

Letters

Private Sector: A Proven Record

More than two-thirds of U.S. research and development is accomplished in the laboratories of private companies. But journalistic coverage of the administration of scientific progress would make it seem that academic and government spokesmen yield better copy than industrial observers ("Science policy: Daddario panel urges new study, changes in OST," 6 Nov., p. 612). Particularly we urge that opinions from industry should be sought in contemplating the growing promise and popularity of "technology assessment." Unfortunately, the initial evaluations in Washington have found the private sector conspicuous largely by its silence.

To keep the record straight, technology assessment is far broader in concept than simply to establish an early warning system which would help avoid environmental pollution. For example, it could appraise what is being done in private and public laboratories with regard to cellular bioengineering. The discovery of truth and basic research support—having no immediate objectives—could be among the subjects considered by technical assessors. Moreover, such evaluations could not avoid economic implications, such as related employment problems and the allocation of taxes, even including the implied warnings in George Orwell's fictional approach to "1984."

Be assured, the realization up and down the company ladder is that better products for better living rings increasingly hollow as a total objective. Industry has more of a social commitment to perform. Company spokesmen in communities throughout the country want a piece of the action that is stirring the minds of social planners.

In 1971, the question we will find confronting us is: What purpose is to be served by institutionalizing technology assessments with an expanded Washington bureaucracy? The answers to that question, especially in this period of devising methodology, will be enhanced by well-rounded industrial in-

put—not tokenism. The American private sector, it should be underscored, has a proven record for assembling multidisciplinary teams of outstanding individuals to solve the most pressing technological challenges in all history. Let's enlist this expertise in assessments.

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Equal Work—Unequal Pay

In the 11 September issue (p. 1115) there appeared an advertisement under "Positions Open" of research appointments in the Division of Land Research, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, Australia. This specifies that "Salary rates for women are \$A428 p.a. less than corresponding rates for men." Perhaps one might argue that blatant discrimination is to be preferred to the more common, covert discrimination. Nevertheless, I find such an ad completely out of keeping with the principles of the AAAS and *Science*. I would hope that you would refuse such discriminatory advertisements. Would you accept an ad which read "Salary rates for non-whites are \$A428 p.a. less" or "Blacks and Asians need not apply"? I think not. I hope not.

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... I feel that it is outrageous for a distinguished journal of science to be a party to the oppression of women by carrying advertising such as this. Although the Australian government is immune from the laws of the United States which prohibit hiring practices that are discriminatory, the Australian government still violates the spirit of the American law, and even worse, the spirit of the times.

I am a male researcher, but nevertheless, I feel that any woman, who

knows as much as I, ought to be paid as much as I. It would be very gratifying to hear that, in the future, *Science* will not carry any ads that do not reflect equal opportunity for women, even if they are placed by foreign employers.

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... *Science* is the official organ of the AAAS and in some respects speaks for all American scientists. I am sure that neither the AAAS nor American scientists in general support discrimination based on religion, sex, or color in hiring practices. Your publication of such an ad indicates that *Science* condones such discrimination.

I suggest that *Science* should inquire when accepting advertising whether the positions involved are open to all qualified candidates on the same basis. If they are not, *Science* should do one of two things: either refuse to accept such advertising, or publish such ads in a separate, clearly labeled section and with the grounds for discrimination clearly noted in the ad. *Science* should also state editorially either that the AAAS does not approve such hiring practices and is therefore rejecting such advertising, or that it believes in allowing each applicant to make his or her own decision.

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Boston Science Museum: No Political Hotbed

"The Boston Museum of Science" is indeed a "Point of View" (9 Oct., p. 145), but one constrained by blinders. It is an excellent representation of the clichés that the antiscientific Left applies to anything that is not oriented to their politicocentric view of man's many and diverse activities and interests.

The first thing the reader notices (or rather, doesn't notice, because the authors missed it) is that the Boston metropolitan community, which the museum serves, is in fact to a great extent suburban; in any event it is a varied constituency, including a large number of tourists. The second omission is any relevant observation as to the source of support for the museum.