creased, perhaps one every decade or so.

We recognize that an engineered storage facility with appropriate handling and cooling facilities would require additional volume, and might look more like the Pentagon than a pyramid. The point of this example is to give perspective to the quantities of waste to be managed, which are indeed tractable and feasible to handle. We are not seriously suggesting that pyramids in the desert are the best way to store nuclear wastes. Other places, such as salt mines, are perhaps better. But if all else fails, they would work, they could be safe and attractive, and they would not be forgotten (*3*). The key objective is to give our successors the freedom to manage the radioactive waste and to change the storage plan if they find a better one, or if surrounding conditions change.

CHAUNCEY STARR
School of Engineering and Applied Science, University of California, Los Angeles 90024

R. PHILIP HAMMOND
Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

References and Notes

1. W. G. Belter, *Nucl. Safety* **8**, 174 (1966).
2. A. M. Weinberg and R. P. Hammond, "Global Effects of Increased Use of Energy" (paper presented at the Fourth International Conference on Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy, Geneva, 1971), table III.
3. Since the above was written, the Atomic Energy Commission has announced plans for vault storage, while continuing research on other modes.

Herbicide Study

As one accustomed to hearing scientists charge that reporters will sometimes distort reality through selective reporting, I feel obliged to report evidence that at least some journalists and some scientists share a common humanity. Vide the statement from Arthur Galston in his book review (14 Apr., p. 154) of *Harvest of Death* (*1*) that "in the meantime, the National Academy of Sciences has picked up the ball, and under a grant from the Department of Defense(!) is conducting an additional survey" [of the effects of herbicides in Vietnam].

That the financial instrument is a contract rather than a grant is not terribly important; what is more important is that the contract between the Department of Defense and the National Academy of Sciences was not made at the initiative of the department but at the behest of the Congress, specifically in the Military Procurement Act of 1970.

Two corrections are therefore in order. It is the Congress that deserves credit for "picking up the ball," and the implication should be hastily removed that the National Academy of Sciences turned to the Department of Defense to support the described study. Galston's exclamation point is herewith returned, for more appropriate use elsewhere(!).

HOWARD J. LEWIS
National Academy of Sciences–National Research Council, Washington, D.C. 20418

Reference

1. J. B. Neilands, G. H. Orians, E. W. Pfeiffer, A. Vennema, A. H. Westing, *Harvest of Death* (Free Press, New York, 1972).

I am willing to change "grant" to "contract" and "picked up the ball" to "accept the ball." In both instances, I was aware of the situation Lewis describes and do not feel that the changes are substantial.

I must, however, insist on restoring the returned exclamation point to its original location in my review. It is somewhat surprising that the Department of Defense (DOD), which was responsible for spreading massive quantities of herbicides over Vietnam without adequate knowledge concerning the consequences of such an action, should now be in the position of supporting, after the fact, a National Academy of Sciences (NAS) investigation into the extent of the partly irreversible ecological damage it has caused. At the very least, DOD sponsorship has led several able anthropologists to refuse to participate in the study. I suspect there have been other disadvantages as well.

It has been reported that previous investigating teams, including the Herbicide Assessment Commission of the AAAS, received less than complete cooperation from the military once they got to Vietnam. I presume that the NAS was able to ensure a more favorable ambience for its investigations. But whatever the concessions made by the DOD to the NAS investigating group, many scientists would have been happier with alternative financial sponsorship. Perhaps the NAS should have sensed this and acted accordingly.

ARTHUR W. GALSTON
Department of Biology, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut