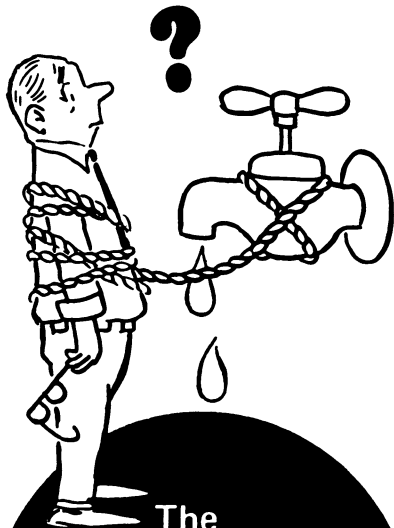


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19 MAY 1972

therefore in the realm of practicality.

The idea of polluting our atmosphere on purpose may seem horrifying, and one obvious price would be a 5 percent decrease in the brightness of a cloudless day. This might be acceptable, though, if we were faced with evolving climatic changes that threatened to bring on an ice age or inundation through the melting of the polar ice caps. Hopefully we will learn how to lessen man's impact on the environment so that threats of this kind will never materialize, but inasmuch as there have been natural ice ages, it might be useful to understand whether we are capable of artificially controlling the climate in this manner.

DAVID D. ELLIOTT

7029 Barkwater Court,
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Herzberg in Canada

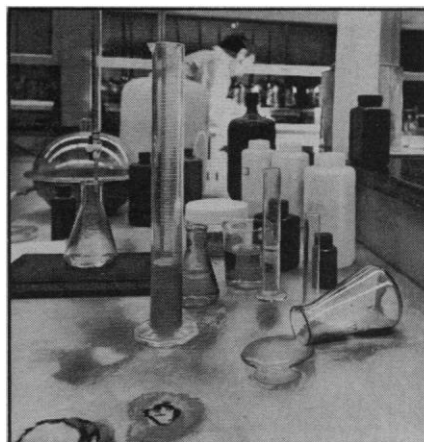
Although I endorse with enthusiasm A. E. Douglas's account of the spectroscopic achievements of Nobel prize-winner Gerhard Herzberg (*Research Topics*, 12 Nov. 1971, p. 672), I take issue with him about Herzberg's activities during World War II. It is exceptional when a specialist of Herzberg's caliber can show the versatility that he did during the period from 1941 to 1945.

Herzberg was not treated scientifically as an alien in Canada, and he responded at once to Canadian requests for a study of detonation phenomena. When he soon ascertained that such a study could not be made spectroscopically, he turned to high-speed photography and then demonstrated and measured the hitherto unknown threshold rate of acceleration to maximum rate of detonation in high explosives. As a native-born German, he was not permitted to enter the United States, but his reports were of sufficient interest to U.S. experts that they met with Herzberg in my laboratories in Toronto.

A charming sidelight on Herzberg's character is exemplified by the laboratory that he built in Saskatoon for his detonation studies. While others were planning fancy facilities, Herzberg's helpers built a sod-hut similar to those used as homes by the early settlers of Saskatchewan. He finished the study while others were still deliberating about it.

GEORGE F. WRIGHT

Department of Chemistry, University
of Toronto, Toronto 5, Canada



LAB MESSY?



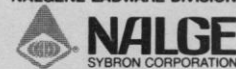
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