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Letters

Peking Man

In the "News of science" section of *Science* [129, 825 (1959)] you ask, "Where is Peking Man?" and speculate on some of the possible answers to this question. As a former member of the American Embassy guard at Peking, China, at the outbreak of World War II, I would like to rule out the theory that the Peking Man may be at the bottom of the Yangtze River.

The S.S. *Harrison* had just taken the 4th Marines from Shanghai to the Philippine Islands and was returning to China for those of us who were still in North China. The war caught the ship just off the coast of China near Shanghai, and the captain ran it aground. This was hundreds of miles from Chinwangtao, and thus the Peking Man never went aboard the *Harrison*.

I recall seeing some cases in Peking marked for Johns Hopkins University and believe these contained the collection. If so, I am fairly certain they arrived safely in Chinwangtao.

Since we were preparing to leave China on Thursday, 11 Dec. 1941, we had packed up all our guns, ammunition, and other equipment and had sent it to Chinwangtao. Because of the facilities in that small Marine outpost, it is quite likely that the Peking Man was stored with our things.

When the war broke out, the approximately 35 men stationed in Chinwangtao were moved to Tientsin, and we were moved from Peking to Tientsin.

It may be that the Peking Man was discarded as unimportant in the looting of our supplies—that it was thrown out with the usual debris of such lootings. If this was the case, there is a good chance that the collection is still in the vicinity of the camp at Chinwangtao or that it fell into the hands of the Chinese and was used for medicine, as was the practice.

The nature of the packing, however, would indicate to the looters that the contents were of some value, and, for this reason, I doubt very much if the collection was thrown out.

Since the Japanese at the time had a great need for military supplies and since our equipment was all packed and ready to go, it may be that the Peking Man was shipped out with our equipment to some point within the Japanese war theater. If this is the case, the collection could still be in existence in any one of a number of places, from the Aleutians to Borneo.

It seems that a check with Japanese Army records, to locate the soldiers who were stationed at Chinwangtao, would be a logical step in trying to locate the

collection. Perhaps the men who were there could tell what happened to it.

One thing is certain: the Peking Man was not on the S.S. *Harrison*.

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Nuclear Research

There are several errors in the editorial entitled "Capital gain" [*Science* 129, 1583 (1959)]. The most important one, and the only one I will point out here, is the position stated in the editorial that, due to "special security requirements," the Department of Defense should have no more than (and by implication, less than) a modest share in nuclear research. As the decision to place the Stanford accelerator under the AEC is applauded on this basis, it is further implied that the AEC has no similar "special security requirements."

I challenge the writer of the editorial to visit the following accelerator facilities operating under Navy contract: the Mark III at Stanford, the 450-Mev proton synchrocyclotron at Chicago, the 400-Mev proton synchrocyclotron at Columbia, the 1.5-Bev electron synchrotron at Cornell—or any nuclear physics facility operating under Office of Naval Research contract. I would then like to have him visit Argonne, Brookhaven, the Radiation Laboratory, and other AEC accelerator facilities and make an *honest* report comparing the "special security requirements" of the Department of Defense and the AEC. (He might also be interested in finding out why Fermi chose Navy support for the Chicago accelerator instead of AEC support.)

If he is concerned with the "special security requirements" of the Department of Defense as a whole, then he should be equally concerned with the "special security requirements" of the AEC as a whole. He should also be lamenting the assignment of the Stanford project to the AEC, instead of the National Science Foundation, for example, due to the AEC's "special security requirements" and, more important yet, due to the strengthening of the AEC monopoly on high-energy accelerator physics. This assignment is in direct opposition to the report's strong recommendation of diversity of support—there must have been reason for such a recommendation.

It might also interest the writer of the editorial to find out who kept the Stanford proposal alive and provided the major drive to see that it was finally approved.

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