can one give credence to any widely disseminated claims based on observations which are kept secret or confined? This question is especially pressing in instances where long-range research plans and public actions affecting many individuals have to be based on scientific inference. To give credence to reports based on privileged data is to destroy the validity of the scientific method.

THEODOR D. STERLING
School of Engineering and Computer Science, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri 63130

References

1. Editorial, *New York Times*, 9 May 1970; editorial, *Nature* **230**, 547 (1971).
2. *The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell*, R. Egner and L. Denonn, Eds. (Allen and Unwin, London, 1961), p. 620.
3. *American Scientist* **53**, 4 (1965).

Education in Chemistry

In the current employment market one can view with indifference our failure to interest Black and other minority students in entering degree programs in the sciences, but one cannot be indifferent to their ability to handle the science prerequisites for medical school or related professional training. Last September a conference was held at the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle to consider how these matters affect education in chemistry. The conference devoted a major part of its deliberations to background problems that affect education in any of the sciences, among them the particular educational problems of various categories of underprepared students.

Two large-scale development projects designed to prepare such students for academically oriented education were described. Remedial programs in communication skills, mathematics, and background science were presented, as well as descriptions of supportive programs in chemistry that are now offered to underprepared students in ten institutions.

The conference did not produce definitive answers to any of the problems to which discussion was directed. It did produce some promising results—particularly a list of characteristics for successful programs for underprepared students and the encouragement and enthusiasm which derive from talking with others deeply involved in the same difficult problems. Although the conference was particularly devoted to education in chemistry, the discussion of background deficiencies in academic preparation and of the self-image of the educationally disadvantaged is applicable to underprepared students in any college major program. An 80-page report of the conference has recently been published. It may be ordered by sending a remittance of $3 a copy to Stipes Publishing Company, 10 Chester Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820.

ROBERT I. WALTER
Department of Chemistry, University of Illinois, Chicago 60680

National Parks

Houston's recommendations in "Ecosystems of National Parks" (14 May, p. 648) would represent significant advancements in the management concepts of the National Park Service and, if fully implemented on a national scale in our parks, would do much to enhance their natural settings.

Cessation of "control" for pests such as the mountain pine beetle, use of fire to maintain certain vegetation types, limiting angling, and continuous monitoring of ungulate populations to assess their impact on vegetation represent significant changes in National Park Service policy, which was formerly similar to that of the more commercial Forest Service.

As Houston points out, many of the management problems within the national parks (usually blamed on park officials) have been caused by changes occurring outside park boundaries and the fact that the parks have not included all of the historic winter ranges of some ungulate populations, such as the elk range in the Yellowstone Valley near Yellowstone National Park and the area south of Jackson Hole near Grand Teton National Park.

The prohibition of sprawling new camping and trailer grounds and the possible elimination of some existing facilities, particularly in Yellowstone Park, also represent a radical departure from past National Park Service policy, which emphasized the need to accommodate as many people as possible, in the vain hope of obtaining more funds from a sparing Congress. Houston's proposals are far-reaching and deserve top priority from the National Park Service.

JOHN F. BURGER
7630 Fairham Avenue, University City, Missouri 63130