Letters

APA Self-Analysis

Judy Miller's account (News and Comment, 20 July, p. 246) of the controversy between the board of trustees of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the ad hoc committee appointed by the board to investigate conflicts between the individual and the institutional roles of the psychiatrist betrays a definite bias. This is apparent not only in the tone of the report but in certain emphases and omissions. The title, "APA: Psychiatrists reluctant to analyze themselves," is clearly a judgment in favor of the position of the committee. Everyone quoted in the report, with the exception of Walter Barton, defends the committee's position. There is no statement from any member of the APA board of trustees justifying the board's actions. I was a member of the ad hoc committee, and, unlike my colleagues, I saw no real evidence that the board was using the Chu-Trotter issue to sabotage an investigation whose results might be embarrassing to the profession. I felt, and still believe, that Chu and Trotter would have difficulty obtaining the cooperation of the psychiatrists they would be interviewing because of the strong feelings aroused by their work on the Nader study on community mental health centers.

The demise of the committee and its projected research project is regrettable. This result, however, can be attributed more to a power conflict among strong-minded men on both sides than to a defensive need in the psychiatric establishment to keep its skeletons from being rattled.

PAUL CHODOFF
1904 R Street, NW,
Washington, D.C. 20009

In the last paragraph of her report, Judy Miller points out that a study sponsored by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) on whether, in addition to its therapeutic role, psychiatry is used as an instrument of social control was assigned to the APA's Council on Research and Development. She also reports that the council will contract with an outside agency, probably a university, to design and carry out an appropriate research proposal. No responsible scientist would undertake such a study unless he was guaranteed the freedom to publish his findings regardless of whether the APA is willing to do so or not. Thus, the evidence as to whether psychiatrists are reluctant to analyze themselves is not yet in.

A feasible design for such a study, promoted by both the original ad hoc committee and the APA's Council on Research and Development, provides for structured, in-depth interviews of key personnel at selected institutions where the conflicts between social and clinical roles are most likely to occur. Collecting reliable data would depend on a candor and rapport between interviewer and interviewee that could only be obtained with maximum trust in the objectivity of all participants. Whether rightly or not, Chu and Trotter do not have that trust among many psychiatrists. At the same time, they have no special expertise that could not be matched by many other individuals who were less controversial. It seems imperative, then, that the council seek the best possible scientists who will have the profession's utmost cooperation. The council and the APA are both interested in an objective report with minimum bias.

RUSSELL R. MONROE
Council on Research and Development,
American Psychiatric Association,
1700 Eighteenth Street, NW,
Washington, D.C. 20009

Contributions of the Space Shuttle

We wish to take exception to Brian O'Leary's statement (Letters, 6 July, p. 10) that "The space shuttle would be as helpful as a white elephant to the balance of payments, to national security, to energy and environmental problems, to exploratory enthusiasm, or to any other goal near and dear to the American people."

America's most competitive commodity in the world market is its advanced technology and the myriad of products that flow directly from it (*1*). Space-related research has been a chief catalyst in stimulating advances along all the frontiers of technology over the past decade. It is not difficult to see the connection between miniaturized space electronics and the giant steps forward that have been made in computer technology and in low-cost pocket computers, pocket radios, medical instruments, and so forth; or between recyclable space life-support systems and the recycling of sewage on the earth's surface; or between the technology of handling cryogenic space fuels and the cryogenically cooled instrumentation now commonplace in laboratories; or between the medical sensors developed to monitor zero-gravity physiology and the sophisticated medical monitoring systems now operating in many hospitals. There is every reason to believe that the space shuttle and the many payloads and researchers it will flexibly accommodate will be even more stimulating to science and technology than the space programs of the past have been.

The surest guarantee of this country's security is its scientific, technical, and economic vigor, to which the space shuttle will make a very significant contribution. If it is the military security of the country about which O'Leary is concerned, we fail to see how supremacy in space technology is any less vital to this matter than supremacy in aviation technology was 30 years ago.

O'Leary does not mention a recent study on solar energy (*2*) in which it is suggested that orbiting power stations linked to the earth's surface by microwave transmission may exploit the sun's energy most efficiently. The economics of such power stations hinge, of course, on the economics of transportation to and from space—an area in which the reusable space shuttle will be a key step forward.

The necessity for a global point of view in the study of environmental problems is now taken for granted by most scientists. Only from earth orbit can we effectively monitor ocean and air pollution, understand the complex interaction between solar activity and terrestrial weather, and monitor water and food supplies on a worldwide basis.

Cancellation of the space shuttle would mean that space science would continue indefinitely to lack the flexibility, the versatility, and the economy which can be achieved by man's presence in space laboratories. One of the major lessons to be learned from Skylab is that there is no reason to tolerate the squandering of space science resources because of failures of batteries, hinges, and other items that are costly to build

so that they are trouble-free, but easy to repair if necessary. We have also learned lessons from Skylab about man's ability to react quickly and effectively to rapidly changing phenomena, to recognize and explore the unexpected, and to improve upon operating procedures with the accumulation of experience. The presence of scientists in space will prove valuable in reducing the complexity and cost, while increasing the reliability, of sophisticated experiments.

We hope that human achievement and social progress are "near and dear to the American people." In the past, they have generally been linked with pioneering exploration of new frontiers and with the accepting of challenges that go beyond the struggle for material comfort and luxury. History now brings us face to face with the next great frontier. Can we turn our backs on it and still preserve our humanity? In the words of Arthur C. Clarke, "The challenge of the great spaces between the worlds is a stupendous one; but, if we fail to meet it, the story of our race will be drawing to a close. Humanity will have turned its back upon the still untrodden heights and will be descending the long slope that stretches, across a thousand million years of time, down to the shores of the primeval sea" (*3*).

JOSEPH P. ALLEN
KARL G. HENIZE

Astronaut Office,
Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center,
Houston, Texas 77058

References

1. *Economic Report of the President, 1973* (Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1973).
2. National Science Foundation–National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Solar Energy Panel, *Solar Energy as a National Resource* (Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Maryland, College Park, 1973).
3. A. C. Clarke, *The Promise of Space* (Harper & Row, New York, 1968), p. 314.

A Reasonable Deduction

Based on my measurements of the cover photograph of the bee sting (20 July) I have concluded that it cannot be properly termed a microphotograph, as described. The dimensions were 22.9 × 19.2 centimeters. In terms of human dimensional perspective, I would suggest that it be most properly classified as a macrophotograph.

However, having a relative concept of the actual size of the bee sting, and the procedures and steps required to produce the enlarged image for the cover, it would logically follow that the photograph should be classified as a photomicrograph. Continuing further on a logical course, and through reasonable deductions from the above information, the cover photograph would most correctly be characterized as a macrophotograph of a photomicrograph.

RICHARD H. MORRISON
Research Services Department,
Northrup, King & Company,
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

Agricultural Research Policies

While I share the concern expressed by Nicholas Wade (News and Comment, 18 May, p. 719) at the meager support given social science by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I doubt whether any conceivable research in that field could have softened the disastrous impact on both rural and urban life of official policies. To accomplish this would have required an effective scrutiny of our entire system of values. On the whole, policy tends to influence research rather than vice versa.

I can testify that official policy has been involved. In 1945 the respected chief of agricultural extension in a southern state told me of his distress. "Until recently," he reported, "our instructions have been to do all in our power to aid the family farm. Now we are ordered to encourage the large, heavily financed and mechanized operation."

Yet at that time the family farm of moderate acreage was not beyond redemption. One of the Memphis newspapers had under way a campaign to encourage the small farmer by various means, including awards at an annual dinner. At the second of these dinners, the publisher chided his aides, saying that the well-dressed, prosperous guests were not the ones he wished to help. To his astonishment he learned that they were the same families that had been present the previous year.

Another experience in 1945 was instructive. This took place in a rich, cotton-growing area. Field workers lived in cabins without gardens, poultry, or other means of subsistence beyond wages. Land was plowed and planted up to the edges of the cabins. A friendly planter told me he was experimenting with cotton-picking machinery, remarking that, while cotton was selling for around 30 cents a pound, he intended to make money if it went down to 12 cents.

When I asked him what would hap-