

the chances of success? Enhancing the overall level of government funding for R&D, increasing the present level of discretionary funding from 10% to 15% or 20% to enable CRIs to do more basic research to underpin their more applied science; providing a better system of funding small 'starter' projects in the universities; and last, but by no means least, encouraging industry to raise its level of support for R&D.

But all that has a familiar ring, and I could just as well be talking about the United Kingdom (or Australia) as New Zealand.

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Sir — Analysis of science reforms in New Zealand raises serious questions about the future of science in New Zealand, particularly in the light of indications that government commitments to increase science funding will not be met in the 1998–99 budget. A subsequent response by P. M. Hargreaves, president of the Association of Crown Research Institutes (*Nature* 391, 834; 1998), demands a response.

Hargreaves states that 349 new science positions have been established since the Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) were set up, but a breakdown of this figure reveals that it represents only 126 full-time equivalent research and development science positions (CRIs also have a commercial arm). Furthermore, only 21 additional positions for scientists are represented, a 1.6% increase in four years. In contrast, technical staff increased by 7.8% and support staff by 20%. Further analysis of recently released Ministry of Research, Science and Technology figures indicates that these are continuing trends in that the number of scientists declined by almost 4% between 1994 and 1996 while technicians increased by 10% and support staff by 25%.

The New Zealand Association of Scientists is particularly concerned about these marked shifts in employment in government research institutions "from research staff to non-scientists" referred to in the *Nature* article. These are disturbing trends which suggest that the reforms may have spawned a new wave of managerialism and bureaucracy on the New Zealand science scene.

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Change comes all too slowly in Albania

Sir — Albania's first democratic government effectively chose to ignore the Albanian Academy of Sciences, but the Socialist party, which took office last year, has been looking at it more critically.

The government appointed a new temporary academy presidium, comprising a president, two vice-presidents and a general secretary, who were given the task of drafting statutes and of organizing elections for a regular presidium. But the members of this temporary presidium worked for the administration of the Hoxha era, and appear to be working undemocratically.

The government said that the new staff of the presidium, together with new directors of the 12 research institutions under the academy's umbrella, should initiate reforms as soon as possible. The most important issues were the means of selecting institute directors and the presidium and of bringing new members into the ageing body of academicians.

The temporary presidium, however, altered the proposed statutes agreed after discussion with scientists at the institutes. The final version, about to be submitted for approval to the president of Albania, says that institute directors should be appointed by the presidium from a list of nominations from the scientific council of each institute. The presidium itself should be elected by an assembly composed of the directors whom the presidium itself appoints, and academicians. It is feared that the presidium will propose to the assembly a two-year postponement of even this procedure.

The slow reorganization process is detrimental for research. Older academy members, some of whom received their scientific titles and degrees by decree in Hoxha's totalitarian regime, cling to their positions and cannot grasp the new paths that science should follow in a democracy.

Researchers will for a long time face not only financial difficulties but also chaotic "reorganizations" by backward minds.

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Addiction, the tobacco industry and *Nature*

Sir — At the end of 1996, *Nature* published my views about behavioural (that is, non-chemical) addictions and the biopsychosocial nature of addiction (*Nature* 384, 18; 1996). These views were originally submitted as an item of

correspondence under the title "Addicted to anything?". After revision, however, it was published under the title "Nicotine, tobacco and addiction".

I thought this title was a little strange — particularly because there was no mention of nicotine, tobacco or smoking in the article itself — but I was pleased just to have had something published in *Nature*. Since that time, however, a number of events have happened that I feel I should share.

Obviously, the publication of my short article automatically led to entry on academic databases all over the world. As a consequence, anyone who types keywords such as "nicotine", "tobacco" or "addiction" into word searches will eventually come across my contribution. On the positive side, I have received what appears to be a record number of reprint requests from academics all over the world wanting to read my thoughts about addiction. In addition, some of those requesting my article were (quite understandably given the title) members of the tobacco industry.

I have also received many telephone calls from the media and legal firms representing the tobacco industry who have done their database word searching and come up with my name (or rather that of "tobacco" and "nicotine"). With regards to the media, I am generally happy to explain my general views on addiction but would be the first to admit I do not consider myself an "expert" on anything concerning nicotine. However, the number of legal firms that have contacted me is not something I have relished.

The feeling I get is that they want to use my research findings to get themselves "off the hook". The general sequence of events is as follows. A legal firm telephones me to say they would like to speak to me face to face about my views on the psychological nature of addiction. I meet them (usually) in their London offices. They tell me they are looking for "scientific advisers" and/or "expert witnesses" to represent their clients (the tobacco industry). I speak to them for about an hour and explain that just because I believe psychological processes to be fundamental in the explanation of all addictions does not excuse the fact that nicotine is physiologically addictive.

Hopefully, with the word "tobacco" in the title of this piece of correspondence, the legal representatives of the tobacco industry will leave me alone!

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● The title was broadened to reflect an accompanying letter. — Editor, *Nature*