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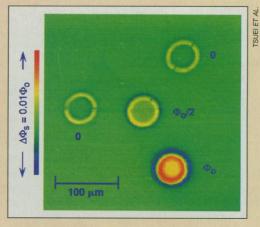
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LETTERS

The cutting edge

This week's Letters section opens with a comment about the latest wave of high-temperature superconductivity experiments (at right, superconductor symmetry). Another writer recalls how the creation of a supercool Bose-Einstein condensate, achieved in 1995, was foretold by physicist Fritz London in 1946. Climate experts debate the importance of liquefied petroleum gas (used for home cooking and heating), which has been recently tagged as a fuel contributing to air pollution over Mexico City. An earlier letter questioning the scientific consensus



about global warming is answered. And a test for measuring the amount of human immunodeficiency virus in tissue is noted.

Superconductivity Researchers

Daniel Clery (Research News, 19 Jan., p. 288) did a good job of reporting the current status of the s-wave versus d-wave controversy in the field of high-temperature superconductivity. However, one key experiment was omitted. In 1995, Fred Wellstood and his co-workers presented a convincing interferometry experiment (1) using a superconducting quantum interference device (SQUID) in favor of d-wave symmetry. Wellstood's experiment answered questions raised about crucial omissions in the earlier experiments of van Harlingen et al. (2) and Brawner and Ott (3). In addition, Wellstood was the inventor of the scanning SQUID microscope (4), which enabled Tsuei et al. to perform their beautiful tricrystal ring experiments (Research Article, 19 Jan., p. 329) (5). Wellstood's institution (the University of Maryland at College Park) has been granted the patent on the scanning SQUID microscope, which has many potential uses beyond the experiments reported by Clery.

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A Prediction of the **Bose-Einstein Condensate**

I very much enjoyed the special article "A new form of matter unveiled," by Elizabeth Culotta (p. 1902), about the Bose-Einstein condensate as well as Floyd E. Bloom's fine editorial "Molecule of the Year 1995" (p. 1901) in the 22 December issue. I am writing to remind your readers that the idea of the macroscopic wave function for the condensate was put forward by Fritz London, who with his younger brother had already developed the idea for superconducting electrons.

A major international physics conference held after World War II was organized at Cambridge in July 1946 by Sir Lawrence Bragg and J. F. Allen. People attended who had not seen each other for many years. There were two topics, fundamental particles and low temperatures. London, then at Duke University, gave the opening lecture of the low temperature part, which he named "The present state of the theory of liquid helium." His first paragraph refers to superconductivity and superfluidity (1).