

graph, however, Book states that those who comply with "existing laws and regulations" will also be in compliance with Proposition 65. This is a much broader approach, and recognizes that compliance with federal law, in the absence of any specific regulatory levels for carcinogens, would be quite sufficient to demonstrate that trace carcinogenic substances in the food supply pose no significant risk.

To the extent that California follows the fifth paragraph, Book is correct in stating that the thousands of food items sold throughout California will not require a warning. To the extent that California limits its approach to that suggested in the fourth paragraph, however, virtually all food would require such a warning. The Scientific Advisory Panel appointed by California Governor Deukmejian recommended in December that the broader approach, described in Book's fifth paragraph, should be followed.

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## Journal Prices

Keith Bowker's contentions (Letters, 30 Oct., p. 597) notwithstanding, the discriminatory pricing policy of some foreign publishers has substantially increased the cost of journals for American subscribers beyond what can be attributed to general inflation. These unwarranted price increases have not only worsened the financial difficulties for libraries, but they pose a greater potential threat to the scientific community than seems to be widely realized. Moreover, these problems will not be solved by electronic or other proposed technical means, but could conceivably be aggravated by them.

Many of Bowker's arguments are untenable. For example, fluctuations in foreign exchange rates have little to do with the discriminatory prices that some British and other European publishers have established for American subscribers. Many American libraries are quite willing and able to pay for the subscriptions in the currencies of the respective countries and thereby relieve the publishers of "the attendant risks of loss should the dollar strengthen."

Bowker's explanation of how his company tries to defend against possible losses by selling dollars forward and thereby reduce its safety margin is not clear. How could there be a future loss once dollars have been sold forward and the price has been definitely established?

The fact is that Blackwell Scientific and other publishers have insisted that North American libraries pay for their subscriptions at special, higher rates. Furthermore, they appear to have made every effort to prevent these libraries from obtaining the publications at the prices effective in the country of origin. As an English subscription agent told me only a few days ago, an increasing number of publishers demand payment at the rate established by them for the country of ultimate destination, even when the publisher mails the journals in bulk to the English agent.

Table 1, showing prices for one of the journals published by Blackwell Scientific, confirms Bowker's contention that, over a 4-year period (1984 to 1987), there was no increase and even a slight decrease in North American prices. This decrease is likely to have been prompted by the slow awakening of American libraries to the overcharges and to the gentle protests that were beginning to be heard.

Nobody familiar with exchange trends and the direction in which the value of the British currency relative to the dollar was moving at that time will feel indebted to the publisher. In mid-1983, for example, a year for which Blackwell Scientific had converted its prices at £1.00 per \$2.10, the official exchange rate was about £1.00 per \$1.50; a year later, the rate had declined to £1.00 per \$1.32. In mid-1985 and mid-1986, the rates were as low as £1 per \$1.30. The trend in exchange rates reversed later but, at the end of 1986, the rate was still only about £1.00 per \$1.45.

Throughout these years, Blackwell Scientific was charging prices to American libraries that could not be reasonably justified by existing exchange rates or by other risk factors. Even after these prices were reduced, Blackwell was converting the dollar

at almost \$1.60 per pound sterling for the 1986 and 1987 subscriptions, subscriptions that were most likely collected during the preceding years. Only recently has the dollar fallen to the level at which, according to Bowker, Blackwell Scientific has for months been making its calculations and collecting next year's subscriptions.

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## Intercontinental Speedster

If Roger Lewin is right that the Pleistocene land bridge between Siberia and Alaska was 100 meters long (Research News, 27 Nov., p. 1230), my countryman Ben Johnson could have invaded the New World from the Old in 9.83 seconds. Might Lewin have meant 100 kilometers?

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## Infamy

I was reading William Booth's postmortem on Three Mile Island (News & Comment, 4 Dec., p. 1342) when I came across a reference to the "infamous" nuclear aircraft engine program. I was involved in that program, in a very small way; and it was probably naïve, but infamous?

A program that put offensive nuclear weapons into outer space, or that deliberately upset the balance of power, while making the United States a debtor nation, *that* would be infamous.

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**Table 1.** Subscription rates for the *Geophysical Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society*, 1982 through 1988.

Year	Individuals		Libraries		
	Residents outside the U.K. (£)	Except those in U.S. or Canada (\$)	In the U.K. (£)	Outside the U.K. (£)	In the U.S. (\$)
1982	36	80	190	220	485
1983	40	84	205	235	495
1984	44	84	230	265	505
1985	36	68	235	270	505
1986	42	67	245	280	450
1987	42	67	245	280	450
1988					495

**Erratum:** In figure 1 of the Report "Activation of the HIV-1 LTR by T cell mitogens and the trans-activator protein of HTLV-I" (11 Dec., p. 1575), the labeling was incorrect. The panel labeled "+tat-1" should have been labeled "Actin," and the panel labeled "Actin" should have been labeled "+tat<sub>HIV-1</sub>."

**Erratum:** The final paragraph of Richard A. Kerr's article "Drilling into surprises beneath an Inyo Crater" (Research News, 22 Jan., p. 350) should have read: "A bit disconcertingly, the magma influx to the chamber seems to be continuing at a reduced rate of about 5 million cubic meters per year. At that rate, only a few decades would be needed to accumulate the volume of magma produced by one of the eruptions 600 years ago."