

Hoffert and Miller dispute our method of cost analysis. We calculated costs from a model that is based on well-documented space systems (3). According to this model, the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) is not "overpriced" as stated by Hoffert and Miller, as it actually cost 20% less than the model predicts. (We took this into account by renormalizing the model to the actual cost of the HST.) Complex space systems are very expensive, and there is no evidence for the supposition of Hoffert and Miller that production costs can be reduced to \$2000 per kilogram; so their table 2 has little value.

We remind the reader of the many conservative assumptions listed at the end of our article, the violation of any of which could significantly increase the CER of a space-based laser system. We are not persuaded by Hoffert and Miller that such systems "look so good."

GEORGE FIELD
DAVID SPERGEL
*Department of Astronomy,
Harvard University,
60 Garden Street,
Cambridge, MA 02138*

REFERENCES

1. G. Yonas, *Phys. Today* 38, 24 (June 1985).
2. *Report to the Congress on the Strategic Defense Initia-*

- tive* (Department of Defense, Washington, DC, 1985); Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress, *Ballistic Missile Defense Technologies* (OTA-ISC-254, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, September 1985).
3. W. L. Pritchard, *Acta Astron.* 7, 373 (1980).

ICSU General Assembly

With reference to David Dickson's briefing on the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) (News & Comment, 3 Oct., p. 19), the venue of the 1988 meeting of ICSU's General Assembly was not decided in Berne. Invitations were received from the Science Council of Japan and the China Association for Science and Technology, but the Assembly did not go beyond welcoming the proposal that it should next meet in East Asia. The final decision as to the venue of the 22nd General Assembly, whether it will be Beijing or Tokyo, will be made by the ICSU Executive Board in January 1987.

JULIA MARTON-LEFÈVRE
*International Council of
Scientific Unions,
51, Boulevard de Montmorency,
75016 Paris, France*

Spanking and Rationality

Daniel E. Koshland, Jr., in his editorial on "Spanking, reason, and the environment" (24 Oct., p. 409) says "The reality is that we live in a world that becomes more densely populated each year and that population depends on chemicals for its food and standard of living." Then he suggests research free of headlines, law cases, and politicizing.

But is it not perfectly obvious (and rational) that the basic problem lies in population growth and the basic solution lies in population control? If it is not, then perhaps Koshland should have been spanked when he first believed the world was rational.

CARL A. CLARK
*39 Montague Road,
Sunderland, MA 01375*

Erratum: In the article "Molecular biology of the H-2 histocompatibility complex" by Richard A. Flavell *et al.* (25 July, p. 437), reference 44 should have been omitted.

Erratum: In the News & Comment article "The Chesapeake Bay's difficult comeback" by Marjorie Sun (15 Aug., p. 715), the size of the Bay was reported incorrectly to be 64,000 square miles. It is the Bay's watershed that spans 64,000 square miles. The Bay itself covers more than 2,500 square miles of surface area, according to Environmental Protection Agency figures.

Together at last, thanks to Lotus Measure.

