or obvious pathologic changes. Discovery of the virus family in the human intestinal tract which