

TO THE EDITOR:

May I ask that a statement be corrected in the editorial comment accompanying the abstract which appeared in *THE JOURNAL* **30** (1962) 107, of an article by M. S. Tarshis on the preservation of mycobacteria by freezing in various diluents [*American Rev. Resp. Dis.* **83** (1961) 762]. There is added to the abstract, in brackets, a comment to the effect that Binford and Shepard had found that leprosy bacilli in lepromas retained their viability when shipped in "dry ice" from the Philippines to the United States.

Actually, the fact is that Binford's experience was that his "N" and "Q" bacilli [*Laboratory Investigation* **8** (1959) 901] survived freezing in dry ice. However, as reported at the LWM-JHU Symposium on Research on Leprosy [*Transactions*, p. 245], these are not leprosy bacilli but are instead cultivable nonphotochromogenic mycobacteria falling into Runyon's Group III.

My own experience was with leprosy material shipped with ordinary wet ice, not dry ice. There was no apparent loss of viability in 4 days, as tested by the foot-pad procedure [*J. Exp. Med.* **112** (1960) 445]. This observation has since been repeated under more controlled conditions in the laboratory, and I am in the process of learning just how long the bacilli survive. With dry ice, on the other hand, I find that viability is usually lost completely. These experiments will be reported in detail when completed.

In the meanwhile, I believe that the statement in the abstract referred to should be corrected.

CHARLES C. SHEPARD
Chief, Special Projects Unit

*Communicable Disease Center
Atlanta 22, Georgia*