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New York and London

111 Fifth Avenue, New York 3

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## Letters

### Deferring to a Minority

Your news note on the U.N. "population explosion" debate [*Science* 135, 29 (5 Jan. 1962)] has, if I read it correctly, some disturbing implications that may have escaped many readers.

The implication is clear that the government of the United States is deferring, on a matter of transcendent international importance, to political pressure by a religious minority. You would also seem to suggest that while the U.S. government is sufficiently concerned with the welfare of the United Nations to avoid "arousing further antipathy to that troubled organization," it is convinced that the minority group would not sufficiently share such concern to refrain from action that would generate antipathy.

The exercise of the veto power by this particular church is not new to anyone familiar with the human population problem. It is significant, however, that this should be recognized in the pages of *Science*.

This is a matter where time is of the essence, since, with even the full support of the United Nations and the U.S. government, progress in reducing population growth is sure to be slow, initially at least. Meanwhile 100 million babies a year are born, many of them foreordained to die miserable and painful deaths. Those who live will often live at the expense of those born earlier.

WILLIAM VOGT

140 Riverside Drive, New York

### Allowance for Overhead

The editorial entitled "Costly cash" [*Science* 134, 2009 (1961)] does not give a completely accurate picture with respect to overhead charges on government-supported research contracts and grants. While it is true that National Science Foundation grants give only 20 percent, this 20 percent is applicable to all charges, including apparatus, supplies, and so on. The larger overhead allowances in grants from other agencies are usually applied only to direct salary charges. Thus, the National Science Foundation's 20 percent might be equivalent to Office of Naval Research overhead allowances of 40 percent. Furthermore, some agencies stipulate that there must be



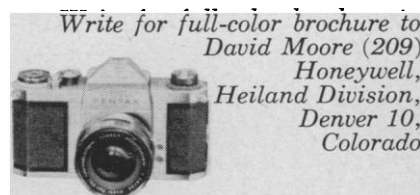
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