

NEWSLETTER

New Concepts In Global Tectonics

No. 6, March, 1998

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FROM THE EDITORS

AN APPRECIATION OF NEWSLETTER NO. 5, DECEMBER 1997

We continued to be surprised and very encouraged by the response to the Newsletter. We had expected some fall-off in contributions and enthusiasm but there is no sign of this and to the reverse the December number was filled with some material remaining over for the March issue. The scope and quality of contributions we have received is outstanding and address a whole number of problems of local, regional and world character. We might particularly refer to papers on the effect of the earth's rotation which are being largely ignored in the current literature. The exclusion of this work from most main-stream publications is a clear indication of severe crisis in the geological sciences. Even if we were wrong about the validity of plate tectonics, it is apparent that the direction of research into narrow paths must have serious adverse effects on the overall development of science. If, on the other hand, we are correct, there is a gross misuse of scientific funds and resources, and the world will have to face the effects of a virtual loss of a generation's work.

We would like to make some comments on particular contributions in the Newsletter and ask our colleagues to understand this is not done in the manner of criticism but in the manner of appreciation. In this context, we would again like to emphasise the central role of field geology. In the contributions to the Newsletter, perhaps our most common comment would be the lack of geological knowledge. Now, of course, this is a problem even for geologists, who are conversant often only with limited parts of the earth's surface. We believe that workers in the geological sciences have to set themselves consciously to develop the broadest possible knowledge of the actual physical geology of the earth and its time relationships. There is elitism from physics and mathematics but in the end, the place where theory must be tested, the actual experimental laboratory for testing theory in the earth sciences, is the real earth. This will often mean team work, but building a team of good workers is not always easy.

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