

OPINION/LETTERS



Ad Seems to Claim That Rats May Be Bureaucrats

as based energy conservation; any-  
 ns thing that makes us more efficient  
 ill is all to the good and saves not  
 re only natural resources but also  
 o. money. But don't expect such ef-  
 15 ferts to have a noticeable influ-  
 at ence on sea ice, glaciers or the  
 ve ongoing rise of sea levels.

il And don't count on a hydrogen  
 se economy to help us reduce the use  
 of fossil fuels. On the contrary,  
 15 producing hydrogen requires  
 at prodigious amounts of energy  
 's from fossil fuels or nuclear re-  
 y actors, making it costly as well.

So if human activities do lead to  
 a slight warming of the climate in  
 this century, it makes more sense  
 to adapt and enjoy the warmer  
 winters than bankrupt our econ-  
 omy and damage the economic  
 system of the world.

The writer is emeritus profes-  
 sor of environmental sciences at  
 the University of Virginia and a  
 former director of the U.S. Weath-  
 er Satellite Service. He contrib-  
 uted this comment to the Inter-  
 national Herald Tribune.

EDITOR

'Mad Cow' Disease

The report "'Mad Cow' Dis-  
 eases and Sheep?" (Aug. 31):

needs clarification. Prions  
 are normal proteins present  
 in the human body whose  
 role is unknown. It is an  
 agent (PrPres or PrPsc) that has  
 been shown to be an infectious agent, but  
 not of this.

There is no proof that bovine  
 spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or "mad  
 cow" disease is caused by abnormal pri-  
 ons transmitted to man — or any  
 other animal — as a variant of  
 Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease or any other

by John Collinge and his  
 Prion Unit of Britain's  
 Prion Council, cited in the  
 position, as is the statistical  
 fact that a maximum of 136,000 to

half a million cases of (human) vCJD will  
 occur eventually in Britain.

The search for the cause of CJD, trans-  
 missible spongiform encephalopathy, BSE  
 and prion diseases has been going on for  
 nearly four decades without success. The  
 incubation periods for these diseases are  
 unknown and there is no therapy.

The Nobel Prize has been awarded twice  
 for the same product, the slow-virus (D.  
 Carleton Gajdusek) cum prion (Stanley  
 Prusiner), whose physiological, infective  
 or any role is unproven to this day.

There are, however, lots of circumstan-  
 tial evidence and many theories and sup-  
 positions, which one hopes will eventually  
 resolve these issues.

SERGE DUCKETT,  
 Philadelphia.

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 neuropathology, Jefferson Medical Col-  
 lege of the Thomas Jefferson University.

In a Kosovo City Park,  
 A Small Ray of Hope

By Rand Engel

PRISTINA, Kosovo — At the  
 groundbreaking ceremony for  
 the restoration of the Gjlilane city  
 park, Bernard Kouchner, the head  
 of the United Nations mission  
 here, said, "This is the happiest  
 day of my life in Kosovo." Dr.  
 Kouchner was moved by a gleam  
 of hope from Gjlilane. In a highly  
 visible project, Albanians and  
 Serbs were to work together.

The ceremony included Hugo  
 Ortega, 23, an Australian volun-  
 teer aid worker, who doggedly put

together. Good, he said, that will be  
 better protection than the peace-  
 keeping force KFOR can provide.

We met with Shaban Musliu,  
 the Gjlilane area spokesman and  
 chief of staff for the KPC. We said  
 that we hoped to have Serbian  
 participation in the park project.  
 Good, he said, we want to work  
 with minorities, as long as they  
 were not individuals involved in  
 the ethnic cleansing. This was not  
 going as we expected. Would he  
 meet with the Serbian spokesper-  
 son? Of course, Mr. Musliu said.

MEANWHILE

We interviewed prospective  
 workers at a U.S. KFOR station  
 near the Serbian neighborhood.  
 Few came. No Serb showed up for  
 the first few days of work. That  
 part of the project seemed over.  
 Mr. Ortega could concentrate on  
 the park itself, a major project  
 with 100 workers.

Then Major Michael Foley  
 found three Serbs who wanted to  
 work. We admired their bravery  
 and feared for their safety. Mr.  
 Ortega held two meetings with the  
 Albanian workers. He said that in  
 Gjlilane, in this park, these workers  
 would help decide the future. Mr.  
 Musliu said that the KPC support-  
 ed a mixed-ethnicity work crew.  
 The workers had the opportu-  
 nity to express their feelings and  
 ask questions. One former KLA  
 member had lost family during the  
 ethnic cleansing terror campaign.  
 He nevertheless wanted a future  
 without hatred. Another veteran,  
 whose father and brother were  
 killed, said that he was willing to  
 plant a tree with a Serb.

People said there would be  
 trouble if they recognized a crim-  
 inal. When Mr. Ortega said the  
 first three Serbian workers were  
 women the tension dissolved; in  
 that moment, the workers realized  
 they could make this first step.  
 During the women's first days on  
 the crew, Albanian workers often  
 asked them, sometimes in Ser-  
 bian, if they were all right, or if  
 they needed water or food.

It is possible there will be set-  
 backs. We are nevertheless moved  
 by the courage of these people.  
 Small steps are being taken in  
 Kosovo, despite the fear and hatred  
 that continue to haunt so many.

We expected the mixed work  
 crew idea to fall apart rapidly  
 when it bumped into reality. We  
 met the Serbian spokesman in  
 Gjlilane to discuss participation of  
 Serbian workers. Yes, he said, he  
 wanted that. We said that the work  
 force would include a crew from  
 the Kosovo Protection Corps, vet-  
 erans of the Kosovo Liberation  
 Army that had fought against Ser-

The writer, the Kosovo coord-  
 inator for Balkan Sunflowers,  
 contributed this comment to the  
 International Herald Tribune.