

ceeded to investigate the situation and prepared an article on the basis of the information that could be obtained. When there was reason to believe that relevant information was lacking, it was so indicated in the article. (For such lacks, it might be added, Condon can only blame himself.)

As for the propriety of an article in *Science* prior to the issuance of the Condon report (which we await with great interest), it is difficult to know where to begin. But when public funds and matters of public concern are involved, where is it prescribed that nothing may be said until the public is presented with a *fait accompli*?

As for Branscomb's anguished assertion that "the tragedy is that *Science* apparently fails to perceive that public acceptance of the rationality of science is at stake"; if it is at stake, it should be noted that *Science* merely presented a report on the interesting events in Boulder, it didn't create those events.

D. S. GREENBERG

*Science*

Since Condon (Letters, 30 Aug.) characterizes *Science's* article on his UFO project as gossip, perhaps he could be persuaded to answer two questions:

1) Is the memo printed at the end of the article "Colorado UFO fiasco" by Curtis Fuller beginning on page 30 of the magazine *Fate* (September 1968) an accurate transcription or copy of a memo written by Robert J. Low concerning the UFO project at the University of Colorado?

2) Is Low the author of this project's report, or otherwise associated with it in some capacity in the past or now?

J. B. HATCHER

3104 Silver Lake Road,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55418

### Conservation: Guideline for the Courts

Kesteven's excellent article, "A policy for conservationists" (24 May, p. 857), is a timely assist to the group of conservation-minded congressmen who have sponsored legislation for a National Conservation Bill of Rights. The resolution to amend the Constitution of the United States by setting forth a statement of national policy concerning the environment and natural resources was introduced in the House on 12 June. Congressman Richard L. Ottinger of New York sponsored the resolution

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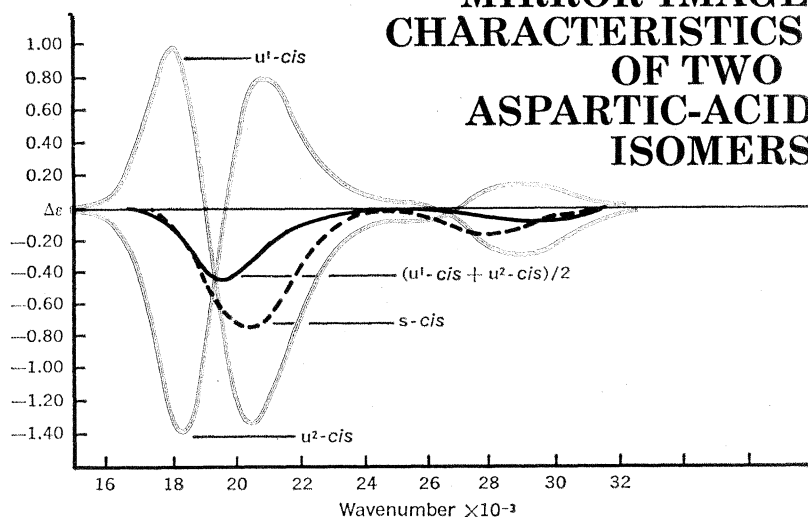
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## CHEMICAL PROFILES

... drawn by Durrum

### PROVING THE MIRROR-IMAGE CHARACTERISTICS OF TWO ASPARTIC-ACID ISOMERS

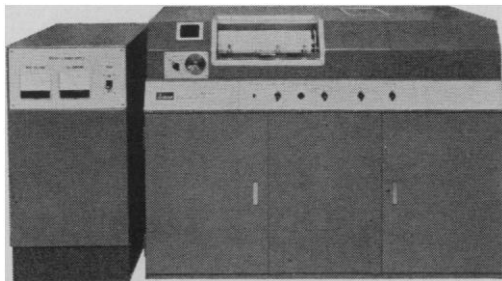


Aspartic acid, with its three donor sites, can form a variety of hard-to-identify chelate isomers. The circular-dichroism profiles drawn here, plotted from data gathered by a Durrum-Jasco CD recorder, are typical of the molecular detective work\* that can be achieved with this versatile instrument.

The steric requirements of aspartic acid indicate that in a cobalt-diethylenetriamine complex, three isomers will predominate: one *s-cis* (symmetrical), shown as a dashed-line profile in the drawing above, and two *u-cis* (unsymmetrical) isomers, shown in color. The latter are essentially mirror images of each other, and the Durrum-Jasco instrument provides a way to identify one from the other.

The configurational contributions to the CD traces of the two mirror-image isomers should, in theory, cancel out, leaving an "average" trace that approximates that of the *s-cis* isomer where there are no configurational contributions. As seen here, a very close correlation is achieved, proving that the two *u-cis* isomers are indeed pseudo-mirror images and providing clues as to their specific forms.

The Durrum-Jasco CD recorder is a powerful analytical tool, used throughout the world to classify and identify complex organic and biochemical compounds. In addition to detailing the conformation and configuration of such substances as steroids, alkaloids, proteins, nucleic acids and synthetic polymers, the instrument can serve to measure their concentrations, kinetic properties, and stereochemical characteristics. Durrum-Jasco CD prices start at \$29,600.



\*AS REPORTED BY J. IVAN LEGG AND DEAN W. COOKE IN THE DECEMBER 20, 1967 ISSUE OF JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY.



## DURRUM

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along with Congressmen Kupferman, Saylor, Dent, Scheuer, Button, Cleveland, Farbstein, Walker, Edwards (Calif.), Eilberg, and Podell.

The purpose of the amendment is to define the rights of citizens of this country with respect to the condition of our general environment and to the use and conservation of natural resources. "The right of the people to clean air, pure water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic, and esthetic qualities of their environment shall not be abridged." The resolution calls for periodic inventories and evaluation of "natural, scenic, esthetic and historic" resources and restrictions on actions that would adversely affect resource values on public lands. A constitutional statement of the nation's will in respect to resources and environment is essential to provide a legal basis for resolving conservation issues. As it now stands, litigation to protect the public from actions damaging to its environment has been only marginally successful. The courts find insufficient basis in existing statutes to give favorable opinions on behalf of the public in conservation matters, and, since these concerns are relatively new, there is practically no protection in common law. The constitutional amendment would set a guideline which the courts could follow.

The Conservation Bill of Rights, now in the Judiciary Committee, faces a long uphill struggle in Congress, and then it must be ratified by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states. If adopted, it will have far-reaching, positive effects on conservation theory and practice in this country and perhaps on human survival in centuries to come.

JOHN CLARK

*American Littoral Society, Sandy Hook, Highlands, New Jersey 07732*

### Milkweed Mystery

An unusually large number of the milkweed plants, *Asclepias*, in this area of Nassau County, Long Island, have not formed pods this year. The plants seem to be of average height for this time of year and in all other ways appear normal. Have readers in other areas observed lack of pod formation this year?

WALTER LENER

*Department of Biology,  
Nassau Community College,  
Garden City, New York 11530*