

His quoted comments suggest that scientific activity should be singled out, in contrast to all other enterprises, to be immune from all regulation in the public interest. But unregulated recombinant DNA activity, for instance, whether practiced in a university or an industrial laboratory, could present hazards from which the public deserves protection.

The claim that we who seek reasonable controls to protect laboratory workers, their families, and their neighbors from the spread of disease are seeking to somehow inhibit scientific inquiry does not withstand scrutiny. At present there are no legal safeguards regarding laboratory safety and containment of microorganisms in recombinant DNA experiments. Legislation to safeguard the public, far from "interven[ing] in the administration of research," is no different from laws regulating other professions and activities—medicine, aviation, building construction—to ensure that standards of safety exist.

McGill's statement that "the adversary method for arriving at truth" is "not appropriate for arriving at sound public policy on scientific matters" implies that such decisions should be left solely to the "experts." Where the importance of these issues transcends the expertise of any one discipline and where the public must run the risks implicit in those decisions, the public must have a say in its own protection. It was public concern expressed to government which led to regulation of DDT, fluorocarbons, toxic substances, and other hazards. Had we relied on self-regulation alone we would still be exposed to these dangers.

As I see it, the needs of environmental protection and of scientific research are not antithetical. Both should be partners in seeking a healthier and better life for all of us.

PHILIP WEINBERG

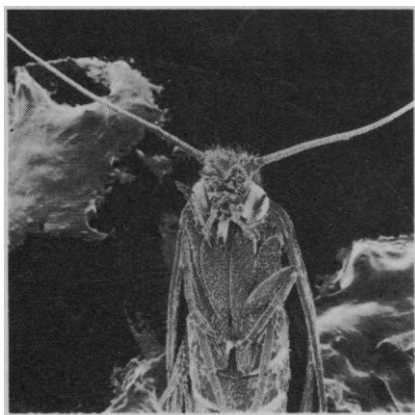
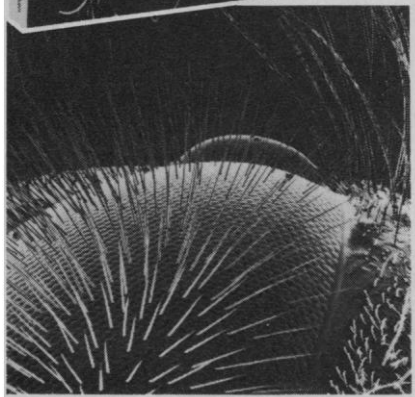
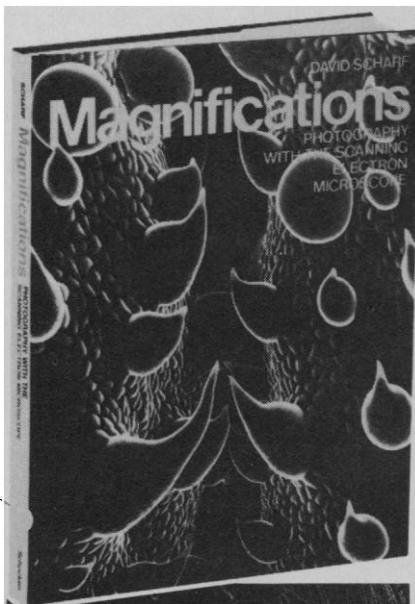
*Environmental Protection Bureau,
Office of the Attorney General,
State of New York,
Two World Trade Center,
New York 10047*

Nuclear Power Initiatives: the IEEE Position

In his article "IEEE: A policy challenge for big engineering society" (News and Comment, 19 Aug., p. 741), John Walsh discusses criticism of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers' nontechnical activities. In describing reaction to the IEEE's opposi-

MAGNIFICATIONS

documents a discovery as astounding as the first microscope.



MAGNIFICATIONS is a book of 103 photographs taken with a Scanning Electron Microscope. The photographer, David Scharf, has devised a new technique that allows him to take photographs of living organisms without drying, gold coating, or other special treatments that might alter or destroy their surfaces.

This is the first book of S.E.M. photographs using this new technique which greatly increases the clarity of the image. The result is a new visual experience of forms in nature; a revelation of details and structures not previously reproducible.

**Take a fantastic
journey beyond the
sight-barrier into
the world of the
incredibly small.**

Magnifications

Photography with the Scanning
Electron Microscope

DAVID SCHARF

9" x 12", With 103
Duotone Photographs **\$24.95**

at your bookstore or from

SCHOCKEN
200 Madison Avenue, New York 10016

SCHOCKEN BOOKS, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

S-11

Please send _____ copy(ies) of **Magnifications** @ \$24.95

☐ My check for \$_____ is enclosed. (N.Y. residents: please add appropriate tax.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

tion to the California initiative on nuclear power, he says that critics "protested vigorously" and that the institute's position drew "intense fire." The IEEE Energy Committee has instructed me to offer the following relevant facts.

We were active not only in California in 1975 and 1976 but also in six other states where antinuclear initiatives were offered later in 1976. Letters were sent to 44,036 IEEE members in the seven states stating the IEEE's position and offering a packet of information, covering both sides of the argument, to assist members in their voting. The "intense fire" of disapproval consisted of about 45 negative replies. Conversely, 5153 positive responses were received, requesting the information, with 550 of these contributing substantially to the cost of the printing and mailing. Thus, current IEEE president Robert M. Saunders' estimate that 90 percent of the membership approved of the position would appear to be conservative.

Walsh mentions "an internal debate over official [IEEE] policy-making . . . aired in the IEEE's monthly journal, *Spectrum*," which, he says, was precipitated by criticism of the institute's position on the California initiative. An article in the March 1977 *Spectrum* was incorrect on this matter. A rebuttal by R. L. Clark, then secretary of the Energy Committee, appeared in the June 1977 *Spectrum* and fairly states the facts concerning the issue.

We also take issue with the implication by critics that the controversial issue of nuclear energy has little to do with engineers' interests. If a subject as technical as nuclear energy has little to do with engineers' interests, who should be involved in the debate and what are the proper interests for engineers?

The IEEE's stand was taken with the interests of all citizens in mind—not just those of engineers. It was taken with a background of fundamental knowledge of the need for energy and a belief that our present nuclear technology can provide the safest, cleanest form of energy to supply this country's future demands.

Moreover, our stand on the issue in California (and in the other states) was taken because the initiatives were not for just "strict control" of nuclear energy, which we favor, but because they would have virtually prohibited further development of the nuclear option and would have shut down existing nuclear plants.

T. H. LEE

*Energy Committee,
Institute of Electrical and Electronics
Engineers, Inc., 345 East 47 Street,
New York 10017*

18 NOVEMBER 1977

A NEW SERIES ON PROSPECTS FOR MAN AND THE UNIVERSE



THE TREE

OF LIFE

The Tree of Life, planned and edited by *Ruth Nanda Anshen*, is committed to the advancement of nascent ideas. It is a program of books by some of the world's most eminent, concerned thinkers, dedicated to the new threshold of consciousness where thought influences evolution.

NOW PUBLISHED:

George A. Miller: SPONTANEOUS APPRENTICES
Children and Language \$9.95

Gerald Feinberg: CONSEQUENCES OF GROWTH
The Prospects for a Limitless Future \$9.95

Erwin Chargaff: VOICES IN THE LABYRINTH
Nature, Man and Science \$9.95

AMONG THE FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS:

Erich Fromm on Man and Society • **Jonas Salk** on Biology and Beyond • **Werner Heisenberg** on Tradition in Science • and others.

CONTINUUM BOOKS

THE SEABURY PRESS

815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

Circle No. 101 on Readers' Service Card