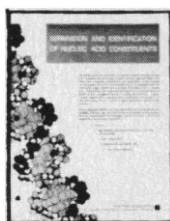


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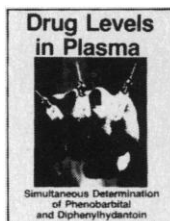
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4 pgs. Describes the LC separation of DNA and RNA constituents — purine and pyrimidine bases, nucleosides, and nucleotides. Ask for N47

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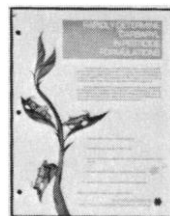
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ted a technologically relevant point. From the quote, your readers could draw the erroneous conclusion that I am an advocate of the breeder. My position has been that by far the most cost-effective R & D to balance energy supply and demand in a free enterprise economy is a set of nationwide programs to actively encourage nonuse, even beyond conservation. By coincidence, this position is also the only essential element of energy policy which can be unambiguously connected to Christian ethics via the imperative to share.

Church bureaucracies, like others, prefer to pronounce on (scientific) subtleties well beyond their ken (and involving only the sixth derivatives of moral imperatives), which requires no action on their part. They avoid the obvious behavioral corollaries of their main hypotheses, which call for sacrifice, however minor, on the part of their constituencies. Scientists should easily recognize such proffered "cheap grace" as the modern day analogue of the "perpetual motion machine."

RUSTUM ROY

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Contrary to the implication in Rose's letter, the National Council of Churches did in fact allow the Atomic Industrial Forum (AIF) to choose the three pronuclear experts to participate in the debate, and the AIF did in fact name him as one of the three, after first getting his permission to do so. A "chronology" of events published by the church council on 22 March states that Rose was "chosen by the Atomic Industrial Forum," and a report on the debate published by the AIF on 5 February states that the three pronuclear speakers were "coordinated by AIF." As for the World Council of Churches' report, the judgment that it was "neutral" on the nuclear issue was made by National Council of Churches staffers.

—PHILIP M. BOFFEY

Nuclear Power Decisions

If the United States were a more nearly ideal representative democracy, I would agree with Brewster C. Denny's opinion (Letters, 16 Apr., p. 202) that use of the direct ballot referendum or initiative is an inappropriate way of dealing with an issue as complex as the regulation of nuclear power plants, and that the appropriate way would be through elected representatives who reach their conclusions by means of reasoned de-

bate. The problem is many people fear that our elected representatives may not be basing their conclusions primarily on the issues, but rather on promises and threats from special interest groups. As long as there is any reasonable suspicion that our elected officials are responding to these political pressures (and there are certainly grounds for such suspicions today), I cannot blame the supporters of the California initiative for taking an issue like nuclear power, which (because of the potential profits involved) is so susceptible to political pressures, directly to the people.

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While Denny is factually accurate regarding the way our political process works, he nevertheless misses the point.

He does not believe that informed debate on the technically complicated issue of nuclear power is possible and that, considering the risks and the economic alternatives, such a debate would not be likely to "produce an appropriate result." This indeed is the heart of the issue; but (i) Can we assume that informed debate will occur in Congress? and (ii) If so, will that debate be any more likely to produce "an appropriate result" with necessary consideration for risks as well as economic alternatives?

At a time when confidence in representative government is so low, it is no wonder that people are trying to bypass that body of decision-makers, especially on such an important issue. Just a quick look at recent "representative" decisions on environmental issues alone, from food quality and air and water pollution to atomic energy, indicates that these decisions have been made with much more concern for economic alternatives than for risks. Our understanding of the risks is so limited that extreme caution is the only prudent course. The emotion stirred by the nuclear power question is rooted in a perception of deliberate disregard by planners for the possible risks.

We must not rush to dependence now on an inadequate and potentially dangerous technology and build up a debt we might have to pay for a million years, when, in 50 years, the development of this technology may be either unnecessary or certainly much more safe. The problem is not the development of nuclear power per se but the push to proliferate it at a time when the safety of the technology is at best doubtful.

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