

sensitive biological assay methods being applied to ALH 84001, we may yet see proof of ancient Martian life within the year—or possibly not. Stay tuned.—Allan Treiman, *Lunar and Planetary Institute, Houston, Tex.*

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# FORUM

## Comment

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Thank you for the excellent synchrotron article (*Eos*, February 11, 1997, pp. 61–62). However, the "first light" experiments at the Advanced Photon Source (APS) at Argonne

National Laboratory on December 20, 1996, do not "mark the dawn of a new era of rock and mineral physics." Third-generation synchrotron radiation sources have been used at the Cornell CHESS facility for geoscience research for many years. For example, we used this facility with Barnes Bierck and Tammo Steenhuis to study consolidation and flow in

geophysical materials in 1994. Richard Dick, Arthur Ruoff, William Bassett, and others were working in this third-generation facility with geophysical materials before that time. What APS at Argonne National Laboratory offers is the first "dedicated" third-generation radiation source for geoscience research. As such, December 20, 1996, does not "mark the dawn" but marks the acceptance and much wider availability of synchrotron radiation as a geosciences research tool. This is an exciting new opportunity for the geoscience community.—Wayne Charlie and Deanna Durnford, *Colorado State University, Fort Collins*

# SECTION NEWS

## GEOMAGNETISM & PALEOMAGNETISM



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## Paleomagnetic Databases Updated to 1996

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The IAGA paleomagnetic databases now include all data available through the end of 1996. Four databases soon will be available as a package (Version 3.2 of the databases) either for use with Access 2 on Windows 3.1

or Access 97 on Windows 95. Users who have Access 7 should now update to Access 97. A description of the Access versions of the databases is given by *McElhinny and Lock* [1996]. The new package is available from World Data Center A in Boulder, Colo., from mid-June. To obtain it, contact Susan McLean on e-mail at smclean@ngdc.noaa.gov and indicate whether the Access 2 or Access 97 version is required. The four-database package includes the following:

- Global Paleomagnetic Database (GPMDB2 or GPMDB97),
- Polarity Transitions Database (TRANS2 or TRANS97),
- Secular Variation Database (SECVR2 or SECVR97), and
- Paleosecular Variation From Lavas 0-5 Ma (PSVRL2 or PSVRL97).

The Global Paleomagnetic Database now includes 3116 references with 8144 results and is complete to December 1996. Both the Polarity Transitions and Secular Variation databases rely on authors sending their data for inclusion, and not all available data had

been received by the cutoff date. The Paleosecular Variation From Lavas 0–5 Ma database is new and is a generalized database that can be used to analyze the angular dispersion of paleomagnetic results or for global field modeling. A description of this database, along with a discussion and analysis of the data, is given by *McElhinny and McFadden* [1997].

The database package previously included the Paleointensity Database, but this is now being expanded and updated and should be available separately in July. A global database for magnetostratigraphy is currently being compiled by M. McElhinny, N. Opdyke, and S. Pisarevsky and should be available later this year.

**Acknowledgment:** Update of the Global Paleomagnetic Database for the years 1993–1996 was made possible through grant EAR-9405846 from the National Science Foundation.—*Michael McElhinny, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*

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