

Abelson on Nuclear Power

I was delighted to find the editorial "Nuclear power in East Asia" by Philip H. Abelson in the issue of 26 April (p. 465). During the last several years, I have opened each issue of *Science* to look first for an editorial by Abelson. Even with the many other assets of the magazine, Abelson's editorials stand out because of their singular societal value.

The members of AAAS and, for that matter, the people of the United States owe a debt of gratitude to Abelson, not only for his lifetime of public service through science, but also because of his insistence that we make sense when we think about major societal issues involving science and technology.

Abelson's moderate, rational voice, using relevant scientific data and speaking with the wisdom of a long life of public involvement, provides a model for us who would occasionally step outside the confines of our scientific disciplines and commit ourselves to serving the larger society and helping build a better world.

I hope Abelson's editorials will continue to appear frequently and that we all will do our part to help our fellow citizens, especially law- and policy-makers and members of the news media, understand.

In doing so, we will honor Abelson in a manner he richly deserves.

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Abelson provides interesting information regarding the growth of the nuclear industry in East Asia, along with comparisons to the "diminished" situation in the United States. The comparative data on reactor numbers, construction time, capacity, and design are enlightening. One issue not discussed by Abelson, however, is the disposal of nuclear waste from the many new reactors planned and recently built.

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Abelson remains crosswise with the majority view that disfavors nuclear power in the United States. Like his many negative editorials about the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's human health protection policies and regulations, his opinions on nuclear energy in the United States have long belonged in the Round File.

We've outlived the Manhattan Project, and the sooner that those who continue to champion nuclear power from that perspective acknowledge it, the better.

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"Obscure" Journal?

It is with some astonishment that I read in the Research News article "Superconductivity turns 10" by Robert F. Service (29 Mar., p. 1804) that J. Georg Bednorz and K. Alexander Müller "published a cautiously worded paper on 'Possible High T_c Superconductivity' in an *obscure* Germany physics journal..." (italics mine).

Isn't it astonishing that Heisenberg and others published their seminal works on quantum mechanics in the same "obscure" journal, *Zeitschrift für Physik*, admittedly many years ago?

Even leading physicists with English as their mother tongue, like P. A. M. Dirac and J. Bell, did not publish regularly in journals like *Physical Review*, as a recent article in *Physics World* [9 (no. 4), 3 (April 1996)] has pointed out: "Bell's most famous paper appeared in a journal called *Physics*, which is now defunct." Thus, there is scientific life even outside the prestigious journals.

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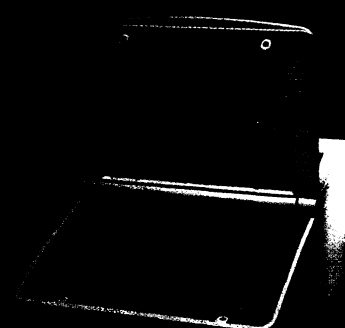
Corrections and Clarifications

In the News & Comment article "Clotting controversy" by Jock Friedly (29 Mar., p. 1800), the affiliation of George Broze should have been given as Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

Letters to the Editor

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