

letters

ing options.

I believe these early reports and articles contributed substantially in the public debate on the MX, which, unlike the impression conveyed by the piece in *PHYSICS TODAY*, did not confine itself to classified documents (how can classified documents contribute to a public debate?) and reports to the Congress.

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PhD not dropped

A recent article ("Foreign Grad Students Raise Enrollment," June, page 62) erroneously lists the Colorado School of Mines among several universities having dropped their PhD programs in physics. To set the record straight, the Colorado School of Mines offers the MS in physics and PhD in applied physics and has no plans to drop either program. On the contrary, both programs are experiencing rapid growth. Prior to the approval of these degrees in 1968 and 1978, respectively, the school offered interdisciplinary MS and PhD degrees in physics combined with engineering. Nine such interdisciplinary degrees have been conferred, four at the doctoral level. Since approval of the new degrees, 24 MS degrees in physics and one PhD in applied physics have been conferred. Both programs are healthier now than at any time in their existence. Of the 20 graduate students enrolled last fall, five were in the PhD program. We expect to have six in the program this fall.

Research associated with these programs is concentrated in several areas having application to the energy and mineral resource fields. These include solid-state and materials science, solar energy, surface physics, nuclear physics, geophysics, particulates and lasers. The largest effort by far is in solid-state and materials science, some of which is in collaboration with the nearby Solar Energy Research Institute.

Apparently the error in the June article came about because I had not checked the box labeled "Doctor's" on the AIP form for the Annual Survey of Enrollments and Degrees.

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Erroneous siting

The December "Washington Reports," concerning the termination of the

Brookhaven CBA (page 41), erroneously states that "Los Alamos has suggested SSC could be located in the picturesque caldera of an ancient volcano just a few miles southeast of the laboratory." This romantic notion is unfounded in fact and contradicts elementary geological considerations, as could have been found by a phone call to informed sources, or even a superficial glimpse at the appropriate topographical map. As an institution, Los Alamos National Laboratory has no intention of competing for administrative control of the SSC. Individual scientists at Los Alamos are understandably interested in participating in the development of this exciting facility.

The interplay of technical requirements with realities of site possibilities (very restricted for such a large facility) requires an early consideration of sites and their constraints on R&D issues. As a preliminary step in this direction, a collaborative (rather than competitive) working group has assembled the first edition of a site atlas (R. Slansky, "Site Atlas for the Superconducting Super Collider," Los Alamos Report LA-UR-83-3078), to facilitate an objective study of site-related issues. The first edition contains contributions from Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, New Mexico, Texas and Utah. We hope that subsequent editions will include all realistic possibilities in the US.

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Cost of astronomy in Chile

In reply to the news report that appeared in October (page 45) under the title "Observing in the high Andes with dollars, planes and bugs," we would like to point out the following:

The statement "while Cerro Tololo's current annual budget is \$6.4 million, ESO spends nearly \$4 for every \$1 at the US observatory, according to NSF accounts" is unfortunately totally false. Actually, the total contribution to ESO in 1983 by its eight member countries was \$16 million, of which \$8 million are used for running the La Silla observatory, with the remainder serving to finance the European Center for Scientific Research, technological development, image processing and so on. With more than twice the number of telescopes as at Cerro Tololo—including a 3.6-m, a 2.2-m, three 1.5-m and three 1.0-m telescopes—the comparison of cost figures does not seem particularly unfavorable.

We regret that a colleague whom we have held in great esteem has been quoted in your journal as having made the ludicrous statements you report-

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