for society and may be a laudable goal for individuals to support, but what good will it do physics?"

There is an alternative assumption, the one I start from, to wit—that there *is* an enormous amount of untapped and wasted talent, and intellectual brilliance, within the minority community, and that not only would it be good for society as a whole if the best of these people could contribute to scientific research, but that ultimately it would be good for physics. We cannot have too many good physicists, but the profession now is undoubtedly missing a lot of potential contributors because of the lack of significant participation by minorities.

In this respect numbers are important. Talent and native intelligence are no doubt distributed among the minority population in about the proportions as among the majority population. Therefore, if we are to succeed in attracting the best minds and most creative persons from minority groups into physics so that they may make significant contributions, there must first be a sufficiently large pool of people who are interested enough in the subject to pursue it. Creating opportunities is only part of the challenge I feel the professional societies should meet. Generating sufficient numbers of people to take advantage of the opportunities is equally, if not more, important.

I submit then that the goal of increasing the number of minority physicists (and other scientists and engineers) *is* compatible with the goal of promoting the health of the discipline as a discipline, and would urge that the AAPT, but even more so the APS, recognize this as part of its mission.

One of the most significant accomplishments of the APS over the past few years was the creation and support of the Committee on Minorities in Physics. Carl Spight reported comprehensively on the activities of this Committee at the joint New York meeting in 1976, so I will not repeat all the details here.

Although the APS Committee on Minorities has engaged in a number of projects and activities, perhaps its most significant long-range effect will turn out to be that it provided a forum for minority physicists themselves (along with sympathetic whites) to discuss, debate, and propose remedies for the concerns of minorities in physics. These kinds of efforts have proved to be sufficiently exciting and potentially useful so that a group of black physicists have decided to formalize the process by organizing as a formal group. At a meeting of black physicists last April at Morgan State University, it was agreed to constitute an organization, which is tentatively called "The Society of Black Physicists." The broad purpose of the organization, which is still in a developing stage, is to promote the welfare of black physicists within the physics community and society at large, and to promote and support activities to increase opportunities for, *and* numbers of, blacks in physics.

Similar organizations have existed for some time among other scientific disciplines and other minority groups. There is SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicano and Native Americans in Science); there is the Society of Black Chemists; black biologists and black engineers also have similar groups.

The goals of these groups are not in conflict with the goals of the mainstream majority associations, but the groups are seen as necessary to provide an opportunity for minorities themselves to mount programs and activities to address the issue this session is devoted to: increasing opportunities for minorities.

In closing I would like to call attention to a recommendation made by the National Board on Graduate Education in 1976. The recommendation addressed the role of professional organizations in creating opportunities for minorities, and I think it would be fitting if the APS and AAPT would endorse it.

> "We urge professional associations to draw upon the prestige and talents of members and to assign a *high priority* to promoting increased opportunities for minority men and women in graduate study and in the professions. Such efforts should be central, not peripheral, to the mainstream of association activities to ensure the *sustained* commitment essential to their mobility and success."

(Adapted from a talk given at the 1978 joint APS–AAPT Meeting)

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Reader compliment

I want to compliment you on the article, "Patents: another way to publish" in March (page 23). This article was especially interesting to me in light of my formal education and training in physics and my present involvement in applied science and technology. I'm sure others like myself, who are currently involved in development and applied physics work, would encourage more articles of this type.

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4/3/78

Cosmic rays in the 30's

The February issue (page 23) contains excerpts from Daniel J. Kevles's book *The Physicists*. This interesting article exposes "difficulties for physics in the