In his January letter to the editor (page 98) commenting on certain researchers long overlooked by the Nobel committee, Marshall Nathan asks, "Just how long must they wait for the recognition they deserve?" As in the case of the belated award of a Nobel Prize having been made to Ernst Ruska, I think this glaring oversight should be rectified. And I would now like to apply Nathan's question to another omission: synchrotron radiation.

To my knowledge, no major prizes have ever been awarded for (1) the first experimental demonstration that relativistic electrons magnetically guided in a circular orbit radiate as though circulating independently[1] (as discussed in my letter in your January 1975 issue, page 9), (2) the first direct observation of the radiation[2] or (3) the first spectroscopy with synchrotron radiation,[3] in which its ideal properties (spectral distribution, polarization, time dependence, collimation) as a research tool were first pointed out.

Surely those three achievements (especially the third one), which made possible the development of so much other new science, both fundamental and applied, were every bit as important in the history of physics as the laser and the cyclotron—and deserve the same level of recognition.

References

1. J. P. Blewett, Phys. Rev. **69**, 53 (1946).
2. F. R. Elder, H. C. Pollock, A. M. Gurewitsch, R. V. Langmuir, J. Appl. Phys. **18**, 810 (1947).
3. H. C. Pollock, Am. J. Phys. **51**, 278 (1983).

GEORGE C. BALDWIN
(gcbaldwin@compuserve.com)
Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos, New Mexico

Corrections

December 1998, page 65—In the "New Products" section, the headline "Time-of-Flight Mass Spectrometer" should have read "Digital Signal Averager." EG&G Instruments neither manufactures nor supplies the mass spectrometer used with the signal averager.

February 1999, page 60—The photo depicts a model of the University of Nijmegen's 30-tesla hybrid magnet, not the actual instrument. ■