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Publisher *Taylor & Francis*

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Critical Reviews in Analytical Chemistry

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713400837>

Letter from the Editor

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To cite this Article Lochmüller, C. H.(1997) 'Letter from the Editor', Critical Reviews in Analytical Chemistry, 27: 2, i

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/10408349708050583

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10408349708050583>

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The first thing I want to do is to announce the good/bad news. The Journal is proud that its Associate Editor was elected Editor-in-Chief of the distinguished international publication "Applied Spectroscopy." Professor Harris's distinguished career in the areas of spectroscopy and analytical spectroscopy is well known. Few of us can claim a dissertation event like the development of the synchronous dye laser. Or several decades of lifetime experiments spanning roughly the number of orders of magnitude in time as the years from the beginning of the universe to this date! Thankfully, he has agreed to stay on to the end of this volume and has given me a book of "free question" stubs to use cautiously or at least carefully. I am most grateful to him for the help he has provided in terms of both suggesting authors and encouragement over the past few years.

I would like to have a series of papers on aspects of environmental chemistry in the Journal and am open to suggestions by the readership as to what best themes and formats to seek to create. I am inspired to do this by my recent two visits to the Baltic Area of the former USSR.

The first was in May 97 where I spoke at the 1997 meeting of the Eesti Keemia Selts on the topic of Science policy and Public Policy with emphasis on Chemistry as the central science discipline. The Estonian Chemical Society began with Republic Status about 1919 and continued till the Soviet occupation and WWII and its aftermath. It is a country with a rightfully proud chemical tradition. Tswett the inventor of chromatography and Ostwald, one of the earliest Nobel Laureates in Chemistry were both Tartu University faculty, for example. What impressed me most is the remarkable strides they have made in that country since liberation as regards the environment. This includes and identifying environmental problems ranging from thousands of tons of high-level, radioactive waste meters from the Gulf of Finland to rocket-fuel soaked ground in former nuclear missile bases. The air is cleaner, there is a plan for a sustainable environment, water quality is much improved.

The second was in early June when several of us were the Americans invited to participate in an US American Chemical Society workshop on environmental chemistry held at Palanga in Lithuania. What became clear from that is that there are many analytical problems to be solved and cost-effective methods are much in need. Much of the need is for broad perspectives on measurement and analysis. A partnership between research and field study and monitoring needs to be encouraged. There will be two more such workshops: St. Petersburg and Prague in the next 18 months. The journal would welcome stories of scientific success and understood cases of scientific failure in this important area of measurement.

Prof. C. H. Lochmüller
Editor-in-Chief, CRAC