

ton, D.C., area I have vivid memories of swimming in the Potomac River and even drinking it; to do so now would be dangerous, perhaps fatal. For the last decade I have been able to observe our smog blanket; each year it seems to persist longer and get larger.

My particular environmental concern has been solid waste. Transporting trash is commonly the third largest item in municipal budgets, ranking only behind schools and public safety. I have been in four hearings at various levels of government trying to solve a tiny part of this problem, and the net result of my activity has been five lawsuits from various groups who prefer business as usual.

I grant that there has been great emotionalism about pollution and that in the course of it some extreme statements have been made. However, one may question how much progress would have been made in slowing down the degradation of the planet as a habitat for man—if in fact any has been made—had there not been an emotional outburst. Possibly it is not good to be either too sanguine or too strident, but if there is a hell it is populated by people who kept silent when they should have spoken out.

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Self-Defense

Bryce Nelson's report (12 Feb., p. 556) on the Hiroshima symposium at the AAAS meeting describes attitudes that puzzle millions. It is puzzling that an M.I.T. political scientist can state that "the arms race has generally gotten worse in the last 25 years" and not relate this to Soviet expansionism and militarism. Rathjens is disturbed that a bomb 200 times as powerful as the Hiroshima one is targeted for a Soviet city the size of Hiroshima. Others of us are disturbed that bombs 2000 times as powerful are targeted for American cities.

The blindness of the symposium is evidenced by Alperovitz's answer to the spectator's question: "Why haven't scientists been more successful in helping control the arms race?" According to Alperovitz, the lack of success is a product of scientists' keeping "their lives compartmentalized between their work and politics." This misrepresentation of scientists who faced the impli-

cations of their work and decided in favor of the defense of their country is repeated by Yale's Lifton, who slanders Edward Teller as a man who "embraced this weapon as a nuclear deity."

What is disregarded by these polemicists is the fact that nuclear weapons exist independently of American politics and scientists. Even the never-stated implication of their attitude—American surrender—would not protect against the use of nuclear weapons. Whereas we might protect ourselves from a Soviet nuclear attack by surrendering to the Soviet Union, we cannot simultaneously surrender to China (to say nothing of countries that may develop nuclear weapons in the future). Therefore, we cannot be assured that we would not be victims in a Russian-Chinese war or even that the Soviets would not decide that such a large and populous country as the United States would be more easily controlled if part were destroyed. Attitudes expressed at the symposium imply that we can trust the Russian and Chinese governments better than our own.

As long as there is a single expansionist or aggressive force, the choice is between surrender and defense. To pretend, as do the Hiroshima symposiasts, that "the arms race" is a product of American politics and scientists is to obscure the choice.

The West has long lost the will and self-belief that are necessary to any expansionist or aggressive power. It is rapidly losing the will necessary for self-defense. Let us really be hard-boiled scientists and stop fooling ourselves. If we choose surrender, let it be a rational product of a recognition of a lack of will to resist and not the product of a self-denunciatory emotionalism or utopian hopes.

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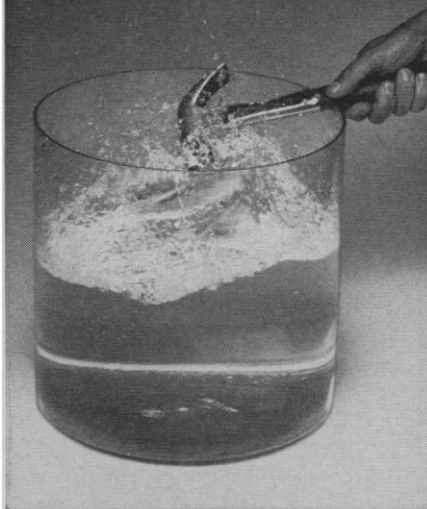
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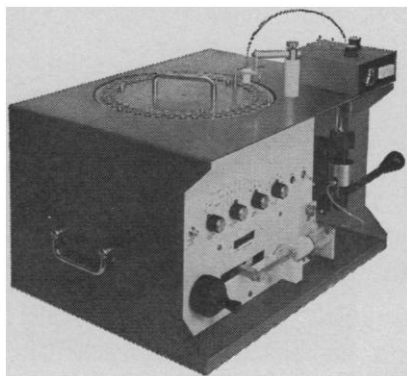
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tent, but we still find that requests for reprints draw negative replies. Many of the foreign journals are not within the reach of all Indian workers, and the cost of Xerox service, even when it is available, is prohibitive. May I therefore ask, through your columns, that requests for reprints from developing countries be given priority by investigators working in more affluent circumstances.

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*Institute for Research in Reproduction,
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Brazen Rule

In his most informative review of *Environment, Power, and Society* by H. T. Odum (14 May, p. 664), Leigh refers to a variant of the Golden Rule, the "silver rule": do not unto others as you would not have them do unto you. A much greater departure from the Golden Rule is, unfortunately, all too well known to us. It can operate, or threaten to operate, whenever there are two or more opposing individuals, groups, or societies. This type of behavior deserves a proper metallic label. This might be the "brazen rule": do unto others before they do unto you.

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Chin Up

If John W. Gardner believes that "talented young people should not . . . be led to assume that there is always a market for talent . . ." (News and Comment, 21 May, p. 823) then I hope that the gods will forgive him and that nobody else listens.

Hear, hear, young people with talent: Don't let the soothsayers shout you down. Talent was, is, and always will be the rarest and most valuable thing in this world, sought for and fought over by everyone who needs someone to help him accomplish anything. Let the prophets of doom droop with their "projections." If you have talent, young man, if you really have talent, then the world is yours and you don't even need me to tell you that.

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Modern AAAS Responsibilities

Key words in the "AAAS Bible" (the Arden House conference statement of 1951) quoted in Philip Boffey's article on the AAAS mission (30 Apr., p. 453) are "relations of science to government, and indeed the relations of science to our society as a whole." These two "relations" tend to merge, since all branches and agencies of the government are managed by people, and are properly influenced by popular opinion.

The AAAS has access to competent men in all scientific disciplines, and would serve the public well by providing expert advice on government support of science, and by initiating special studies in this connection. Many of the presently neglected problems of science are interdisciplinary, and require active investigation by small working groups in order to get started toward a solution.

I think the AAAS should seize the initiative and set up such working groups, each one charged with producing a brief report within a year or less, with a review session at the next annual meeting. The most difficult requirement is the selection of topics and members for these groups. I suggest that a small action committee with rotating membership be appointed by the Board of Directors with the responsibility of reviewing suggestions from AAAS members or from such government agencies as the President's Science Advisory Committee, the departments of Interior, Commerce, Transportation, Health, Education, and Welfare, and so forth. The committee would organize three or four working groups each year, and evaluate their reports in the light of critiques in special sessions at the annual meeting. Emphasis should be on brevity and specific recommendations for government action. Where there was general agreement, the recommendations should be publicized and formally transmitted to the government agency best able to act upon them.

The general level of AAAS recommendations should be somewhat more on science objectives than on the consumer benefits emphasized by Ralph Nader's "raiders." Examples of topics that could be studied include: cancer research relative to other public-health programs (for a working group of two or three medical specialists, a psychologist, a sociologist, and an economist); national potential for power production (two nuclear physicists, two geologists,