ful in the treatment of *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia in AIDS patients (*4*).

Although we are especially familiar with DFMO (*2, 3, 5*), many other viable approaches are being investigated, some in our own laboratories and many others in the laboratories of our colleagues.

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Biological and Chemical Warfare

In R. Jeffrey Smith's article about concerns raised by the Army's proposed new facility for testing aerosols of lethal biological agents (News and Comment, 7 Dec., p. 1176), a number of scientists are quoted as criticizing the project on the basis of its being defensive "overkill" and the likelihood that it will generate information leading directly to the development of offensive biological weapons. No one questions the value of defensive studies per se. But a policy of developing defenses against biological and chemical weapons that the Soviet Union might possibly develop entails serious risks. The same policy is sure to be adopted reciprocally by the Soviet Union, leading almost inevitably to a superpower race to develop and perfect increasingly lethal weapons, for, as many scientists have pointed out, biological studies for defensive and offensive purposes are virtually indistinguishable. Many smaller nations also have the capacity to join the race and might do so for both deterrent and protective purposes. Ultimately, some of the perfected weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists. A world bristling with sophisticated biological and chemical weapons will be a good deal less safe than it is now, even if the weapons are not used, as shown by the present dangerous state of our decaying chemical weapons stockpile.

Not to develop defenses against conceivable biological and chemical weapons also entails risks. But if such a policy were clearly avowed and openly maintained, thereby lessening the perceived threat to other nations, those nations might be encouraged in their own self-interest to follow suit, and an international treaty might result. Taking a chance on mutual security in this sphere is considerably less dangerous than preparing for the worst, for no defense against biological or chemical weapons can be fully satisfactory, and the defensive preparations themselves, like "star wars," will make offense more likely.

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Chemical Information Online

I was pleased to see that *Science* is continuing to present articles regarding the status of the Chemical Information System (CIS), which we used to provide to the public on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency. I was also pleased to see that Jeffrey L. Fox indicates in his most recent article (News and Comment, 16 Nov., p. 816) that we will now be making the CIS available to the public commercially.

The article states that we will not leave the system "intact." While this is semantically correct, it implies that we will be dismantling the CIS. In fact, we will be adding new databases and system capabilities.

The article also erroneously states that Information Consultants Incorporated will be putting the contents of *The Merck Index* online. Actually, on 28 November the final signatures were placed on a contract between Fein-Marquart Associates and Merck & Company; *The Merck Index Online*—an updated version of the published 10th edition—is now the only public, online access to *The Merck Index*. This and many other new and updated databases will be placed onto the CIS, as provided by our subsidiary, Chemical Information Systems, Inc.

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Erratum: In the article "Panel says Depo-Provera not proved safe" (News and Comment, 23 Nov., p. 950), the dosages of Depo-Provera, a progestogen, and estrogens used in cancer therapy and as a contraceptive were incorrectly reported. In cancer therapy, the hormones are used in large doses. In contraceptives, the dosages are small.