

present in coffee plantations with legume and other tree shade cover, very likely providing an ample food supply for insectivorous birds. What is especially notable about these patterns is the high numbers of cicadas emerging in Costa Rica's premier coffee-growing zone within the pronounced tropical dry season, a period corresponding to the winter season of the northern hemisphere. Therefore, dry-season cicadas undoubtedly comprise a portion of the diet for migratory bird species inhabiting these areas temporarily as well.

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#### Approaches to AIDS Research

The enormous attention paid to the problem of AIDS has included much discussion

about funding: How much federal money should be spent on AIDS relative to other research endeavors? What are the gaps in our knowledge that need to be filled? How much spending should be for targeted research and how much should be investigator initiated? There has been little discussion, however, of the institutional formats under which AIDS research can be done.

I recently attended an opening celebration for a new research floor at the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center (ADARC) in New York and was reminded of the numerous significant advances made by their team of investigators. I doubt that the research progress of these same investigators would be anywhere near as spectacular if they were individually placed in major universities around the country. The key is the institutional setting. A highly competent group of faculty-level investigators with complementary disciplines and interests has been brought together by a strong leader, David Ho, to focus on several discrete aspects of the AIDS problem. As with any good sports team, the total is much greater than the sum of the individual parts.

The formation of ADARC was made possible by the hard work and financial backing of the Aaron Diamond Foundation. While the continued operation of

ADARC is dependent on the cooperation of the Diamond Foundation, Rockefeller University, and the city of New York, most of the operating costs are borne by federal grants. We need more of these focused research centers if we are to optimize our spending in the fight against AIDS. I second the challenge of Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala to philanthropic organizations to use their financial power toward this end. Other societal problems—drug abuse and gun control, to name a few—could also benefit enormously from this approach.

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#### Swedish Biomedical Research Funding

In Jon Cohen's News & Comment article of 25 October (p. 491), a table lists changes in the public funding for basic biomedical research in various countries between the years 1996 and 1997. The figures appearing

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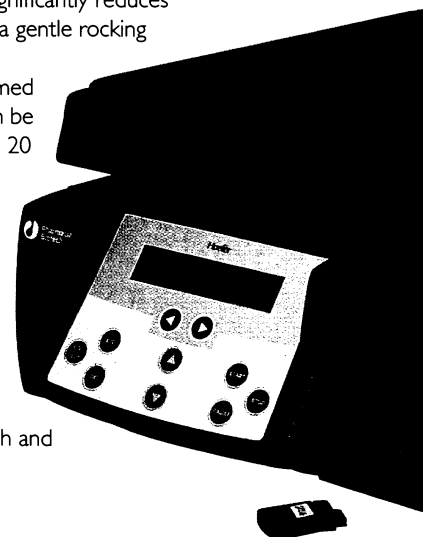
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