

F.A.S. NEWSLETTER

FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS
1749 L Street, N.W. Washington 6, D.C.

Not For Release in Any Form

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April 13, 1949

FAS Meeting in Washington on Friday, April 29th, at
8:15 P.M. at the Cosmos Club, Madison Place and H Street:

Subject: Science and the Climate of Opinion

Speakers: Samuel A. Goudsmit, Brookhaven
Richard H. Shryock, Pennsylvania

Dr. Shryock will discuss the historical and Dr. Goudsmit the current aspects of the topic. Discussion and a social hour will follow the formal talks. Members of the Federation, the American Physical Society, and the public are invited to attend.

More on Blackett. The controversy on Blackett's book, "Fear, War, and the Bomb", mentioned in the last newsletter, is raging more furiously than ever. Articles by Ridenour in the Scientific American (March) and by Rabi in the Atlantic Monthly (April) have taken Blackett to task for his attempt to de-emphasize the military effectiveness of the Bomb. Rabi points out that we can only discuss the effectiveness of the Bomb when we know how many there are available. As a result of our misguided secrecy, not only the American people, but Congressional committees who approve our military expenditures are kept in the dark as to the number of A-Bombs in our stockpile. (Incidentally, for those readers who still haven't read Blackett's book, or Morrison's review in the February Bulletin, the figure on the equivalent A-Bomb damage due to the Wehrmacht's invasion of Russia is 1000, not the 100 reported in the March 7th Newsletter.) Ridenour, in his review, emphasized that the effectiveness of Strategic Bombing must be viewed in terms of target systems. The two target systems which proved to be the Achilles heel of Germany were synthetic oil plants and the transportation system. In addition to this, Ridenour points out that the strategic bombing campaign had the useful by-product of destroying a large percentage of the German fighters in combat, thereby achieving control of the air for the tactical air-force, acting in direct support of our invasion. Whether such target systems exist for other countries and whether the atomic bomb is effective against them is, of course, a question for military planners and not, as things are, for the public.

Both authors criticize Blackett severely for his imputation that our bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were carried out as a deterrent against future Russian actions. Similarly, they are properly contemptuous of Blackett's allegation that the U.S. control proposals as put forth by Baruch were principally designed to embarrass the Russians.

It seems to us that this sudden flare-up of interest in Atomic Energy Control may have the salutary effect that we critically re-examine our own position. It may lead to new attempts to establish international agreement at a time when interest in such an agreement was largely dormant.

AEC Chairman David Lilienthal has again expressed clearly and forcefully the need for public opinion to reach promptly a balanced perspective about atomic energy. Addressing the American College of Physicians in New York, March 31st, on The Brighter Side of the Atom, he appealed to physicians for special help because, by their special training, they are "prepared to know the worst -- and do the best" they can.

National Science Foundation Legislation. Congress continues to make progress in processing National Science Foundation legislation. Following passage by the Senate of S. 247, the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee (Priest Subcommittee) held hearings on the three versions before it on March 31, April 1, 4, and 5. The Federation was represented by Dr. Hugh Wolfe, a member of the FAS Administrative Committee. The testimony was largely the same as that presented last year. Based on the Federation resolution of December, 1947, it stressed the need for a broad scope in Foundation responsibilities and activities, reiterated the principle of wide-spread distribution of funds, called for a policy of non-classification of Foundation research, and support of international scientific activities without reference to foreign policy objectives. On the much-argued administrative issue the Federation stated its continued belief in administrative authority residing in full-time personnel advised by a part-time board of private citizens.

One new point was introduced this year as the result of suggestions made during the Council meeting of January 30, 1949. Where existing bills restrict the activities of the Foundation in the field of "atomic energy" without prior concurrence of the AEC, the Federation recommended that the restriction be limited only to "fissionable materials".

The hearings brought out few new issues or points of view. Most witnesses stressed the importance of the Foundation and indicated their willingness to accept H.R. 12 or S. 247 with minor modifications. H.R. 359, originally S. 1850 of the 79th Congress, was supported, as such, only by Rep. Emanuel Celler of New York, its present sponsor. Additional indirect support for H.R. 359 came from the Federation in that several of its suggested amendments to H.R. 12 are similar to provisions in H.R. 359.

One focus of opposition has developed and has already succeeded in somewhat slowing final action on the bill. The Committee has been bombarded during the past several weeks with letters and telegrams from manufacturers, particularly in the West, expressing opposition to the Foundation on the ground that it will impose bureaucratic government control on scientists and inventors. Because of this pressure, an additional day of testimony has been scheduled on April 26th to give opportunity for the National Patent Council, chief organizer of the opposition, to present its views. The possible effectiveness of this opposition is difficult to estimate, but it would be well to counter it with statements from individuals and organizations urging speedy action on the legislation. Address communications to Representative J. Percy Priest, House Office Building, Washington 25, D.C.

Biological Warfare. BW officially returned to public awareness on March 12, when Secretary of Defense Forrestal issued a statement on BW potentialities. Prior to this, public discussion had been hampered by a blanket of secrecy so strict that armed forces personnel were forbidden even to refer to the subject. The Forrestal statement was sober in tone and directed against the "scare" treatment accorded the subject in certain areas of the press. "While it would be folly", it said, "to underestimate the potentialities of biological warfare, there is no factual basis for extravagant claims of the existence of a biological super-weapon."

In a press release on March 14 the Federation applauded Forrestal for making a statement on BW but stated that this constituted only a necessary first step. It pointed out that ignorance of BW and its potential is one of the chief dangers, and urged that the Secretary follow up by outlining possible counter measures that can be taken by public health authorities and appropriately trained scientists. It stated further that the question of international inspection and control should be explored, concluding that "A study equivalent to the 1946 Acheson-Lilienthal report on atomic energy control seems to be in order."

The Federation has had a special committee looking into BW for the past year. Present plans call for a report by this committee in Washington on April 30.

An AEC Personnel Security Review Board has been established on a permanent basis. Members are former solicitor-general Charles Fahy, Chairman, A. S. Flemming, and Bruce D. Smith.

The Executive Secretariat, the committee of volunteers which supervises the national office, has lost the active services of Dr. Richard L. Meier, who has gone to the University of Chicago for a few months before going abroad. Full time Executive-Secretary before becoming a member of the Secretariat, Dr. Meier has been principally responsible for FAS activity in Washington for the past 18 months. The Secretariat has been enlarged by the appointment of Dr. Frank L. Verwiebe, of the Applied Physics Laboratory of Johns Hopkins University, who will assist in the work of the Washington office, although Dr. Meier will continue to contribute from a distance.

New Members Wanted. The Federation of American Scientists is a body of scientists organized to act as responsible citizens. In support of its primary objective to prevent atomic war, the FAS stresses the necessity of effective international control of atomic weapons.

The FAS fought for civilian control of atomic energy in the United States and for confirmation of the Atomic Energy Commission appointees, because of the significance of these issues, to the people in other lands as clues to the future conduct of the United States. Similarly, FAS continues to advocate a National Science Foundation to supplant the present support of research by the armed forces.

Through its Newsletter the FAS attempts to keep its members informed regarding the status of current issues, to generate and support measures of good will for improving international understanding, such as the international distribution of isotopes, and to stimulate the analysis of the social implications of the new weapons of mass warfare. Not only must the areas of great risk in these fields be pointed out, but also the many possibilities of benefits to mankind.

A special responsibility of the FAS is the safeguarding of the civil rights of scientists in connection with security clearance procedures. In its relations with the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and other employers of scientists, the FAS will continue to urge procedures in accord with the established principles of democratic society.

Today the FAS is a nationwide organization comprising 18 local associations and some 2000 members. Its policies are formulated in a national Council, composed of one delegate from each member association, and executed by its Administrative Committee and Executive Secretariat.

Anyone who cannot conveniently take part in a local association is invited to apply to the FAS national office for membership-at-large, either as a full member if he is a qualified natural scientist, or as an associate member if he is in accord with the aims of the organization. Membership in the FAS offers the satisfaction of participating in an organization dedicated not to the special interests of its membership, but to the welfare of all mankind.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP-AT-LARGE IN F.A.S.

Name _____ Highest Degree Received _____ Institution _____ Major Field _____
 Mailing Address _____
 _____ Present Position _____
 Are you an American citizen? _____

Annual dues are: Member....\$5.00, Supporting Member....\$10.00, Patron....\$25.00
 (Please make checks payable to Federation of American Scientists)

There are local associations of the FAS in the following communities: Baltimore, Brookhaven, Cambridge, Chicago, Ithaca, Iowa City, Los Alamos, Ann Arbor, Schenectady, Berkeley, New York, Oak Ridge, Pittsburgh, Princeton, Rochester, Madison, and Washington, D.C.

Rehabilitation of Foreign Laboratories. A pamphlet just issued by UNESCO, "Science Laboratories in Need", describes the plight of scientific laboratories in war-devastated countries in Europe and Asia. Country by country, institution by institution, the present condition of the laboratories is described in some detail together with their monetary or physical needs. The pamphlet concluded with an appeal for aid by the more fortunate countries: "[The losses of these science institutions] have been immense, their few resources are almost exhausted, and they have no adequate means to replace them. There is a limit to improvisation and, without external aid, these people may come to an end, not only of their material resources, but of their ingenuity and hope."

One of the collecting agencies for monetary contributions in UNESCO's appeal is the FAS Committee for Aid to Foreign Science, University of Rochester, Rochester 3, New York. Information on the needs of particular institutions in devastated areas -- and copies of the pamphlet -- may be obtained from UNESCO New York Office, 405 East 42nd Street, New York 17, New York.

CARE Book Program. A new program for advancing the cause of world reconstruction has been announced by CARE to begin May 15th. The program is intended to replenish the shelves of the overseas technical schools and universities with gifts of new American technical and scientific books. As with their famous food packages, CARE will pack, ship, and guarantee delivery of books -- at the American list price -- selected under the guidance of a committee headed by Luther Evans, Librarian of Congress. Donors of sums over \$10 may designate country, type of institution, specific institution or category of books (not titles). Smaller donations will be placed in the general book fund. Categories include Medicine, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geology, Mathematics, Engineering and Sociology. This is not a used book program, and is designed for institutions, not individuals. Write to CARE Educational Unit, 50 Broad Street, New York 4, New York, for further information.

FAS Meetings in Washington. In addition to the general FAS meeting at the Cosmos Club on Friday, April 29th, on "Science and the Climate of Opinion", there will be a meeting of the FAS Council on Saturday evening, April 30th, continuing the next morning. The election of officers and Administrative Committee for 1949-50 will take place at this time, as well as consideration of Federation policy on the matters of current interest. All members of the FAS in Washington for the American Physical Society meetings -- or at any other time -- are invited to visit the FAS offices.

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Sec. 562 P.L. & R.

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