

# Letters

## Pest Control Debates in Court

Upholt, of the Federal Committee on Pest Control (Letters, 5 April), objects to the judicial arm of our government as arbiter of the 20-year controversy over certain pesticide uses. But industry, in which so many scientists are enmeshed, routinely resorts to the courts to force issues. It is obvious that the current pesticide policy revolution in Michigan was precipitated by the Environmental Defense Fund's lawsuit against that state's Department of Agriculture (22 Dec., p. 1552) which continues to use dieldrin in a futile effort to "eradicate" the Japanese Beetle, an insect naturalized and accepted to the south and east of a state line. Never before had Michigan's Department of Conservation scientists had an opportunity to present their data where they would be listened to. If a judge is not scientifically competent, a competent lawyer can at least show him which scientists have been arbitrary, and have followed the doctrinaire thinking that has made this pesticide controversy so stubborn. For example, that Michigan court record shows that *one* Japanese beetle is cause for declaring that an infestation exists, and imposing a quarantine. And yet this cooperative program was "approved" by the FCPC. This, and the fact that Department of Interior biologists had shared in the decision, was a principal defense of the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

The facts seem to be that the FCPC's procedure does not involve approval. Committee members are allowed to object to a proposed program, but this imposes a burden of proof on the objectors even though the proposals under review are themselves not scientifically documented. This hamstringing FCPC effectiveness because few bureaucrats care to contend with their fellows to that extent. Further, as Upholt admits, the program agency may still act as it pleases because the FCPC has no statutory authority.

Our difficulty is that the ecology of pest control is currently beyond the sophistication of most pest controllers,

and that the Department of the Interior, the only ecologically oriented agency, is both low on the federal totem pole and outnumbered on the FCPC. Under these circumstances, "Advise and Consent" is a soporific prescription.

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## Poland: Barriers and Purges

It may interest readers of *Science* to know that the current purge of Polish intellectuals has now been extended to include at least one of its outstanding scientists. During my present stay in Rome, I received several invitations to lecture in Polish universities this spring. Early in March, my hosts wrote that approval for a visa had been cleared through their Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Health, and it was only necessary to present myself at the Polish Consulate in Rome to obtain it. When I did so a short time later, no visa was available nor was there any expectation that one was forthcoming. I made an application and waited several weeks. Visits to the Consulate during this time produced neither the visa nor any information. Only after intercession by an American Embassy official in Rome did the situation become clear to me. Visas were being withheld from Americans, even diplomats, and especially Jews.

On 2 April, I received a letter from one of my hosts requesting specifics of my visit so that final arrangements could be made. I wrote and explained the difficulties. Our letters must have crossed. His letter of 4 April was a shock to me, my family, and my colleagues at the Institute. Instead of the usual jovial, enthusiastic letter in English, this was written in terse German. One sentence sums it up: "*Von heute bin ich ohne Institut, ohne Arbeit, ohne lebensmittel*"—"As of today, I am without an institute, without work, and without a livelihood." This man, whose name is best withheld, was dismissed with apparently no warning at the apex

of a productive and highly honored career. He had served with the World Health Organization, received honorary fellowships in scientific societies throughout Europe, and held honorary degrees from a number of universities. He had received high scientific honors from his own government and the Soviet Union. Now the professor, his wife, and their two sons, who are already launched on their own professional careers, are forced to leave Poland for some land where they may work and study in peace.

There is an element of tragic irony: the professor's wife and sons are not Jewish, and he renounced Judaism years ago. Yet he could not escape the master files of the bigots. For that handful of Polish Jews who escaped the Nazi slaughter some 25 years ago, the dream of peaceful integration into Polish life has again been shattered.

Last year I was happy to participate in a scientific exchange program arranged through the Polish and U.S. academies of science. I felt then and I still feel that personal contact is a two-way road to better understanding. But recent events convince me that the gulf between the Polish government and scientists is wide, and any improvement in personal attitudes which may result from living and working in the United States will not alter Warsaw's official policy. Persecution of Polish intellectuals and scientists and refusal of visas to American scientists of Jewish origin mock our program of scientific exchange. It is a further mockery that Poland invites the United States to Warsaw to discuss peace in Vietnam at the same time it closes its borders to our citizens. We should not continue to be partner to this hypocrisy. Our National Academy of Sciences should discontinue further exchanges until such time that freedom of opportunity for all Poland's intellectuals and scientists is reestablished.

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## Detrick Symposium Dissent

We feel that the readers of *Science* would be interested in the reasons that a minority of the members of the governing board of the American Institute