

CORRESPONDENCE

Katchalsky Memorial Fund

SIR,—The senseless murder of Professor Aharon Katzir-Katchalsky at Lod Airport has deeply shocked the world. Wide circles, both scientific and non-scientific, have conveyed their outrage and sorrow to the people of Israel and the Weizmann Institute of Science. We have received a flood of letters and cables all expressing a profound sense of loss at the tragic death of a scientist whose personality and impact were, literally, unique.

Many of these letters and cables have indicated a desire to participate in the creation of a memorial worthy of Aharon Katzir. We are all most deeply moved by this response. While we have not yet been able to make any detailed plans for a suitable way of commemorating Professor Katzir, we are clear on one point: the wish, at one and the same time, to perpetuate his memory on this campus and to further those fields of endeavour that were closest to his heart.

In order to make possible some kind of coordinated action, an international committee is being formed, and a Katzir Memorial Fund has been established at the Weizmann Institute of Science.

Ideas and offers of help will be gratefully received.

Yours faithfully,

I. DOSTROVSKY

*Vice-President,
Weizmann Institute of Science,
Rehovot*

Katchalsky Memorial Symposium

SIR,—Many scientists from around the world have had the privilege of knowing Professor Aharon Katchalsky, his brilliant scientific work, his extraordinary faculty to communicate science, and his warm personality. Those who have worked with him, were his students, or merely heard him lecture will carry equally the intellectual excitement which Aharon Katchalsky could invoke.

On May 30, 1972, Professor Aharon Katchalsky, returning to Israel from one of his frequent trips abroad devoted to international scientific cooperation, was gunned down at the Tel Aviv airport along with Puerto Rican pilgrims and other innocent bystanders in a vicious and senseless terrorist attack.

We have requested that a suitable

Memorium symposium be held at the forthcoming Fourth International Congress of Biophysics sponsored by the IUPAB and due to begin in Moscow on August 7. Professor Katchalsky was a past president of this organization and an honorary vice president at the time of his demise. Because so many of his friends, students and scientific colleagues will gather in Moscow for this meeting, we feel that it is a unique opportunity to honour Professor Katchalsky's scientific and intellectual accomplishments, and would be an especially significant and fitting tribute to this outstanding international scientist. Indeed, his leadership and example in international scientific co-operation have played a major part in making such international meetings possible.

Realizing the difficulty of making late changes in a carefully prepared programme, we hope the organizing committee of the Fourth International Congress of Biophysics will see fit so to honour Professor Katchalsky with a memorial symposium.

We ask our colleagues throughout the international scientific community to express the appropriateness of such a memorial symposium, and appreciation to the organizing committee for their efforts in arranging the tribute.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES F. DANIELLI
JOHN C. ECCLES
ROBERT REIN
HAROLD SCHERAGA
ROBERT A. SPANGLER
V. S. VAIDHYANATHAN

*State University of New York,
at Buffalo,
Amherst,
New York 14226*

Science in India

SIR,—The suicide by Dr V. H. Shah (*Nature*, May 19, 1972) is not the only case in New Delhi. In the late 1950s Dr Joseph also committed suicide in similar circumstances. Many young scientists in India run into such problems but consider it wise to emigrate.

Scientific methods require proper management to produce results. The partnership between management on one hand and science on the other is an absolute necessity if improvement is to be expected in developing countries. Dr Homi Bhabha, the late Indian nuclear physicist, was probably referring to this

problem, I believe, when he said in his last speech, "It is my personal view . . . that the general absence of the proper administration for science is a bigger obstacle to the rapid growth of science and technology than paucity of scientists and technologists because we are less effective through the lack of right type of administrative support."

Will the Government of India do something about the problem? It remains a big question.

Yours faithfully,

G. R. SAINI

*Research Station, PO Box 280,
Fredericton, NB, Canada*

Science Criticism

SIR,—For a long time it has been the accepted prerogative of every newspaper to criticize the policies and attitudes of any government; any art medium has a following of eager critics willing to distinguish between the good, the bad and the ugly; and what has science got? Nothing.

For some reason science is sacred. It has always been considered bad form to criticize scientific papers without, at least, providing an alternative argument on the same subject. But why is this so? Presumably the quality of scientific work is, unlike everything else, self-evident. Or perhaps the pride of the average scientist is more tender than that of, for example, the average film producer. Or perhaps scientists are simply above criticism. None of these explanations is really satisfactory. And when one discovers how much poor work is being done in the name of science and being published without a whisper of complaint from anyone, one goes on wondering why this is so.

It seems to me that a reasonable case could be made for devoting some energy to the serious art of scientific criticism.

Yours faithfully,

ANTON ZIOLKOWSKI

*Seismic Discrimination Group,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology,
42 Carleton Street,
Cambridge,
Massachusetts 02142*

Space Tribology

SIR,—In a report entitled "Base for Britain" published on May 26 (*Nature*, 237, 189; 1972), it was stated that the contract for the European Space Tri-