Editorial

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Foundations of thermodynamics is one of the most important issues to which this Journal is devoted. We are more than happy to be given the honor to publish the proceedings of the recent gathering at San Diego, and so we here present the material provided by Dr. Sheehan.

We were surprised to see that Dr. Sheehan himself came with the most daring proposal, that of “thermosynthetic life”, speculating the existence of life forms that can violate the Second Law. Certainly life as we know it is not like that, and I for one see absolutely no way to imagine how such alien life forms could cope with the laws of logic. If the paper would have been submitted by itself, it might well have been rejected.

However, it is inevitable that thorough and novel studies of the foundations of a branch of science demands that one tries to look beyond what is known, to scan the horizon, and thus, to stick one's neck out. Is the “Second Law” really what it seems to be? Can there be violations? Questions concerning the role played by life, whatever life is, may well be included in such considerations. The paper was written in an agreeable tone. We decided that it would be a pity to leave it out.

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