F. A. S. NEWSLETTER

Published by the
FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS
1805 H Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.
David R. Inglis, Chairman

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No. 59-5 May 14, 1959

STRAUSS CONFIRMATION?

On the press-day of this NEWSLETTER, there is a real doubt whether Admiral Lewis E. Strauss will be confirmed as Secretary of Commerce. But confirmed or not, the former Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission has been subjected to one of the most searching and bitter nomination hearings in American history. Many observers judged that the real crisis in the controversy before the Senate Commerce Committee came with the hostile testimony of two men—first, a scientist, and the second, a Senator.

The scientist was David R. Inglis, of the Argonne Laboratory, Chicago, Ill., who by coincidence that day of April 30 was beginning a term as Chairman of FAS. The FAS Council met the night before Dr. Inglis was to appear and for some time considered the Strauss nomination.

Except for one delegate who abstained because of lack of specific authorization to vote, the Council voted unanimously that the FAS should protest the confirmation of Mr. Strauss to a high post involving major scientific agencies and offices governing exchange of technical information with other countries.

The Council was aware that traditionally the Federation has not taken action on questions revolving around an individual. Further, the FAS Council does not ordinarily authorize any person, even the Chairman, to speak for it except as directed. In this instance, however, the Council did not feel that it should dis-associate itself from Inglis' testimony, and authorized him to identify himself as FAS Chairman. In addition, the Council did not require review of Inglis' testimony in advance.

A statement subsequently adopted by the Council and sent to the Committee on May 6 stated Mr. Strauss "has alienated the sympathy of a large part of the scientific community, rendering future cooperation with him difficult. He has misused the personnel security system for political purposes and the suppression of opposing opinions." An FAS statement was not adopted at the time of Inglis' appearance. The Federation's official position was that it supported Inglis' opposition to Strauss, but left the detailed arguments up to Inglis.

Inglis' Testimony

As the Associated Press lead phrased it (4/30) Inglis "accused Strauss of narrow-minded, vindictive and sometimes unethical tactics." He said Strauss has "substantial defects of character," and further he outlined the national policies—with over-emphasis upon atomic weapons—which he said Strauss had originated or greatly influenced, such as development of the H-bomb.

He said "Our national guilt for getting ourselves and the world into this unhappy fix without looking seriously for acceptable alternatives is due in no small measure to the narrow dedication of Mr. Strauss to the single track approach of modern weaponry with no toleration for negotiations as a parallel track toward future security."

Strauss testified the next day, charging Inglis with "untruth" and "unqualified falsehood." Perhaps most of the criticism of Inglis followed the line that a man should not be disqualified for office because of pursuing or directing a particular administration atomic policy. Sen. John O. Pastore, (D., R. I.) said of the H-bomb "That was a Presidential decision, and I don't see how it can be used to disqualify anyone."

A most startling note to many was the later questioning of Inglis by Sen. Hugh Scott (R, Pa.) who found Inglis' testimony to be "infested with a venomous desire for revenge." Scott queried Inglis as to whether he had ever been a member of the Independent Citizen's Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, and as to where he had stood in the Hiss case.

(continued on page 2)

FALLOUT HEARINGS HELD AMID INCREASING PUBLIC CONCERN

Four days of public hearings were held May 5-8 by the Special Subcommittee on Radiation (Chairman: Chet Holifield, D, Cal.) of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. While hearings were designed to bring Congress and the Committee up to date on developments since the last fallout hearings in 1957, they were also admittedly a reflection of public concern over disclosures of increases in strontium-90 in foods (See FAS NL 59-3). The subcommittee also wished to consider which agency should have responsibility for establishing standard for radiation hazards (See NL 59-4).

Dirty Bombs and Faster Fallout

Although several announcements by Lewis L. Strauss (when he was chairman of the AEC) led to the belief that the 1958 series of nuclear weapons tests produced little fallout, the AEC revealed at the hearings that the total radioactive debris produced during 1957-58 tests, was almost equal to the quantity produced in **all** previous tests (**W. Post,** 5/6). US tests were shown to be almost as "dirty" as Russian tests during this period. A non-AEC scientist, E. A. Martell, of the Air Force Cambridge Research Center, told the committee that the radioactive debris in the stratosphere appears to be coming to earth much more rapidly than previously predicted from tests held at equatorial latitudes, and that the fallout from Russian tests held in northern latitudes would be down in 6-12 months. (Data published by **Science,** May 4). He estimated that external gamma radiation from fallout was about one-half that from natural resources in areas of high fallout in the Northern hemisphere during 1957 and 1958. His figures were in contrast with lower figures for radiation exposure in the US presented by Charles Dunham, Director of AEC's Division of Biology and Medicine.

"Hot Spots" versus Overall Averages

One reason for the differences of opinion about radiation hazards from fallout resided in the AEC practice of presenting averages for the USA as opposed to Dr. Martell's figures for "hot spots." The same difference of approach led a panel of scientists to state that the radioactive strontium-90 in human skeletons will reach an average of 9% of the permissible limit if no further tests are held, while Dr. James Terrill of the US Public Health Service cautioned that accumulation of fallout products in bone might exceed the "permissible" limit in sections of the country where fallout is above average (**W. Post,** 5/9).

The AEC on April 23 published a recommendation of the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurements which included **doubling** the level of allowable strontium-90 skeletal accumulation for workers in atomic occupations. Opposed to this was the International Committee's August '58 recommendation that for the general population the maximum permissible dose should be reduced to one-third the present level. In an instructive article in **The Minnesota Chemist** of March-April '59, W. O. Caster points out that accumulation of Sr-90 in the bones of an individual is not homogeneous and that a factor N has to be taken into account to correct for the degree of inhomogeneity. Engstrom et al., in a report entitled **"Bone and Radiostrontium"** (Wiley, 1958) state that the factor N may range between 6 and 60 under different conditions. If the current AEC evaluation estimates that 180 s.u. would produce a radiation dose of 0.45r/year (just below the maximum permissible level for the general population), then inclusion of Engstrom's factor would mean that 180 s.u. on the average can well exceed permissible levels locally. Another factor, also mentioned in the article above but usually not emphasized, is the presence in fallout of unexpended uranium and plutonium. In Dr. Caster's view, these rank in danger **above** strontium-90.

INTERNAL SECURITY

On Feb. 24, the American Bar Association, through its House of Delegates, submitted a set of recommendations to Congress concerning national security. The recommendations were concerned with the following: the legality of sedition laws; the authority of legislative investigative committees; redefinition of the terms in the Smith Act; the Post Office ban on foreign propaganda; the 1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act; and the privilege against self-incrimination. Several of the recommendations were in disagreement with Supreme Court decisions. R. L. Malone, president of the ABA, said the recommendations were aimed at ending "defects in our internal security laws that were pointed out in decisions of the US Supreme Court" and were not "in any sense attacking the Court or its decisions" (**W. Post,** 3/2). The American Civil Liberties Union strongly recommended that the ABA reconsider its legislative recommendations and that "a serious disservice upon the internal security of our country, the rights of people within it, and the concept of equal justice under the law as enunciated by the Supreme Court" had been done by the ABA (**NYT,** 4/19). The National Lawyers Guild charged that the ABA had allied itself with the severest attackers of the Supreme Court.

Security Bills Pending

Most of the ABA recommendations are included in thirteen bills currently under discussion at hearings of the Senate Internal Security Committee which began on April 20. These bills are aimed chiefly at reversing the effects of Supreme Court decisions in the area of national security. Four of the bills are concerned with redefining terms in the Smith Act; three with allowing states to enforce their own "Smith Acts"; others with Government control of aliens awaiting deportation, suspension of civilian employees from Government jobs, and passport regulations. (**Emerg. Civ. Lib. Bull.,** 4/24).

The passport bill (S. 1303) sponsored by the committee chairman, Senator Eastland (D, Miss.) would permit the State Department to deny passports to Communists, Communist suspects, or anyone the Department felt would injure the US by travelling in time of war or "national emergency." This bill was prompted by a Supreme Court decision that passport denials solely on the basis of political affiliation are not authorized by law. Roger Fisher, of the Harvard Law School, told Senators that legislation to deny passports to Communists was "unwise and unconstitutional" (**W. Post,** 4/29). Deans of Harvard, Yale, Columbia and University of Pennsylvania Law Schools, as well as individual professors at these schools and Cornell sent a telegram to Sen. Eastland concerning the passport bill and several others before the committee. "Not one of these bills seems to us to strengthen the democratic system they are intended to protect" the signers stated. "On the contrary, in combination they seem to jeopardize many of the values most highly cherished in a free society" (**W. Post,** 5/5).

MISSILE BASES OVERSEAS

The United States is going ahead with plans for a vast nuclear arms build-up of its North Atlantic allies. In hearings before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in March, J. N. Irwin Jr., Assistant Sec'y. of Defense testified that $302 million would be spent on this program in the next fiscal year. The plans include the establishment of bases for the launching of 650 mile Matador missiles on West German territory, under West German control, within a few months.

Italy has agreed to accept one squadron of the 1500 mile range Jupiter missiles. The missiles would be turned over to the Italians but the atomic warheads would remain under American control and custody. The only other nation to sign such an agreement is Great Britain, while negotiations for a similar pact with Turkey are reported to be under way. After a riotous three-day debate, the Italian Senate, by a vote of 133 to 87, approved the government's policy on this issue (**W. Post,** 4/17).

The Soviet Union accused the United States of trying to "torpedo" the Geneva foreign minister's conference by stepping up missile base construction in Europe. Lincoln White, the State Department's spokesman, said "this accusation is totally devoid of substance," and that Russia was being "completely hypocritical," since the Russian leaders continue to boast of their own buildup of the most modern weapons including missiles of all kinds (**W. Post,** 4/23).

As an example of such boasts, on the eve of the foreign minister's conference in Geneva, Premier Khrushchev told a group of West German editors, "the Western powers would be literally wiped off the face of the earth" in any future war.

RADIATION AND FALLOUT CONTROVERSY

The recent disagreement between the National Committee on Radiation Protection and Measurements and the International Committee on Radiological Protection (with which the US group is affiliated), has stirred up a controversy over the way in which "safe" radiation limits are determined, and confused most people as to what the meaning of the term "maximum permissible concentration" may be. Coincidentally there have been suggestions that the control of the radiation health aspects of radiation should be removed from the AEC, which is an operating agency, and delegated to the Public Health Service.

The controversy over the permissible limits stems from the definition of a "maximum permissible" limit as one which in the light of present knowledge is not expected to cause any "bodily injury or effect that a person would regard as objectionable and/or competent medical authorities would regard as being deleterious to the health and well being of the individual." Since the limit depends on our knowledge of harmful effects at low dosages, and this knowledge is extremely meager, the recommended value is somewhat arbitrary and may be subjective as well. The recent change involves a re-examination of the data on internal radiation hazards of various isotopes, including strontium-90. The allowable bone concentration has been doubled for workers in the atomic field, from one to two microcuries in the whole skeleton. Because of decreased estimates of biological discrimination factors, the increase in permissible concentration in ingested material has only been increased by 25%.

Population MPC

The above limits were agreed to by both the US committee and by the international committee. The committees disagree, however, on what should be established as the maximum permissible concentration for the general population. The US committee wants to stick to the past estimates of one-tenth of the professional levels, while the international body has recommended that the levels be set at 1/30 of the professional levels where atomic hazards are concerned—as is the case for strontium-90 — and at 1/100 for genetic hazards.

The related fight over the possible existence of a threshhold for somatic radiation effects has not been settled. Thus the dispute is at a stage where the believers in a threshold argue there is no evidence that exposure at the permissible levels will cause any damage to anyone, while those who say that the effects are proportional to dosage emphasize the point that even very low levels will cause significant effects. It is likely that this problem will be with us in one form or another for a long time.

Sen. Lister Hill (D, Ala.) introduced a bill (S.1628) which would give to the Public Health Service the primary responsibility for the protection of the public's health and safety from the dangers of ionizing radiation. This bill would presumably not affect the setting of safe exposure limits referred to above, but would involve the establishment of operating standards for the safe usage of radiation in such fields as reactors and accelerators, radioisotopes, and x-ray machines. The act vests no enforcement powers in the Public Health Service but requires the Surgeon-General to develop a program for the adequate control and regulation of radiation standards, and to present it to Congress by Feb. 28, 1960. The proposal is in line with the recent recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Radiation which was established by the PHS. A similar bill (HR7014) was introduced in the House by Rep. John E. Fogarty (D, R. I.).

STRAUSS (continued from page 1)

Much later, Jack Anderson, a reporter on Drew Pearson's staff, testified that he had seen a folder marked CONFIDENTIAL, containing FBI information concerning Inglis as an AEC laboratory staff member on the table in front of Mr. Strauss as an aid to his rebuttal (**W. Post** 5/14). David L. Hill, a former Chairman of FAS, also testified at length. Like Inglis, he emphasized Strauss' vindictiveness, but Hill's 35 page statement dealt more with specific incidents and less with matters of policy and opinion.

The charges and counter-charges were front-page stories in Washington, and were soon equalled or surpassed by charges brought by Sen. Clinton P. Anderson (D, N. M.) who took the unusual but not rare step of appearing before the committee as a witness. As Chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, Anderson had long been known for opposition to Strauss' policies and methods, and he gave lengthy elaboration of what he termed a record of falsehoods.

BOOK REVIEW

EDUCATION AND FREEDOM, by H. G. Rickover, Vice Admiral, U. S. N. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York 1959. $3.50.

By this time most readers of the **Newsletter** will know that Admiral Rickover belongs to the group of prominent citizens who have expressed their deep concern over the various deficiences of the American educational system. As Dr. Joseph Still did against a medical background (See NL 59-1), Rickover analyzes against an engineering background, the demands which an increasingly industrialized society will make on future generations. He follows this analysis by proposing changes in our educational system in order to meet these demands.

Most readers will also know that the book is controversial. The debate is not about the function of the public schools in preparing the younger generation "to understand the complexities of today's tense and uncertain world," and thus to master them. All agree with this proposition. The debate is on the methods used. Rickover's main criticism is directed against John Dewey and "progressive" education. By and large, Rickover condemns this kind of education because of the many excesses committed by self styled "progressive" educators who judge teachers by the number of their certificates in educational methods, and not by their mastery of subject matter. He states: "It (pedagogy) admittedly has importance in the early school grades where presentation of subject matter to very young minds will greatly affect their grasp of it. But as the pupil's mind matures, the method grows progressively less important. Teacher training everywhere includes pedagogy, but in no other country is so large a part of teacher training devoted to study of methods, so little to knowledge of subject matter."

The controversial sides of Rickover's book have been ably discussed by Theodore Brameld, Professor of Education and author of **"Cultural Foundations of Education,"** and by Arthur Bestor, Professor of History and author of **"The Restoration of Learning" (NY Times Book Review,** 2/1). Brameld points out that progressive educational methods, which according to Rickover "have not found too wide application in our schools . . .", cannot be blamed for the deficiencies of the system. The issue of progressive education should not distract the reader from the main themes of the book. The first is the role of education throughout history in determining the rise and fall of nations, as seen by an engineer-scientist. Rickover's plea for an engineering oath comparable to the Hippocratic oath should be heeded by all engineers. The second main theme is the necessity to "develop in all children—talented, average, and below average—the highest level of intellectual competence of which they are capable," as the only means by which the tremendously increasing population of the world can live in decency, in face of rapidly decreasing resources.

The book ends with proposals which, to some degree, might contribute to the solution of the main thesis, as expressed by Brameld: "How shall America create a powerful program of education, suitable to the age of space which Admiral Rickover himself has helped to accelerate?" Rickover proposes the establishment of twenty-five demonstration high schools, a lengthened study year, and accelerated classes conducted by subject-trained teachers who should be paid according to their knowledge of the subject. He proposed to decrease the shortage of teachers by giving teacher certificates to professionals who are available because of arbitrary compulsory retirement ages, and by using part-time teachers from the ranks of professionals in industry and research laboratories.

H. G. DuBuy

PEACEFUL ATOM

On April 13, Italy dedicated an American-built 5000 Kw heavy water research reactor near Milan thus becoming the fourth nation, after Brazil, West Germany and Spain, to qualify for a $350,000 US Atoms-for-Peace assistance contribution (**AEC,** B-57, 4/13). The European Atomic Energy Community and the US AEC have jointly called for bids for the construction of nuclear plants in the 6 Euratom nations (Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and The Netherlands). The program envisages a capacity of one million Kw at coal-competitive prices in 4 to 6 years, and also allots $100 million, contributed equally by the US and Euratom, for research. An additional $135 million in 4½% loans is to be made available by the US Export-Import Bank, and the AEC has agreed to guarantee Euratom the price level of fuel fabrication, chemical fuel reprocessing services, adequacy of fuel supply, and a market for recovered plutonium (**AEC,** B-54, 4/13).

The AEC-Euratom agreement specifies that proposed plants use reactors of American design, that one or more US manufacturers must participate in the construction, that fuel elements must be fabricated either by US or Euratom sources to be eligible for AEC guarantees, and that loans be used for equipment, material and services required in the development and construction of reactors of US design. In view of the greater experience of the British with large-scale commercial nuclear power it is questionable whether the Euratom countries will not choose to deal with the United Kingdom rather than with the US. Euratom, in fact, concluded a cooperation agreement with Britain on Feb. 4, thus opening the European market to the sale of British reactors (Hirsch, **New Scientist,** 3/26).

EURATOM In Operation

The International Atomic Energy Agency became operational at its Vienna headquarters in Jan., 1958, with 70 member nations, a staff of 500 and a budget of about $6 million. In its first year it has concentrated on developing a training program for atomic technicians and on studies of waste disposal, isotope handling, safety standards, and third-party liability (**NYT,** 4/4). This UN agency, whose effectiveness may be limited by the veto rights of the major powers, has had hard sledding in achieving its major objective of supplying uranium to have-not countries. Although the US has pledged 5000 Kg of U-235, and Canada has given 3 tons of natural uranium, other nations have contributed only token amounts.

Although the "floating laboratory" nuclear ship "Savannah" is to be launched in July (**AEC,** B-56), and although the AEC plans to get some experience from large Euratom reactors, the development of large-scale atomic power in the US is still retarded. AEC Commissioner McCone and Senator Anderson of the Joint Congressional Committee gave different reasons for this retardation. In a release of April 7 (**AEC,** S-9) McCone cited the high cost of nuclear power in this country as compared with conventional power, and urged the development of several "prototype" reactors of different kinds, looking toward an eventual competitive position for nuclear electricity. According to McCone, "seven experimental power reactors are now in operation," and "sixteen plants incorporating eight different reactor concepts have been authorized for construction by the Government or by industry." The AEC is also encouraging development of heavy water reactors because of their value to foreign countries which have natural uranium fuel available, and because they do not compete with weapons programs for U-235.

(continued on page 4)

The FAS is a national organization of scientists and engineers concerned with the impact of science on national and world affairs. The **Newsletter** is prepared in Washington by FAS members. The staff for this issue included, Editors: M. M. Elkind, M. G. F. Fuortes, H. Goldfine and M. Singer; Writers: M. Amrine, J. Buck, M. G. F. Fuortes, R. Glasser, H. C. Goodman, E. Kravitz, N. Seeman and G. Snow; Production: I. Shapiro, of the Washington Office Staff.

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ATOM TALKS PROGRESS?

On April 13 President Eisenhower wrote to Premier Khrushchev suggesting that nuclear test suspension could be put "into effect in phases, beginning with a prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere." Negotiations should meanwhile continue in order to extend the ban to cover underground and outer space testing. (According to Sen. Humphrey (**Congr. Rec.**, 5/1-6483), the President's letter was inspired by a suggestion advanced by Sen. Gore).

The President's letter was made public on April 20 and Premier Khrushchev's reply was issued on April 25. The Russian Leader objected that, if the American proposal were accepted "all we would do would be to mislead public opinion" since underground and outer space tests would still permit development of new atomic weapons and would not obviate the dangers of radioactive fallout.

Premier Khrushchev wrote that agreement on a comprehensive test ban could be reached by following a proposal advanced by Premier MacMillan during his visit to Russia. The British Premier had suggested that international inspections could be limited to a pre-established annual number. "There would naturally be few such inspections" the Soviet Leader said, and they should be justified "not by the wishful thinking of the men in the control agencies, but on the objective instrument readings."

Rigid Stands Opposed

Meanwhile, concern over the dangers of taking inflexible positions on the issues of rearmament and testing has been expressed. In a letter to the **NY Times** (March 24), D. R. Inglis (Physicist at the Argonne Laboratories and Chairman of FAS) reasserted the "possibility and urgent need for success of the negotiations on controlled test cessation" and stated that "It is important not only that negotiations be pursued with some flexibility but also, if necessary, that their scope be broadened."

A most significant development, however, was the approval by the Senate on April 30 of SR 96, introduced by Sen. Humphrey on March 26. This resolution puts the Senate on record as favoring continued efforts to reach an agreement on suspension of nuclear tests. The Senate asked the President to send this resolution to the Russian Government. Senator Humphrey commented that "by this resolution we make clear the dedication of the Government of the United States . . . to the proposal of reduction of armaments . . . and to the suspension of nuclear tests" (**Congr. Rec.**, 5/1-6482).

On May 12, the East-West test ban talks recessed until June 8. According to Chalmer Roberts (**W. Post**, 5/13), there now appears to be a 50-50 chance that an agreement can be reached. Prolonged negotiations have minimized the gap between the atomic powers with significant assists from the recent Eisenhower-Khrushchev letters and the tenor of the Senate voiced in SR 96. The point has now been reached where a few political decisions at the highest level—perhaps at the anticipated summer summit conference—would crystallize a test-ban agreement.

GOVERNMENT SECRECY AND INFORMATION

On April 17, Congressional hearings began before the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights to consider the "Freedom of Information" bill proposed by Sen. Hennings (D, Mo., Chairman of the Subcommittee). The proposed bill seeks to modify the Public Information section of the Administration Procedure Act which now permits executive agencies to withhold information when it relates "solely to the internal management of the agency" or when the agency determines that the "public interest" requires secrecy. Sen. Hennings and Rep. Moss (D, Calif), head of the House Subcommittee on Government Information) propose to stop the "misuse" of this section of the act, which was supposed to guarantee the "right to know." The proposed Hennings bill would permit secrecy only when required by specific statute, by national security, or to prevent "unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." The tighter language is proposed to insure maximum dissemination of information. The Administration is opposed to the bill, the Attorney General contending that the President has power inherent in the Constitution to withhold any information he deems necessary. This has never been ruled upon by the courts.

Suggestions For Improvement

Prof. Arthur H. Compton of Washington Univ., in testifying before the Senate Constitutional Rights Subcommittee called for the transferring of the responsibility for security and secrecy to the person in charge of getting the job done, that is, the university or industry president or the governmetn research chief. "Security clearance has become a highly organized bureaucratic matter put into the hands of agencies that have their **own interests**" apart from getting the job done, Compton said. He further suggested setting up a central government security office to serve as an **advisory** agency to the research centers (**W. Post**, 4/29).

Another tack was suggested by Sen. Anderson in his **New York Times** article on May 3 (a feature article that reviews his long running conflict with the AEC on secrecy) where he recommends that "the burden of proof be placed on those responsible for classification"—that the AEC should be required to provide a satisfactory justification for any "tag" placed on information—"and the tag removed when it can no longer be justified."

PEACEFUL ATOM (continued from page 3)

US national policy on atomic energy recently came in for searching scrutiny by Senator Anderson. Writing in **The Nation** (April 4), Anderson cites the need for plutonium for small atomic "brush fire" weapons as well as for controlled explosions for excavating and mining, and decries the refusal of the Administration to consider dual-purpose reactors producing both plutonium and power. Anderson believes that the primary trouble is that "the Administration does not want the government to get any further into the power business under any circumstances."

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