linacs are already showing that they will be cheaper in the long run for large sterilization facilities. And as the cost of building and operating those accelerators goes down, smaller operations will find it beneficial to switch.

The article concludes that accelerators for sterilization are somehow excluded from the US, and it implies that they get no help from the government. Neither of those assessments is fair. Niowave is developing linacs with direct financial assistance through a Small Business Innovation Research grant from DOE. The company has also benefited from participation in panel discussions like the Alternate Technology Working Group led by the Department of Homeland Security. Other groups are also receiving federal support and making progress in reducing radionuclide dependence—for example, in eliminating cesium-137 from blood irradiators and replacing americium–beryllium sources currently used for logging geologic formations when drilling wells.

Chase Boulware
(boulware@niowaveinc.com)
Niowave Inc
Lansing, Michigan

Israel's water story: Success or crisis?

When I received the June 2016 issue of PHYSICS TODAY, I was surprised to see that a piece featured on the cover was about Israel's water success story.

The item (page 24) blithely celebrates Israel's innovative technology for optimizing water usage and delivery to agricultural lands. It covers most of the technical strategy developed over the years, but it overlooks a key policy explaining the effectiveness of Israel's water management.

Since 1967 Israel has pursued a policy of monopolizing water in occupied Palestinian territories. Palestinians are denied the right to drill wells on their own land or to repair existing ones. The policy includes the destruction of wells, irrigation systems, and water lines in the West Bank and near the borders of the Gaza Strip.[1] As a result, the 4 million Palestinians living in those areas have less than the minimum quantity of water for domestic use established by the World Health Organization.

I understand the scientific vocation of the American Institute of Physics (AIP) and perhaps its desire to remain neutral on political issues. However, by failing to acknowledge the existence of a massive humanitarian crisis revolving around the very subject of the story, AIP is tacitly endorsing the brutal oppression of the Palestinian people.

As a member of the American Physical Society, I ask that you inform your readers of the ongoing water crisis in the Palestinian territories.

Reference

1. Amnesty International, *Troubled Waters—Palestinians Denied Fair Access to Water* (October 2009).

Gabriel Antonius
(antonius@lbl.gov)
University of California, Berkeley
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory