

F. A. S. NEWSLETTER

FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS
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MORE SECURITY

Still not knowing whether it faced all-out war, a long period of half-war, or no war, Congress began to pull at the security strings even harder than before. The fighting in Korea strengthened the hand of the extremist wing which has long sought to blanket out subversion even at the risk of smothering the rights of the entire population. Moderates found tough going as restrictive legislation previously placed in the cooler was dragged back onto the agenda, and legislation still in the mill received new impetus.

In this category is proposed legislation governing security controls for federal agencies unrelated to active military defense. The so-called "Rooney rider" in the one-package appropriation bill now being considered by the Senate, would give the Secretary of Commerce absolute discretionary powers to discharge employees "in the interests of the United States." His department includes agencies such as the Census Bureau, the National Bureau of Standards, the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the Civil Aeronautics Administration, and the Weather Bureau. Having been passed by the House and approved by the appropriate Senate committee, the rider has only to survive Senate floor action before passage is assured. In the present atmosphere, it unfortunately will probably pass, unless there is extraordinary success to the efforts of the various active organizations concerned with civil liberties.

Because of the international situation, the Tydings-Murray security bill (H.R. 7439), once abandoned for this session of Congress, was dusted off and promptly passed by the House on July 12. Senate consideration is now definitely expected this summer.

The Tydings-Murray bill (see NL, Mar. 1 and 29, 1950) collects and unifies the legal basis for security controls for civilian government workers. It would replace the security provisions of the Atomic Energy Act, of Public Law 808 (military departments), and the McCarran rider (State), and covers in addition several other agencies. The bill would authorize the agency head to summarily suspend persons deemed security risks. It calls for specification of reasons or charges and then, after an opportunity to respond to the charges (and in most cases a hearing before a board named by the agency head), the employee is discharged if the ruling is adverse. The bill further specifies that such action would not disqualify the employee from seeking employment in a non-sensitive government agency, but makes sure that such re-employment is cleared through the Civil Service Commission.

As reported by the House committee which held hearings on the bill, it applied to civilian employees of the military departments, the AEC, State, the National Security Resources Board, and the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics. The President was authorized to extend coverage to other agencies, should he consider it necessary. However, by amendments from the floor of the House -- in 5 minutes and without opposition -- the Departments of Commerce and Justice were specifically added to the list. The recently publicized cases of Remington and Lee in Commerce, and Coplon in Justice, were prominent in the brief speeches. Rep. Brown (R. Ohio) concluded his justification: "I am perfectly willing to trust Charlie Sawyer (Sec'y of Commerce), a great Democrat and a patriotic American from Ohio -- he has served his country in time of war -- with the power to discharge employees or to suspend employees in his department. He will not abuse the power granted him." Similarly, Rep. Lucas (D. Tex.), after pointing out that the Dep't of Justice handles all our vital secrets when they try people who are charged with subversive activities, said, "I am perfectly willing to trust J. Howard McGrath with this power, for certainly no one would believe he would abuse it."

Various proposals have been made to Congressmen to improve the T-M bill. The obvious one is to remove the agencies which are not predominantly sensitive in terms of security, or at least restrict the application of the proposed law to only certain

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A-BOMB IN KOREA ?

Like pennies in an urchin's pocket, the A-bomb burned in the U.S. arsenal as the Korean police action expanded into a major, if localized, conflict. When should it be used? What circumstances require and justify it? What targets are worth its terrible price? We have reached that point in the predicted path where these questions confront the American conscience.

Fighting in Korea was hardly 24 hours old when Peter Geoffrey Roberts, British industrialist and Conservative member of the House of Commons, called for an atomic war against North Korea. Though Major Roberts appeared to find little support among his own countrymen, similar sentiments have been voiced in the United States. Chiefly confined to the letters to editors columns of daily newspapers, calls have also come from a few individuals in high places. Sen. Brewster (R. Me.) and Rep. Bentsen (D. Tex.) for instance, suggested that the North Koreans be warned that the A-bomb would be used against them if their forces were not immediately withdrawn to their own boundaries.

Thus passed from theory to reality the grave issues surrounding American reliance for defense on the atomic weapon. The situation which has developed in Korea is an almost textbook example of the dangers which advocates of international control have sought to avert. Given an incendiary situation short of full-scale war, can mutual fear be prevented from leading to reckless use of power in hand? In present circumstances, the U.S. still holds the preponderant power and the decision rests with it. But in the future, when the power is more evenly balanced, what will stay the urge to get the jump?

Both in the U.S. and abroad, reason clipped the wings of hysteria. Few believed that top American policy makers would permit use of the A-bomb so long as the fighting remained localized in Korea. There was, of course, no disposition in either the State or Defense Departments to forego use of the A-bomb entirely, as demanded by the Stockholm resolution. The Secretary of State was quoted as regarding this document as "basic hypocrisy." But U.S. use of the A-bomb in Korea is generally viewed as strategically inappropriate and politically unwise. Said Sen. McMahon, "The atomic bomb is primarily a weapon to strike at the sources of power or at troops so massed as to furnish a target." He did not see North Korea as supplying such targets, saying, "The sources of power of the North Koreans are not being generated in North Korea itself. I doubt if there are any tank factories in North Korea."

With this judgment the South Korean consul in San Francisco agreed. Wanting the bomb but preferring some other delivery point, he stated: "I do not advocate using the atomic bomb in North Korea in this war, but I do favor dropping it on Manchuria, where many factories are turning out supplies for the North Koreans." The president of the British Atomic Scientists Association, R. E. Peierls, in a letter to the London Times, called use of the bomb "most ineffective" in action like that in Korea because "there is probably no center in Korea which is vital for the conduct of the present operations."

Others laid emphasis on the political inexpediency of an atom bomb drop. The United Press noted that "diplomats fear that world opinion, now overwhelmingly on the United States' side, will be alienated if this country resorts too readily to atomic warfare." The Mayor of Hiroshima thought "it would be very unfortunate if the U.S. used the atom bomb against anybody again, especially when we hear that the Russians have the bomb too. The use of the bomb by both nations would signal the end of civilization. We are now on the brink of this danger." In this warning from Hiroshima was contained the thought uppermost in the minds of many -- the certain knowledge that use of the bomb in Korea would precipitate worldwide atomic warfare.

Considerations like these appear to render unlikely early

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THE DOMESTIC ATOM

AEC Commissioners Reappointed. With the expiration of the terms of office of the Atomic Energy Commissioners on June 30, quick action by the President and the Congress was needed to maintain the continuity of the Commission. On June 19, Mr. Truman submitted for reappointment the names of the 4 incumbent Commissioners. Sumner Pike was proposed for a 4-year term, Gordon Dean for 3 years, Thomas Murray, 2 years, and Henry Smyth, 1 year. The Senate section of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy acted promptly to recommend Senate confirmation of the latter three appointments, but held up and eventually rejected, by a 5 to 4 vote, the nomination of Mr. Pike.

The result was a hot political fight in the Senate, with the newspapers of the country echoing charges and counter-charges. Drew Pearson and other columnists hinted at political deals by Senators inimical to Mr. Pike.

FAS Chairman Higinbotham issued a statement (see below) calling for quick action by the President and Congress to restore public confidence in the activities of the Commission. The press rallied to the support of Mr. Pike. The charges of his opponents proved so vague and unconvincing that the Senate, contrary to custom, upset the Committee's vote and approved Mr. Pike's appointment by a 55 to 24 vote.

The following day, Mr. Truman announced that Commissioner Dean was to be chairman of the AEC, an action which does not require Senate confirmation. Once again the furor over the AEC died down and the Commissioners can now continue work, although they are one short with no eager candidates in sight.

FAS Statement during controversy in the Senate over confirmation of Sumner Pike as AEC Commissioner was released by W. A. Higinbotham on July 5:

"The Federation of American Scientists is deeply concerned over the crisis for the Atomic Energy Commission and the nation precipitated by failure of the Senate Atomic Energy Committee to report favorably the nomination of Sumner Pike. The Commission, without a permanent chairman for almost five months, is now reduced to only three commissioners. It has been deprived without warning of its Acting Chairman, the only member with experience dating from the inception of the Commission. The shattering effect of this situation on the operations of the entire AEC and on the morale of its personnel is difficult to overestimate.

"The Atomic Energy Act divided responsibility for the effective operation of the Commission between the President and the Congress. In view of the novelty of the undertaking and its great importance to the national welfare and security, close continued scrutiny by the Congress was regarded as essential. The presumption was, however, that the President and Congress would pull in harness to insure the success of this vital enterprise. It was not intended, nor expected, that political bickering or inadequate liaison would be permitted to reduce the Commission to the status of a tattered rag-doll. Unfortunately, we are very close to that circumstance today.

"It is not our intention to assess blame for the present state of affairs, nor to dwell on the difficulty in placing outstanding men in these important positions. What we are concerned with is that the Executive and Legislative branches shall both immediately buckle down to the tasks assigned them under the Atomic Energy Act, and shall speedily by nomination and confirmation bring the AEC up to its full strength of five commissioners and a permanent chairman. In the immediate situation, the Senate should give full consideration to the nomination of Mr. Pike. Only in these ways will the American people be convinced that the Atomic Energy Commission, in which they have placed so much hope for present and future security, is not being degraded by inability of important governmental officials to put aside petty considerations when confronted by an issue of supreme magnitude."

Shifting Policy on Atomic Secrecy. Broader and more effective distribution of technical reports on atomic energy is to be expected from the recently announced arrangement for utilizing the facilities of the Department of Commerce's Office of Technical Services for this purpose. The plan would make declassified reports, including **Nuclear Science Abstracts**, more generally available to business and industry. OTS will only handle distribution as it does for other federal agencies; preparation and release remains a function of the AEC. This announcement is one of several which hint

at a gradual change in policy regarding secrecy in the atomic energy program. The Russian atomic success, the widespread public discussion of secrecy with reference to the H-bomb decision, the growing sentiment for increased participation of industry in the AE program, all are likely contributing factors.

Additional evidence is the announcement of the forthcoming August publication of "The Effects of Atomic Weapons," a full-sized, illustrated book, prepared by 100 experts for the AEC. Called in the advance notice "The first completely authoritative document on the over-all effects of atomic weapons," the volume is of primary interest to persons engaged in civilian defense and the building trades. The book could not live up to the blurbs unless it contained newly declassified information of some interest. Advance orders, at \$1.25, are being accepted by the Sup't of Documents, Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.

The O'Mahoney Rider, which provides for full FBI investigation of all AEC fellows (passed last summer over the strenuous protests of a large number of scientists and educators) is attached to the AEC appropriations again this year. The hope of some that the restriction would be dropped when the furor subsided has not yet been realized, a fact which the FAS is soberly bringing to the attention of the Senate and the universities now sponsoring the AEC's curtailed fellowship program.

The Industrial Atom. In recent *Collier's* articles, David E. Lilienthal, former chairman of the AEC, urged drastic revision of the 1946 Atomic Energy Act so the atom might be freed from a "Soviet-type" government monopoly and American private enterprise be given an opportunity to develop the industrial atom. On the basis of experience since 1946, including the fact of the Russian atomic explosion, Lilienthal is convinced that our present course is no longer justified. He proposes that government monopoly be restricted to atomic weapons, that the great factories producing U-235 and plutonium be leased to private concerns, and that competition in new ways of production be encouraged. Creative opportunities in designing and building of reactors should be made available to private industry. The possibilities of the industrial atom, according to Lilienthal, are almost limitless. He envisages kinds of jobs and businesses and ways of living now undreamed of. This kind of development "know-how," he says, is a distinctive American art. Its propaganda value from an international point of view he compares to what we imagine would happen if the Russians should beat us in developing the peaceful side of the atom. In the midst of a desperate competition with Russia, we have adopted a Russian rather than an American method of treating atomic energy, according to Lilienthal's present views.

Lilienthal would have the government keep track of all privately-owned atomic materials and reserve the right of seizure. The change from government monopoly will not be without loud outcry, he admits, but in so doing, we would "Americanize the atom."

Dr. Charles A. Thomas, who helped write the original Acheson-Lilienthal Report, and who is a vice-president of the Monsanto Chemical Co., added his voice in urging that the U.S. turn a larger share of the atomic energy program over to private industry. Dr. Thomas suggested specifically that industry be given authority to build an atomic energy power plant to make phosphate fertilizer, the plutonium which is made in the process to be turned over to the government. For this conversion of uranium into plutonium, the government would pay industry a fee.

Editorial comments on both these proposals have on the whole been favorable, the most critical attitude emphasizing the difficulties of protecting military secrets while liberalizing information on peaceful applications.

Constructive Peace Conference. Chicago was the scene in late May of the Mid-Century Peace Conference, which unanimously urged prompt initiation of an "all-out effort to construct a full-scale atomic plant for peace somewhere in the southwestern U.S. where power is needed." Under the auspices of the Committee for Peaceful Alternatives and sponsored by a diverse but predominantly religious group, the conference also commended the appeal of the International Red Cross for banning the use of atomic weapons, Trygve Lie's peace efforts, and McMahon's approach to the problems of peace.

"How Big Need a Big Bomb Be?" by Harrison Brown, the lead article in the summer issue of *The American Scholar*, is a recent thoughtful contribution to the H-bomb discussion.

INTERNATIONAL OPENNESS

Niels Bohr's "open letter" to the United Nations tells the story of his part in the struggle towards an international agreement on atomic energy. It emphasizes an angle of the problem whose solution Bohr considers a prerequisite to any enduring gain on the road to peace -- the advancement toward an "open world." The openness which Bohr envisages as essential involves far more than a lowering of security restrictions on technical matters, for "respect and good will between nations cannot endure without free access to information about all aspects of life in every country."

Bohr had an early and continuing opportunity to present his viewpoints on atomic energy to the western statesmen, beginning with a conference with Roosevelt in 1944. He pointed to all the hopes which later formed the familiar background to the Acheson-Lillenthal report and to the Baruch proposals. From Bohr's cautious style, one may perhaps guess that these proposals should have appeared to him as somewhat too little and too late. He had warned from the start that: "All such opportunities may, however, be forfeited if an initiative is not taken while the matter can be raised in a spirit of friendly advice. In fact, a postponement to await further developments might, especially if preparations for competitive efforts in the meantime have reached an advanced stage, give the approach the appearance of an attempt at coercion in which no great nation can be expected to acquiesce."

Bohr is aware, of course, of the extreme difficulty of inducing all parties to travel on the road to an open world: "...abolition of barriers would imply greater modifications in administrative practices in countries where new social structures are being built up in temporary seclusion than in countries with long traditions in governmental organization and international contacts. Common readiness to assist all peoples in overcoming difficulties of such kind is, therefore, most urgently required." While conscious that his considerations "may appear utopian," he feels confident in the inherent power of sound ideas and, at least, in the propaganda value of a clear stand for openness: "Such a course should be in the deepest interest of all nations irrespective of differences in social and economic organization." Undismayed by the worsening situation, Bohr still feels that "every initiative" towards this goal would be of the greatest importance.

An interesting corollary to this letter was supplied right after its release in Copenhagen on June 9. Bohr was publicly asked to sign the "Stockholm appeal" for the prohibition of atomic weapons which has been raised by a group friendly to the USSR. Bohr flatly refused to join in this appeal on the grounds that it did not include the request for openness.

(The text of Bohr's letter appeared in Science for July 7, and is scheduled for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. Additional copies in quantity are available for the cost of postage from the FAS Washington office.)

International Research Centers. Several proposals have recently been put forward for the establishment in Western Europe of one or more international research centers under joint sponsorship of interested countries. Two of these proposals were concerned primarily with Atomic Research. In an address delivered to a UNESCO meeting in Italy, Prof. I. I. Rabi of Columbia University proposed the establishment of a nuclear physics laboratory in Western Europe as the first step toward the creation of several pure research laboratories to be launched by UNESCO and operated under the joint sponsorship of participating countries. This idea received warm backing from a number of foreign scientists, including G. P. Thomson of Great Britain.

A similar proposal came from Prof. Jean Thibaud of the University of Lyons. He urged the unification of Western Europe atomic research in a manner similar to the Schuman plan for pooling coal and steel resources. His proposal, however, dealt with the application of atomic energy for industrial and other peaceful purposes only.

A somewhat broader proposal came from a committee of Western scientists which met in Paris last year to explore resolutions of the UN Economic and Social Council ("The experts invited from Asia and Eastern Europe were unable to attend."). Their report, released June 2, urged the UN to organize 3 international research centers as soon as possible to deal with mathematics, psychology and other related sciences, and social science. It suggested a world-wide convocation of scientists to study the whole problem of setting up international laboratories to be held sometime during the summer of 1951.

Biological Hazards of Atomic Energy. A 2-day conference, arranged by British scientific societies on the subject of atomic energy and its biological hazards, will be held at the Royal Institution, London, England, on October 20-21, 1950. The object of the conference is to consider the possible biological hazards arising from the development and application of atomic science now and in the future. The four sessions of the meeting will be: (1) Biological and medical effects of nuclear radiations; (2) Tolerance levels and measures of protection; (3) Biological implications; (4) Atomic energy and the future.

"The Quick and the Dead" is the title of an outstanding NBC radio series, giving the story of the A- and H-bombs. The first two of the 4 programs (8:00 p.m. EDT, Thursdays) were factual and at the same time dramatic. Many of the scientific, military, and political participants, from Fermi to Churchill, play themselves via tape recordings. Produced and directed by Fred Friendly, the programs are narrated by W. L. Laurence, with Bob Hope playing the inquiring taxpayer.

The H-Bomb -- What and Why. A distinct contribution to atomic education is the extremely informative and well-written 41-page pamphlet, "The Hydrogen Bomb and International Control: Technical and Background Information," just issued by the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy. Presented simply in a few pages are enough basic technical data -- authentic and declassified -- to give the reader an appreciation of the production problems, the costs, and the raw materials both for fission and fusion bombs. There is a searching, analytical questionnaire which lays bare the ramifications of the complex problem of international control. Six pages are devoted to a history of the proposals and negotiations toward international control of atomic weapons. An appendix contains a translation of the famous chapter on nuclear fusion from Thirring's "Die Geschichte der Atombombe" (Vienna, 1946), excerpts from Ridenour's and Bethe's Scientific American articles on the H-bomb and from Bacher's Town Hall speech, together with an extensive "selected" bibliography of recent official publications, books, pamphlets, and periodical and newspaper references.

Copies are available from the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, Capitol Building, Washington 25, D.C.

National Science Foundation. The international situation has diverted White House attention from the task of making appointments to the 24-man part-time National Science Board of NSF. Informal progress reports filter out from time to time, each predicting announcement of the nominations in the near future. There are still no rumors worth spreading regarding the appointees.

The Federation of American Scientists consists of scientists and some interested laymen concerned with the impact of science on the modern world. The FAS Chairman is W. A. Higinbotham, of Brookhaven; the Vice-chairman, Hugh C. Wolfe, of Cooper Union. Policy, determined by the elected Council, is carried out by the Executive Committee and by the Secretariat, which prepares this occasional Newsletter and is otherwise appropriately active on the Washington scene.

Applications for membership may be sent to the Washington Office. Non-member subscription to the FAS Newsletter is \$2.00 per year (about 10 issues). Application or subscription is respectfully solicited from individuals on temporary "free" lists who wish to lend direct or indirect support to FAS activities or services.

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"An Offensive for Freedom" was the theme of the Second Annual Conference on American Foreign Policy at Colgate University, July 7-13. The 90 speakers and discussants and 200 registrants included officials, experts, and grass root representatives. Chosen months earlier, the theme proved more prophetic than the planners had wished. Daily reports of the campaign in Korea gave new urgency to the discussions.

It was natural that the military aspect of our foreign policy would receive especial attention, which it did at two conference sessions. "Some Implications of the H-Bomb" was the topic to which Dr. Ralph E. Lapp, General Leslie R. Groves, and Dr. Bernard Brodie addressed themselves. Dr. Lapp renewed his appeal (see June issue of Scientific American) for an adequate civil defense, claiming that all the proposals brought forward thus far by government agencies were of trivial value.

Gen. Groves viewed the H-bomb as merely the latest in a long progression of increasingly powerful weapons used for war. He acknowledged that its very power brought certain disadvantages, for even with A-bombs it took some care to select a suitable target. It would be correspondingly more difficult to find a target which would justify the use of an H-bomb. During the question period, Gen. Groves was asked what the implications were of the greater energy cost per neutron of fusion-bombs than fission-bombs, as indicated by Dr. R. F. Bacher in the May Scientific American. He probably did not grasp the full meaning of the question, but in reply he stated that he would much rather have 12 atomic bombs than one hydrogen bomb, merely because from a military viewpoint, he disliked carrying all his eggs in one basket.

Dr. Brodie of Yale (editor of "The Absolute Weapon") declared that the H-bomb presented no new problems except that it might be overrated. The H-bomb's wider coverage might induce greater inaccuracy on the part of the bombing crews (!) but he urged that we not underrate A-bombs. He proposed that we continue to develop the H-bomb until one can be detonated, then declare that the U.S. would not use it, thus going Hans Bethe one better. Such a policy, he claimed, would have no effect upon our adversary, would cost very little militarily, but would help to enhance our prestige in the rest of the world where the Soviets are attempting (with some success) to identify this country as the war party.

The representatives of the military, at another session, were generally agreed that there was no defense possible from a powerful aggressor who was willing to accept a high percentage of losses in an all-out attack on this country. They were anxious that we increase our military strength ("No general ever had too many weapons!") but they acknowledged that something further was needed.

What this "something further" should be, received much thoughtful attention. Considered important were: Marshall Plan aid; technical assistance under Point IV; the sharing of the resources of technical knowledge of all nations through UN agencies; bilateral agreements to supply underdeveloped areas with funds, mostly private; and, with special emphasis, the moral or spiritual approach, exemplified by a vigorous Voice of America.

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A-Bomb in Korea? (Continued from Page 1).

use of the A-bomb. But some observers went further, pointing out that the entire moral basis of the police action in Korea is at stake in the discussion of the A-bomb. Trygve Lie remarked, when questioned on his attitude, that there had been entirely too much said on the matter already. His obvious concern had its basis, no doubt, in the fact that American forces in Korea are now officially functioning as a UN police force, under Gen. MacArthur as a UN commander. Any decision to use the A-bomb would therefore imply UN sanction. The question is thereby raised whether the decision on the bomb is one the U.S. can properly make. Having so closely associated itself with the UN in Korea, would the U.S. be consistent in taking an action unilaterally which would certainly have the most serious consequences for every nation on the globe? For it is generally agreed that an A-bomb drop would make world-wide conflict inevitable.

It is the avowed UN intention to localize the conflict in Korea. Good police action is not punitive action; its legitimate objective is coping with the aggressor to restore the status quo ante. This the bomb could never do; indeed it must inevitably destroy any hope of doing so. Not that restoration of the 38th parallel can be viewed as an end-point. The police action which we and the UN have been driven to undertake must be followed, better accompanied, by a demarche as dramatic as an atomic explosion, but calculated to produce exactly the opposite effects. Having committed itself to throw back aggression through collective action under the UN, the U.S. must now take the lead in organizing major constructive UN action to eliminate the causes of aggression. The proposals of Senator McMahon, and more recently of Walter Reuther, to expend large sums through the UN to build up the under-privileged areas of the world, must be given serious consideration. Not atomic bombs, but positive constructive measures to aid world economic development are the proper long-range weapons of international action under the UN.

-- Clifford Grobstein

More Security (Continued from Page 1).

designated areas or projects within these agencies. A further proposal would allow appeal by the accused to a board constituted at least in part outside his own agency. Such an amendment was defeated in the House, by a very close margin, on the grounds that it was not acceptable to the military. Another suggestion is that employees who have been adjudged poor security risks should whenever possible be transferred, at least pending appeal, to positions not involving access to classified information. The present wording calls for suspension without pay. It must be presumed that in all security cases within a government agency, the persons involved have received clearance as to loyalty, since all but a minute fraction of present Federal workers have been checked under the President's loyalty program; new workers on classified projects undergo a pre-employment loyalty investigation. However prospects for improving the T-M bill along these lines are not bright, given the present mood of Congress, although hearings will be held by Sen. Tydings' (D. Md.) Armed Services Committee.

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