

for basic research is being severely restricted.

The announced philosophy of the current Administration is to reduce the role of government in our social and economic affairs. The objective of this NSF program is one which clearly should be fulfilled by private venture capitalism. I would hope that Congress and the Administration might redirect the funds allocated for SBIR into areas where they

will benefit the public at large. NSF should not be in the business of spending public funds to enrich private enterprise.

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#### References

1. "Program Solicitation: Small Business Innovation Research" (National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., no date), p. 1.

Congressman John J. LaFalce (Letters, 29 Jan., p. 456) cites the conclusion of a National Science Foundation study (1) that small R & D firms have been the primary generators of major technological innovations. While the conclusion appears to be well founded, one should bear in mind that the relationship between innovation and small R & D firms is more similar to that between the egg and chicken than the horse and cart. It may well be true that major technological innovations have been important, and perhaps the primary, generators of small R & D firms.

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#### References

1. National Science Board, *Science Indicators 1976* (National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., 1977).

#### Social Sciences in Chile

As a follow-up to John Walsh's account of the status of universities and degree programs in Chile ("New university law decreed in Chile," News and Comment, 27 Mar. 1981, p. 1403), it may be of interest to *Science* readers that some easing of the restrictions on social science programs has begun to occur. On 1 March 1981, Roberto Escobar B. was designated director of a new Department of Sociological and Anthropological Sciences, which replaces previous units, at the University of Chile, Santiago. The department contains 22 full-time and 28 part-time professors. As of January 1982 the university is the only one in Chile to offer an advanced degree in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and archeology, along with a master's level program in social sciences. The new department has also been able to reinstate its publication series, including the *Boletín de Prehistoria*, which had been suspended since 1975, and the *Revista Chilena de Sociología y Antropología*; both journals will have an issue this year. Contributions are welcomed for either journal, with submissions to be directed to Roberto Escobar. Let us hope that this rerecognition of the social sciences in Chile continues and expands.

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# SYMPOSIUM

## IONS, CELL PROLIFERATION AND CANCER

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Subjects include the roles of sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, pH, cyclic nucleotides and calcium-binding proteins in a wide variety of proliferating systems and in cancer development; techniques and methodology.

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