

## PENULTIMATE EDITORIAL NOTE

*Mosquito News* will have a new editor within the next few months, and he or she will have responsibility for the September number. Thus your current editor feels free to editorialize because his time for incurring the wrath of contributors and readers is limited. Fortunately the number of irate authors and readers has been very small during the past 8 years. In fact there have been many comments to the effect that *Mosquito News* has been improving. In behalf of the Editorial Staff and Editorial Boards I acknowledge such compliments and express thanks.

On the other hand, when the word improvement is used there is the implication that something has been wrong or bad. To prevent possible criticism of the former state of things it is well to specify that whatever you have in mind has gone from good to better. *Mosquito News* was good in 1973, and if it is better in 1981 most of the credit belongs to the authors and reviewers. Contributors have been submitting better manuscripts, and reviewers have been conscientious in furnishing help so that better quality papers have resulted.

The so-called "peer" review process is considered to be of paramount im-

portance in academia as well as in many government agencies and elsewhere. Along with most of us the Council of Biology Editors recognizes imperfections. There are reports that because publication of a certain scientific paper was delayed by referees the availability of a most valuable therapeutic drug was also delayed; and many lives would have been saved if the article had been published promptly. There are also reports that many referees are unable to recognize manuscripts which they themselves reviewed and criticized 5 years or even 3 years previously. Nevertheless the reviewing process is going to continue to be the principal means for the maintenance of a journal's prestige.

During the past 8 years an appreciable number of manuscripts has been rejected by *Mosquito News* because of poor quality. Four of these articles (revised, more or less) appeared later in 4 other American journals. The reviewing process worked to the extent that the articles were improved. Whether or not our reviewers were too strict is still a question. We are dealing with judgmental decisions. But what are the alternatives?

—W. E. Bickley

## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Submitted manuscripts will be kept on file in the Editorial Office and will not be processed for publication until an author provides a statement that he has a sponsor for payment of page charges, or that he will pay the page charges personally, or that he will apply for a waiver of page charges.