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Antibiotics in Feeds

Eliot Marshall (News and Comment, 23 Feb., p. 732) indirectly quotes Richard Novick and others as saying that they agreed to join the CAST (Council for Agricultural Science and Technology) task force on antibiotics in animal feeds because "we were naïve." This is scarcely true in Novick's case: while the preliminary deliberations of the task force were in progress, he published a long article in the Journal of Commerce (1) devoted to claims that agricultural use of antibiotics was dangerous and ineffective. James McGinnis telephoned Novick on 18 October 1977 and furnished him with information about the continued efficacy of antibiotics in the state of Washington ever since 1949. Novick subsequently wrote to the New York Times (2) and stated that "frequently these days little or no effect can be obtained."

Concerning the ABC news documentary on antibiotics in animal feed, American Cyanamid purchased a full page in the New York Times to refute it, and the head of Cyanamid, James Affleck, appeared on ABC television in rebuttal. Accuracy in Media also protested. One statement in the ABC documentary was that their reporters had seen a "whole barrel of chloramphenicol" (CM) in a feed mill in North Carolina. This turned out to be chlortetracycline. The use of CM in animal feeds is illegal; it would foster development of CM resistance in Salmonella.

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1. R. Novick, J. Commer., 23 Sept. 1977, p. 4. 2. ____, New York Times, 21 Nov. 1977, p. 36.

Pert and the Lasker Award

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Division of Research played a significant role in the events leading up to the flurry of current questions concerning the 1978 Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research to Hughes, Kosterlitz, and Snyder (News and Comment, 26 Jan., p. 341; Letters, 2 Mar., p. 834) (1).

At the 1977 39th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Committee on Problems of Drug Dependence, the NIDA Pacesetter Research Award was given to Avram Goldstein, John Hughes, Hans Kosterlitz, Eric Simon, Solomon Snyder, and Lars Terenius for the rapid development of the concept and characterization of the structure and function of enkephalins and endorphins, the endogenous morphine-like substances produced in the central nervous system. All six of the awardees had received NIDA support for the investigations leading to these discoveries.

In retrospect, we feel that it was a significant omission on our part that Dr. Candace Pert was not included. Her graduate student role was the issue at the time; subsequent increased awareness of her major contribution has led us to this revised conclusion.

Selecting recipients for prestigious awards is a complex social process in which "scientific merit," unfortunately, is often only one of many considerations. Sometimes, serious mistakes are made. This should not detract, however, from the satisfaction we can all share at the continuing dramatic progress in the opiate receptor and peptide research area.

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1. J. Arehart-Treichel, Sci. News 115, 120 (17 February 1979).

Erratum: In the reply by J. W. Holaday and B. H. Natelson to the technical comment entitled "Ultradian cortisol rhythms in monkeys: Synchronized or not synchronized?" (1 Dec. 1978, page 1001), the second sentence of the last paragraph should have read: "Tannenbaum and Martin (6) have reported a light-entrained, synchronized ultradian growth hormone rhythm in rats

mone rhythm in rats." Erratum: The article "American Physical Society panel gives a long-term yes to electricity from the sun" (News and Comment, 16 Feb., p. 629) contains an error in the fourth paragraph. The first sentence in the paragraph should read: "Ehrenreich portrayed the future of solar cells as bright, calling attention to a decrease in their costs by a factor of 5 in the past 5 years and citing the prospects for further ad-vances." vances.

Erratum: William Beaver was erroneously identi-Comment, 2 Mar., p. 857) as a professor at George Washington University; he is actually a professor at Georgetown University.

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