

Reply to Dr. Bergel's Letter to the Editor

TO THE EDITOR:

The results on pharmacological and toxicological effects of dapsone (DDS) obtained and discussed by M. Bergel in his Letter to the Editor might be of great interest; they have, however, nothing to do with the antibacterial mode of action of DDS on the enzymatic level of the bacterial cell. The action of DDS is highly specific on the 7,8-dihydropteroate synthetase, i.e., the inhibition of bacterial growth occurs via

depletion of dihydrofolate. It can be totally antagonized by p-aminobenzoic acid (PABA), which competes with DDS for the binding site on 7,8-dihydropteroate synthetase.

—J. K. Seydel, Dr. rer. nat.

*Professor and Head
Biochemistry Department
Forschungsinstitut Borstel
2061 Borstel, Federal Republic of Germany*