

experimental techniques, numerical methods, electron microscopy, etc. But projects of this kind are very far from achieving reality without funds comparable with those afforded to other, more "modern" branches of biology.

Insect taxonomists have contributed substantially to the advancement of science as well as to everyday scientific practice. Most of the research work, however, still remains to be done, while it is also imperative to ensure the existence of reliable identification services. Both are the basic responsibility of taxonomists toward society. On the other hand, I am convinced it is the moral duty of science administrators to grant enough support for insect taxonomy to allow it to develop as progressively and successfully as other fields of biological enquiry.

Yours faithfully,

JAN ZUSKA

*Department of Entomology,
Research Institute of Food Industry,
Czech Academy of Agriculture,
Na bělidle 21,
Prague 5*

Faulty Flying Machine

SIR,—I believe your readers would be concerned to hear of the unfortunate fate of a colleague who constructed a flying machine based upon a design of H. C. Bennet-Clark (*Nature*, 239, 451; 1972). The machine became airborne satisfactorily but when adjusting the trim to change from a subsonic to a supersonic condition it veered uncontrollably and, sadly to say, fatally to starboard.

Subsequent examination of the black box flight recorder yielded the last message from my colleague, couched in understandably uninhibited terms, to the effect that "... the ... dotted line on the starboard fin should have been drawn through the ... corner".

Yours faithfully,

D. C. SPOONER

*Research and Development Division,
Cement and Concrete Association,
Wexham Springs, Slough SL3 6PL*

IQ Absurdity

SIR,—There appears to be an absurd recommendation towards the end of the first paragraph of "How much of IQ is inherited?" (*Nature*, 240, 69; 1972). You say, in effect, that, even where valid conclusions are being drawn from accurate observation of a phenomenon, policy makers should be absolved from paying them any attention. Using a closely similar example, may I point out the unsoundness of this notion?

It is the generally accepted view among psychologists that there is no inherent difference between the sexes in the distribution of IQ. I conclude, from your comments, that you would consider it entirely proper for this fact to be disregarded by social policy makers, on the grounds that it is likely to be irrelevant to decisions about, for example, equal treatment for the sexes at work. If this should not be a permissible conclusion for me to draw, I would welcome your explanation of the critical ways in which it differs logically from the argument which you have presented.

The emotional content of racial questions has a tendency to cloud real issues. I would like to suggest that the problem to which educational psychologists, social policy makers, and the editors of learned journals should be addressing themselves is that of providing suitable educational facilities for as wide a range of intellectual ability as possible. In this way, most people would receive treatment tailored to their special needs, and the colour of their skin would be seen for the red herring it is.

Yours faithfully,

ANDREW M. STEWART

*Imberdown,
Woodlands Lane,
Liss,
Hampshire*

Law of the Sea

SIR,—The article on "Threat to Deep Sea Research" (*Nature*, 239, 421; 1972) is misleading when it refers to permission usually being granted for work on the continental shelf. For example, Turkey insists that national organizations should participate. However, even when this condition is fulfilled the Turkish Government consistently refuses permission on security grounds. Similarly Greece usually insists that a naval observer is on board, but when this is welcomed and national organizations are participating by invitation, refuses permission for magnetic, gravity and bathymetric surveys.

These are two countries selected from many examples which could be quoted, but several other countries both in Europe and elsewhere are becoming increasingly restrictive, generally on "security" grounds. It is always easier to refuse permission than to grant it.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN S. TOOMS

*Applied Geochemistry Research
Group,
Department of Geology, Royal School
of Mines,
Prince Consort Road, London SW7*

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