

# Letters

## Southeast Asian Policy

We of the Molecular Biology and Virus Laboratory of the University of California (i) condemn the current U.S. policy and military activity in Southeast Asia as unwise, immoral, and dangerous; (ii) urge members of Congress to use every legal means to resist the implementation of this policy; (iii) urge immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops and assistance from Southeast Asia; and (iv) express our intention to support only those candidates for elective office who subscribe to the above policies.

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\* In addition, the letter included 110 cosigners.

## Postscript

An important paper by R. G. Giovanelli [*Mon. Notic. Roy. Astron. Soc.* **127**, 461 (1964)] came to my attention too late for inclusion in my article "The case for a hierarchical cosmology" (27 Feb., p. 1203). Its aim is to construct models for "a self-perpetuating universe on a statistical rather than a steady-state basis." Further work on multiple clustering within a "big-bang" model has been described in a 1970 dissertation at the University of Texas by J. Wertz and shows how many features of the classical models can be preserved and combined within the hierarchical concept.

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## Floating Gobs of Oil

In "Petroleum lumps on the surface of the sea" (10 Apr., p. 245) Horn, Teal, and Backus describe a scarcely new phenomenon. One afternoon in the summer of 1928 Avalon Harbor, Santa Catalina Island, was covered by floating gobs of stiff oil. The U.S. Navy aircraft carrier *Saratoga* had cleaned its bilges or oil bunkers in the

Catalina Channels. The Wrigley Company then had to mobilize its labor force and small boats to skim these lumps off the harbor and remove them from the beach so that its tourist guests could swim.

Since that time I have frequently seen tarry patches on beaches and rocky shores. These are often so abundant as to make the beaches unpleasant for sunning and swimming. The problem has been considered so serious that in 1957 the American Petroleum Institute commissioned a comprehensive survey of the situation on the Atlantic Coast. The report of the survey is very instructive, both as to the magnitude of this sort of pollution, and as to the fate of the oil that is cast ashore (1).

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## Reference

1. J. V. Dennis, "Oil Pollution Survey of the United States Atlantic Coast . . ." (American Petroleum Institute, Washington, D.C., 1959).

## Grecian Concept of Entasis

According to Richard T. Feller, "The deviation of the Washington Cathedral nave axis from the choir axis" is not an error; "The architect planned it to give . . . the best visual perspective and prevent the converging of lines at the east end of the cathedral, such as one sees on distant railroad tracks" (Letters, 27 Mar.).

This device is neither uncommon nor new. Sir E. Lutyens, for example, employed it in his celebrated Cenotaph, in London's Whitehall. Such techniques recall the concept of entasis, which Ictinus, Callicrates, and their associates used in the Parthenon, the Doric temple of Athena Parthenus (490 B.C.). In this way, the optical illusions of concavity were corrected by means of virtually imperceptible curves. Fascinating details on this subject may be found in John Pennethorne's *Elements and Mathematical Principles of the Greek Architects* (1844) and Francis Pen-

rose's *Investigation of the Principles of Athenian Architecture* (1851).

The opposite, namely, deliberate optical illusions, may be seen in Rome's Palazzo Spada, which was designed by Francesco Borromini, Italy's great baroque architect, as well as in the Vatican's Scala Regia by Giovanni Bernini (1663).

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## Women on College Faculties

The status of women at Harvard was the subject of a study recently requested by female faculty members because women are virtually unrepresented in the higher ranks of both the faculty and administration (27 Feb., p. 1235). The various resolutions which women scientists have introduced at several scientific meetings are further signs of the frustration they are still experiencing in the universities. There are many brilliant female students in graduate schools, and most of them encounter little discrimination toward their sex until they become job-seekers. Then they face the ubiquitous problems of avoiding those jobs which are stereotyped for women; and, if they are fortunate enough to secure first-rate positions, of earning well-deserved promotions.

In anthropology, possibly one of the least discriminatory disciplines, women were the authors of nearly 23 percent of the dissertations published in the *Guide to Departments of Anthropology 1969-70* (American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., 1970), but only 10 percent of the full-time anthropologists in universities and colleges with graduate programs were women. Almost 25 percent of the listed graduate departments have no full-time women anthropologists. This category includes a disproportionate share of "elite" and "giant" institutions as well as a number of state universities. Where are all the women? The small colleges which lack graduate departments provide the answer. Almost 50 percent have full-time women anthropologists, and women account for over 25 percent of their total full-time faculty. Recent statistics on annual salaries of nearly 300,000 registered scientists in all disciplines reveal that the median for males is \$13,500, but for females, only \$10,000 (*Summary of American Sci-*