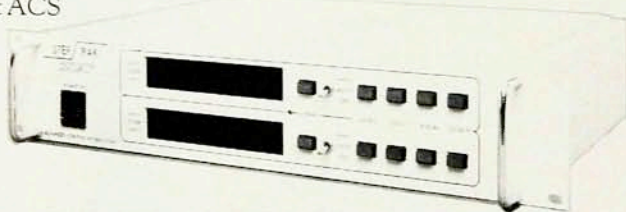


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letters

have had several Israeli scientists attending conferences in [our country] in the last few years with valid visas and landing permits. The incident involving Andrei was unfortunate . . . ; however, it is factually incorrect to assert that he was denied a visa because he holds an Israeli passport. The precise reason for the delay in granting a visa is unknown to us; indeed all governments in the world would appear to regard the granting of a visa as a prerogative, with no public justification thought necessary."

At this point, I invite the reader to guess the name of the host country. Wrong! It was not the Soviet Union! In spite of the very familiar tone of the response letter, in this particular case the host country was India and the host institution was none other than the world-renowned Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Bombay.

It is sad to see that B. V. Sreekantan has learned from his Russian colleagues how to draft such notorious letters designed to "explain" the deplorable behavior of his government, which strikes at the very heart of international scientific cooperation. Even more unfortunate, this spokesman of the Tata Institute has also mastered the well-known Russian ploy of concluding his letter with the outrageous charge that it is actually Andrei who is guilty of "politicizing physics."

The justly respected Indian community of physicists has the right to expect better representation from its spokesman.

NATHAN WISER
Bar-Ilan University
Ramat-Gan, Israel

12/85

Noncrystalline semiconductors

I have been fascinated and amused by the spate of letters (February 1985, page 11; August 1985, page 13; January 1986, page 13) engendered by Hellmut Fritzsche's article on noncrystalline semiconductors (October 1984, page 34). To this chemist, they confirm what I had previously only suspected—physicists are people. The arguments appear to be based more on professional relationships than on fact.

We, and several other companies, are benefiting from the pioneering discovery¹ of R. C. Chittick and his coworkers.

Reference

1. R. C. Chittick, J. R. Alexander, H. F. Sterling, J. Electrochem. Soc. 116, 77 (1969).

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