Jargonistic governmentalese

Sir: In the Advertisement Supplement (MJA, 7 June 1975) there occurred the following sentence: “However, priority will be given to health manpower planning and task analysis research, research into health economics, regional health and health related planning and evaluation methodology development.”

This is as blatant an example of jargonistic governmentalese as one can expect to encounter, and it is frightening to consider the future impact of [any commission] which expresses itself (it is not possible to think) in these terms.

It is no mean feat to construct from the English language a sentence of 27 words (26, if one removes from the illicit drug category in which it has been placed by law enforcers. The Lancet ran a story about damage to chromosomes occurring in marijuana users, only to retract it a few weeks later when it was found that the “damage” done to the white blood cells was non-specific and occurred in response to any drug, or to none at all. If I recall correctly, the retraction was published on page 121

“Marihuana”

Sir: One would imagine that if, as your comment suggests (Journal, 21 June 1975), the tetrahydrocannabinol constituents of marijuana possess the amazing abilities to prolong rejection time in organ transplants and to depress the rate of growth in tumours, then the medical profession should be roaring for immediate, intensive research into this substance and advocating for its urgent removal from the illicit drug category in which it has been placed by law enforcers.

I seem to recall also, a genetic damage claim in this anti-pot tirade. A few years ago The Lancet ran a story about damage to chromosomes occurring in marijuana users,