ally obliged to suggest and try one conservation method after another as long as the resolution of the issue remains in doubt.

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Greenland Research Projects

As a National Science Foundation–funded principal investigator of a large research project operating in Greenland, I was particularly disturbed by some statements in Joseph Palca's article "Poles apart, science thrives on thin ice" (News & Comment, 17 Jan., p. 276). It is true that logistic support provided to scientists by the U.S. Air Force has been beneficial to scientific projects throughout Greenland. However, it should be noted that the cost of this support is reimbursed to the U.S. Air Force. It is not a "piggyback" free ride.

The current projects in Greenland are not at risk of ending prematurely ("on thin ice") because of the recent decision by the Air Force to withdraw from the Sondrestrom Air Base. The air base is not closing—it is the airport hub for all of Greenland. In fact, the operation of the base has been gradually turned over to the Greenland Home Rule to be operated as a civilian airport. Discussions are continuing between the National Science Foundation and the Greenland Home Rule to ensure that support for science projects will remain available.

It is suggested in the article that little attention has been paid to environmental issues in Greenland. For many years the Danish (and now Greenland Home Rule) authorities have shown their concern about the environment. All research projects must be approved by the Danish Foreign Ministry through the Danish Polar Center, and all aspects of the research proposals including environmental factors are scrutinized before they are approved.

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Synchrotron Radiation Facilities

Michael Balter's article "Synchrotron light: The third generation" (News & Comment, 8 Nov., p. 794) gives the impression that work on ultrabright synchrotron radiation is limited to high energy sources like the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) and Argonne National Laboratory's Advanced Photon Source. There are equally important projects under development in the lower energy range. We refer, in particular, to the two ultrabright sources Elettra in Trieste and the Advanced Light Source at Berkeley.

There is an increasing tendency in synchrotron radiation toward specialization. Storage rings in the high electron energy range up to 8 gigaelectron volts are being developed primarily for structural techniques such as diffraction and scattering, whereas lower energy rings will take the lead in spectroscopy. Although not absolute, this specialization is easily recognizable in the spectrum of beam lines for each kind of source.

More than $250 million is being invested in Elettra, scheduled to be commissioned in 1993. The facility is being developed by the Sincrotrone Trieste company, whose president is Carlo Rubbia. The initial program calls for the construction of at least eight beam lines, with the participation of scientists from Italy, the United States, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the United Kingdom, and other countries. Elettra will clearly be in the same class as the ESRF and will be a "leading facility" in Europe.

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Ig Nobel Prize: The Pogo Connection

I was pleased to see the 18 October Briefing (News & Comment, p. 372) about the "Ig Nobel Prize." There was, however, no mention of the debt the prize's organizers owe to the late, great humorist Walt Kelly, who invented the "Ig Noble Peace Prize" (note spelling) back in the 1950s. The original prize was the brainchild of Ignatz Noble, a civic-minded citizen of Fort Mudge, and its spirit was identical to that of the modern upstart.

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Erratum: In the "NATO International Scientific Exchange Programmes" (31 Jan., p. 577), the item "Cell-free analysis of the functional organization of the cytoplasm" was listed incorrectly. The title should have been "Molecular mechanisms of membrane traffic." The organizer is Dr. Kathryn Howell, American Society for Cell Biology/NATO, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814, USA. The date and place are 9–13 May 1992 and Virginia, USA, respectively.