the honest dissemination of information.

The scientific public is well aware of the almost legendary unwillingness to communicate and compromise that describes the technological cognoscente, but faced with the unfortunately obvious failures of modern technology—the space shuttle, Chernobyl, Bhopal, leaking underground storage tanks, DDT, acid rain, Three Mile Island, ozone damage, and so forth, the nonscientific public has been made aware that they must abandon their blind trust in technocrats and play an active role in ensuring the survival of the species. The technological community will have to satisfy legitimately the demands of an increasingly informed public, and if they cannot successfully convince the public that their ideas are safe and useful, they will have to withdraw. It is the hallmark of a democratic society that an informed public pursues its own self-interest. Secrecy and bribery, Koshland's "cure" for the nuclear waste problem, can only heighten the public's repugnance for nuclear power.

PAUL WILSON
Department of Chemistry, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Koshland's tongue-in-cheek editorial on using political and economic tactics to overcome local opposition to a nuclear waste storage facility contains the seed of a fruitful idea, but a more serious approach may be more productive. In particular, several interesting connections exist between siting the waste facility at Yucca Mountain on the Nevada Test Site (the best location on the combined grounds of geology, hydrology, low population, government control, and existing radioactive contamination) and ending the testing of nuclear weapons there.

The main hazard of nuclear waste storage, of course, is the accidental release of radioactivity. But since weapons testing involves the same hazard to a far greater degree, by trading storage for testing the people of southern Nevada and southwestern Utah would actually *reduce* their risk of radioactive exposure.

In addition, the economic benefits of the waste storage facility are real, so the "pork barrel" incentives Koshland suggests are probably unnecessary. Such a facility would provide about 1000 permanent jobs, thus substantially compensating for the loss of about 3000 similar jobs at the Test Site. And while a museum lit by Čerenkov radiation may be a joke, the storage facility really could include an off-site visitor center to explain to passing tourists how it operates. Perhaps Koshland's venture capital group should consider setting up a souvenir shop next door.

In fact, the waste storage facility should be a source of pride for the local residents. They would be helping to solve the serious long-term problem of nuclear waste, and for this they would deserve the thanks of our generation and its descendants. This contrasts sharply with weapons testing—while a few persons strain to find moral and technical justification for this activity, most understand that the likely end of the arms race it perpetuates will be our generation's having no descendants.

KENT ANDERSON
34 Panoramic Way, Berkeley, CA 94704

Erratum: In the briefing "AIDS case dismissed on legal technicality" by Deborah M. Barnes (News & Comment, 25 July, p. 414), the date when Robert Gallo and his associates were awarded a patent for developing a test to detect antibodies in blood samples of people contaminated with the AIDS virus was incorrect. It should have been May 1985, not May 1984.