

an agency would be formed to equalize the resulting benefits among all farmers.

A soil conservation program supported by farmers would be much more effective and less costly in tax dollars than one imposed on them by a police force.

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Btu Borrowing?

I have a modest proposal which might settle the controversy about energy analysis and the "net energy" concept involving Malcolm Slessor, Howard T. Odum, and David Huettner (Letters, 11 Apr., p. 259). Instead of paying for imported oil in dollars, let us borrow Btu's from Saudi Arabia and pay them back in Btu's some years from now, after fusion power or some other essentially inexhaustible source of energy has been developed—with interest of course. If they accept this proposal, then we can consider the controversy settled in favor of net energy accounting.

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"Kerfuffle"

Is Nicholas Wade, who writes so succinctly about techniques of gene splicing with recombinant DNA molecules (25 Feb., p. 762), practicing analogous techniques of syllable splicing and recombinant "verbarianism" when he speaks of a regulatory "kerfuffle"?

Presumably a kerfuffle is something like the brouhaha which he mentions earlier, but I could not find the word in any regular or slang dictionary. F. B. Hilmer (personal communication) suggests that Wade has grafted the prefix "ker-" to "fuffle" (to put, or be, in disorder), as in kerplop, kersplash, and so forth. But we doubt that he has a valid hybrid because (i) it is not onomatopoeic, and (ii) it is used as a noun, whereas the precedents are usually adverbs.

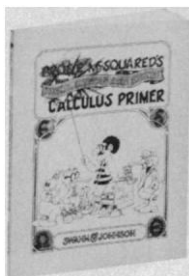
Perhaps we also need guidelines for this kind of recombinant research, else we shall soon encounter such hybrids as "broufuffle" and "kerhaha."

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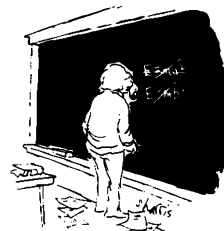
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