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Vietnamese Pacification Program

Orians and Pfeiffer strayed far from their defoliation brief in their letter of 11 September . . . There was never any "deliberate policy of the U.S. government to win the war by moving people from the countryside, which we cannot control, to the cities, which we can control." Quite the contrary, the aim was to extend security throughout the countryside, and it was to this aim that the so-called "90 percent relatively secure goal of 1969" referred. I should know, as I was chief U.S. adviser to the Vietnamese pacification program in 1967-68 when that goal was set.

Also untrue is the assertion of Haseltine, Carter, and Long (Letters, 3 July) that "the defoliation program is in large part purposefully directed against the rural population of South Vietnam." Not in my time it wasn't (though I had nothing to do with the program). Their quote from Huntington is lifted out of context to imply that it was—and still is. Whatever else one may say about the Vietnam tragedy, I object to assertions that the pacification program was in any way associated with destroying Vietnam's ecological balance or society. Its purpose—and impact—has been quite the reverse, as is now becoming clear.

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Nerve Gas: Judging the Risks

In his recent article ("Nerve gas disposal: How the AEC refused to take Army off hook," 25 Sept., p. 1296) Carter was being something less than objective. It is incredible, not that the AEC refused to take on the nerve gas disposal job, but that anyone ever seriously considered using a nuclear explosion for that purpose. The report of the Gross committee was speculative; Carter cited no experimental data or evidence to back up their claim that "the results would be completely predictable."

Carter ignores some obvious questions. Why is hauling a trainload of nerve gas coffins 2000 or so miles west to Nevada less of a hazard than hauling them 600 miles east to Sunny Point, North Carolina? Why is loading a ship in North Carolina more hazardous than threading coffins one-by-one down a 6-foot diameter shot hole at

Yucca Flats, where an accidental explosion (before the shot hole could be closed) would spray a highly lethal geyser plume of nerve gas upwind of at least three-fourths of the people in the United States? Why is hydrolysis of nerve gas under 16,000 feet of salt water, the kinetics of which have been thoroughly studied, more hazardous than blowing it up in a nuclear explosion underground at one-tenth the depth, in an operation whose outcome is purely speculative? Carter has let his anti-Army bias hang out in clear view.

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Misdirected Attribution

On page 32 of the excellent *Short History of Botany in the United States*, edited by Joseph Ewan for the Eleventh International Botanical Congress, I find that I am erroneously credited with proposing the word "palynology" which is in general use to replace the older term "pollen analysis." Actually the proposal was made by H. A. Hyde and D. A. Williams, assisted by L. J. D. Richardson of University College, Cardiff, Wales. It was published 28 October 1944 in the informal mimeographed "Pollen Analysis Circular" (Oberlin College, 1943-53) which has since been absorbed by the journal *Micropaleontology*.

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Coitus-Induced Ovulation

May I urge W. Jöchle (Letters, 21 Aug.) to publish all pertinent information on any case he may have of coitus-induced ovulation in women. If such evidence can be provided, we will have to completely revise our present concepts on the functional and timely interdependence of the pituitary-ovarian-endometrial physiology in women. Not a single documented case of induced ovulation in women has been published in the world literature during the past 100 years even though the literature is replete with case reports based on "old wives tales" (male and female).

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