



LETTERS

to the EDITOR

Applegazing

Sir:

In support of Roman Smoluchowski's article in *Physics Today* ("Creative Research," April, 1949), one is tempted to observe that the important thing is not that Newton saw the apple fall but rather that he was lying under the apple tree.

H. B. WAHLIN

Madison, Wisconsin

To Prevent Misunderstanding

Sir:

The Scientists' Committee on Loyalty Problems has been studying the loyalty and security clearance procedures of different government agencies for some time. While these procedures could be improved in many ways, the Committee wishes to point out to scientists that they themselves, even under present procedures, can better the situation.

The following proposal aims at raising the level of the confidential reports on which clearance decisions are based. In most investigations, agents of the FBI obtain information from friends, neighbors, and colleagues of the person to be cleared, as well as from less direct sources. The results are collected in a confidential dossier in which the sources of information are often anonymous or revealed only to a very limited number of officials. It is obvious that these unacknowledgeable statements can cause serious misunderstanding which cannot easily be clarified, especially in cases where the clearance status meets with difficulties.

It is, therefore, strongly recommended that all scientists adhere to the following rules whenever possible:

When giving information to loyalty and security investigators, state willingness to testify if necessary.

Prepare a signed, written statement of the information for the investigating agency.

LYMAN SPITZER, JR., for the Scientists' Committee on Loyalty Problems:
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