

# Letters

Just a note to tell you how pleased I have been with your magazine!

I had been told to expect "a nifty little rag some people back home" were publishing, and had no idea that my gift would really be a survival handbook for my present life. What a relief to learn that Madison, Wisconsin is not the only place where the cooperative spirit is alive and well, where bicycles are as popular as cars, and where it is possible to live at peace with an urban environment.

In any case, I look forward to receiving future issues. Keep up the good work!

Sarah Deborah Aspen  
Madison, Wisconsin



Dear Friend:

I thought that the article in your January issue, "The Sprout Route", contained a lot of good information. I hope that I may offer some constructive criticism. I'd like to take exception to the emphasis on enzymes.

"Enzyme" seems to be a magical word, and has been much abused. Enzymes are neither magical nor mysterious. Enzymes are simply proteins whose function in the body is to speed up certain chemical changes. Any protein—and enzymes are no exception—when eaten is digested: broken apart into its component amino acids. These amino acids—not the protein—are then absorbed and used to manufacture the proteins/

enzymes that the body needs. I know of no evidence to show that enzymes or any other proteins are absorbed and used as such by the body.

There *are* reasons for eating uncooked foods, and for eating sprouts. And it may well be that active enzymes in a food indicate that the food is optimally nutritious, or that enzymes contribute to the nutritional value. But I think that it is about time that we say and do the right thing for the right reasons, not the wrong ones — which tend to cause our efforts to be discredited by those that tend to think that one error, however trivial, disproves our argument. It is time that we stopped saying — and publishing — that we should eat foods that contain enzymes because our body needs enzymes.

If we are going to talk about nutrition, let's at least make sure that our facts are straight.

Again, I thought that the article had some good information. I also tend to agree with your observation that chlorinated water doesn't bother sprouting seeds — at least it doesn't seem to bother mung beans.

Jack Ryan  
El Paso, Texas



Only recently have circumstances given us the time and pleasure to read *doing it!* (our former name). In these days of alienation, depersonalization and gross indifference to human concerns and suffering, your work is like Shakespeare's candle in a dark night.

In one sense we find it nostalgic, for it is a reminder of another time, of small town America when (so we like to believe, at least) everyone felt at home, safe and secure.

One of the great qualities of the magazine is that in an age that gives rise to resignation and even despair (to which I, for one, am not entirely immune) your policy—implicit in tone and content—is to rouse the power within people to transcend the psychological obstacles, and political ones as well.

Recently I came upon Zola's *J'accuse*. In it he said something like, in the end the truth will be heard and will be victorious. I think that will be so in our country, though I don't look with pleasure to some of the years in the interim.

Milton Schwebel  
New Brunswick, N.J.



Maybe you could chose one issue for each magazine and devote part of the space to a listing of what groups are active on that issue (for instance, tenant groups and their different approaches and pitfalls), and what they are doing. This could set up a support and possibly coordinating network and would really be a service as well as interesting reading.

K.M.  
Newton Corner, MA