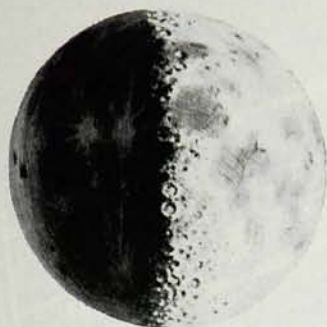


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more optimistic view.^{1,2} If the 152 neutron subshell arises from a gap between the $N = 152$ and $N = 154$ neutron levels, the effects would be expected to disappear between $N = 156$ and 160. Thus a leveling out of the lifetimes would result beyond $N = 156$ and the SF half-life systematics would be expected to behave in a manner analogous to those for alpha decay—except the level gap would influence SF decay rates more dramatically. The predictions of these calculations^{1,2} agree well with the results for ²⁶⁰104 but not for the Ghiorso and Sikkeland value for ²⁵²102 (which could be due to an isomeric state decaying by spontaneous fission). The solution to this problem is a subject of considerable debate at present, and hopefully current heavy-element research efforts will clarify it within the next year.

References

1. S. A. E. Johansson, Nucl. Phys. **22**, 529 (1961).
2. V. E. Viola, Jr., B. D. Wilkins, Nucl. Phys. **82**, 65 (1966).

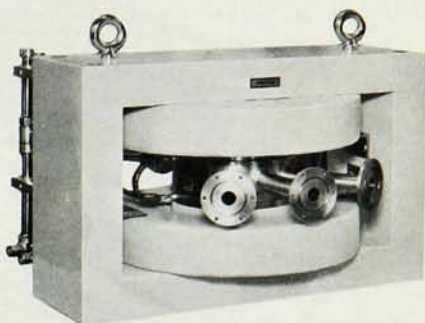
VIC VIOLA

University of Maryland

Federal agencies and the Draft

Mr. Huffman of US Steel (PHYSICS TODAY, Aug., p. 9) makes a good point. Neither prominent scientists nor scientific societies have strongly opposed the ending of occupational and graduate student deferments. But it is not only the scientist and the association who "have an obligation to the American people to inform them of the vital importance of maintaining a strong scientific community . . .," who have failed to make it clear ". . . to the general public that the best way for a scientist to serve his country is by doing good science." A great deal of responsibility lies with the federal agencies such as NIH and NSF, which have failed to support publicly the needs of the scientific community whenever those needs have conflicted with the single-minded purposes of the Selective Service system. In fact the civilian federal agencies make it a policy never to intercede with Selec-

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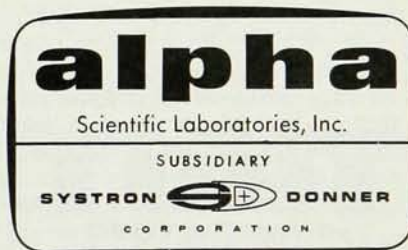
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tive Service on behalf of an employee or grantee. The official report of the Public Health Service to the President's Commission on the draft not only elevated Selective Service needs above the long-run needs of American science and civilization, but also did so on the basis of unscientific extrapolations from the conclusions of a small number of old, poorly designed, and largely irrelevant studies.

M. G. SASLOW
University of Washington

How many postdoctorals?

I read with interest and no little astonishment the note under RESONANCES on page 71 of the September PHYSICS TODAY, having to do with the number of postdoctorals in physics in US institutions. Since I was the source of the data mentioned in the statement, I would like to correct the conclusion drawn.

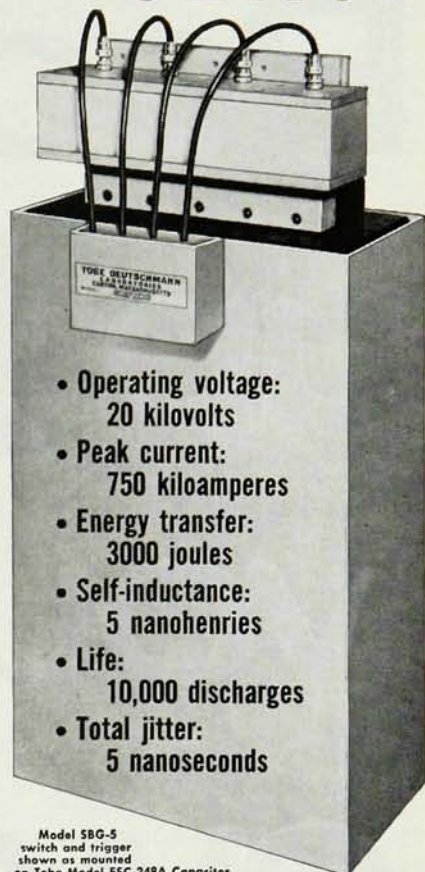
We have received returns from 11 000 postdoctorals working either in this country or as US citizens abroad. Of these 9 786 have been analyzed at this writing. Of those analyzed 13.6% or 1 332 are physicists. Almost exactly one-half of the postdoctorals are foreign citizens, and of the Americans only 446 are "immediate" postdoctorals, that is, within one year of their PhD. Furthermore if we take the average postdoctoral appointment to be two years, only 233 physics PhD's go immediately into postdoctoral work. Since this is only 21.3% of the 1 046 PhD's produced in the United States last year, it is certainly an exaggeration to suggest that most US PhD's enter postdoctoral training.

RICHARD B. CURTIS
National Research Council

Erratum

The book review appearing in the September issue, page 93, under the title "History of Kinetics," is for the book *Kinetic Theory, Vol. 2: Irreversible Processes* (Pergamon Press, 1966, cloth \$4.95, paper \$3.95). The book title was mistakenly printed as *Kinetic Theory, Vol. 1: The Nature of Gases and of Heat*. □

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