

Local 2050

SEP 19 1988

Mr. Michael Heylin
Editor
C&E NEWS
1155-16th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Heylin,

You, and the author, Bette Hileman, are to be commended for tackling the difficult subject of fluoridation in your August 1 issue and for doing it so well. You are absolutely correct in pointing out that the traditional norms of scientific inquiry seem to have been abrogated in the fluoridation debate. In carrying out our own investigation, the National Federation of Federal Employees Local 2050, which represents the professionals at EPA headquarters, found the scientific support documentation for the latest drinking water standard to be unsupportable. We have not taken a stand for or against fluoridation, but we have taken a stand against abuse of the scientific process. EPA management's approach to setting a drinking water standard for fluoride appears to us to be a clear case of such abuse, and a Congressional inquiry seems to be in order.

EPA professionals have a clear right to operate in a professionally ethical environment. As a result of the fluoride case, NFFE has proposed a code of professional ethics to EPA management to prevent a repetition of this abuse. At this writing, EPA management is refusing to negotiate this proposal which speaks volumes about their interest in the subject.

My only criticism of your report is your suggestion that the issue of whether to fluoridate or not "can't be made purely on the basis of scientific evidence." This may be true if the risks are slight. But, if the information that has been suppressed can be verified, the risks may indeed be great and make the "choice" on fluoridation a rather academic exercise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert J. Carton". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Robert J. Carton, Ph.D.
President-Elect
NFFE Local 2050
Box 76082
Washington, D.C. 20013