CORRESPONDENCE

BIG VS. LITTLE

To the editor:

You seem to concentrate on the spectacular success stories of transference like Genentech, some of the firms along Route 128 in Boston, or the California companies. How about talking about some of the losers...the little guys who tried it with little or no money and *almost* made it. Let them tell how it was—or wasn't. In that way, you'll better inform, enlighten, and encourage other backyard or garage inventors trying to buck a government which wants more missiles, not medicines.

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ANOTHER VOICE OF CONCERN

To the editor:

I would like to respond to your article entitled "Wide Acclaim for North Carolina Regulations." (*Bio/Technology* **7**:1002, Oct.'89).

North Carolina, a dynamic and progressive state, has outstanding research and commercial ventures—both academic and industrial—founded in the applied biological sciences. For this reason the bill that passed surprised many observers and advocates of the technology. It remains to be seen if the rules developed to implement the new law will remedy some of its more troublesome provisions. Various companies, my own included, opposed the legislation. The Industrial Biotechnology Association also opposed the legislation. Although not all inclusive, the principal objections to the bill include:

- Biotechnology is a conglomeration of scientific techniques. Like economics, finance, or chemistry, it is difficult to regulate such a system efficiently and productively when viewed as a singular topic.
- The Federal Coordinated Framework acknowledges this limitation ensuring that the product rather than the process is scrutinized. The same basic science can produce a protease for injection or household cleaning; the injectable pharmaceutical merits greater scrutiny. Regulation should be a function of the inherent risk.
- Submitting "virtually the same information" is not the *same* information; if it is identical, the purpose of the submission must be questioned. A patchwork of fifty slightly different requirements would truly become a nightmare for this developing and important industry.
- It is possible that the Federal government could approve an experiment which North Carolina rejects—or the reverse.
- Finally, rather than duplicating an existing process, consider an approach that codifies active participation in the existing framework. This creates synergy allowing scarce resources to complement rather than duplicate efforts. The more minds focused on the potential and the pitfalls, the better off we all are—but let's use the same existing, proven system.

The rule-making process can clarify these concerns and Monsanto anxiously anticipates participating in North Carolina's rule-making process.

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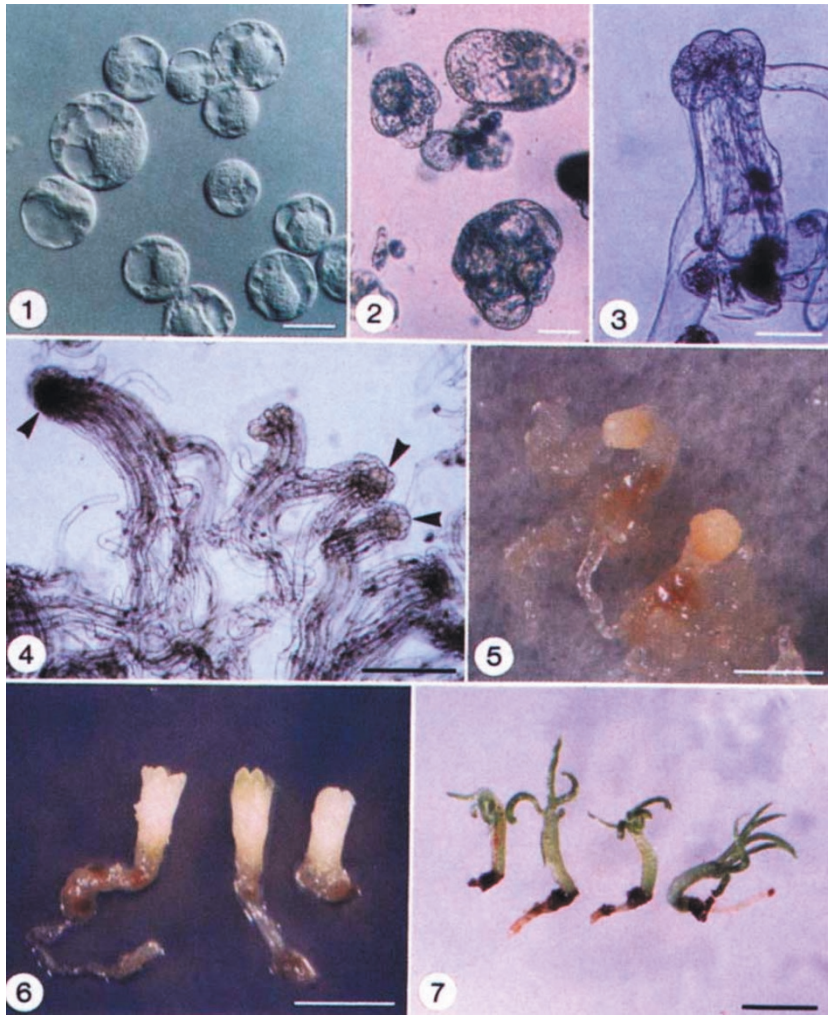

ERRATUM. Due to an editorial oversight, Figure 1 in Attree et al., Plantlet Regeneration from Embryogenic Protoplasts of White Spruce (*Picea glauca*) (*Bio/Technology* **7**:1060, 1989), was reproduced in black and white. Consequently, some relevant detail was not clearly visible. A color reproduction of the figure appears above.