

F. A. S. NEWSLETTER

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September 26, 1955

SPARRING ON ARMS CONTROL CONTINUES

OFFICIAL EXCHANGES

Soviet reaction to the Eisenhower aerial inspection plan, first proposed at Geneva and recently laid before the UN Disarmament Commission, was made public on Sept. 23. In a speech before the UN by Foreign Minister Molotov, and in the text of a letter from Premier Bulganin to President Eisenhower released on that date, the Soviets carefully avoided rejection of the President's plan. Bulganin said that "in principle, we have no objections to this proposal."

However, Bulganin contended that the plan falls short of Soviet objectives and affirmed that creation of an armament control agency is "an indissoluble unity" with "a plan for gradual disarmament." The Soviet Premier questioned the advisability of occupying "ourselves with the questions of aerial photography and the exchange of military information" which "would become significant only if agreement is achieved on the reduction of armaments and on taking measures for the prohibition of atomic weapons."

AMERICAN PLAN The plan which Bulganin's letter criticized had been officially proposed at a meeting Aug. 29 of the 5-nation subcommittee of the UN Disarmament Commission by US chief delegate Lodge. It includes these major points (Washington Post, Aug. 30): (1) military blueprints supplied by each country will be subject to ground and sea observation as well as air inspection, as initially proposed by Eisenhower at the summit conference in Geneva; (2) the blueprints furnished would include identification, strength, command structure and disposition of personnel, units and equipment of all major land, sea and air forces, including paramilitary, in addition to a complete list of military plants, facilities and installations with their locations; (3) the exchange of information would be progressive starting with the least sensitive items which would guard against surprise attack; (4) "each inspecting country would utilize its own aircraft and related equipment" with personnel of the inspected country aboard each aircraft; and (5) airfields and adequate communication equipment for rapid reporting to home governments would be arranged for.

RUSSIAN CRITICISMS With regard to the details of the US plan, Bulganin observed that the US has military bases in many foreign countries and that Russia has "united militarily with several allied states." Therefore "it is impossible not to see that the proposal introduced by you completely omits from consideration armed forces and military establishments which are outside the area of the US and the Soviet Union." Having thus drawn a bead on the touchy issue of US bases abroad, he blandly suggests that these represent an obstacle to the Eisenhower plan by inquiring, "Would the governments of such (allied) states permit their sovereign territory to be photographed from the air by foreign aircraft?"

STASSEN REPLY In apparent reply, Harold E. Stassen, the President's disarmament aide, stated at a meeting of the Disarmament Subcommittee that the US position is that the US-USSR agreement should cover an exchange of information "from one end to the other of each country" (Washington Post, Sept. 24). Stassen has never clarified American policy with
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BOTH SIDES CAGEY

Geneva introduced a new US stance in the long debate on international weapons control. Now, nearly two months later, the US and USSR continue their cagey circling and it is clear that no early decision is in sight. The new US policy, with its emphasis on precaution against surprise attack rather than on control of weapons production or disarmament, has at least temporarily captured the initiative and forced reconsideration of the entire arms problem in a new light.

SIMPLICITY & CRITICISM The bold proposal for exchange of military blueprints and reciprocal aerial inspection launched by President Eisenhower at Geneva has been subjected during recent weeks to searching scrutiny and criticism both at home and abroad. Aside from its inspirational aspect, the chief factor in the popular appeal of the Eisenhower aerial inspection plan has been its apparent simplicity. Its "immediacy" has been praised, and it has been hailed as a "technical breakthrough" and as the "perfect" and "realistic" solution to the practical problem of surveillance. Some observers, on the other hand, have seen the plan as not so simple after all, and have questioned its tactical handling, its political advisability and its practical efficacy.

England, France and Canada are said (Washington Post, Aug. 30, Sept. 13) to have resented the unilateral and secret preparation of the bombshell sprung at Geneva, and to be confused and alarmed by the reservations now officially attached by Presidential-assistant Stassen to many specific features of the disarmament plan which had been previously agreed upon by the 4 Western members of the UN Disarmament Commission (details in NL 55-6). US policy, in fact, has been accused by both domestic and Soviet critics (N. Y. Times, Sept. 11) of being without direction and of having lost sight of the prime objective of disarmament, and the Washington Post on Sept. 14 called editorially for clarification.

NEW POLICY? There has been questioning as to the degree to which our disarmament policy has undergone basic realignment, with disarmament becoming in fact of quite secondary importance, and the prime objective becoming security against surprise attack (Lippman, Sept. 1). New thinking along these lines is ascribed to realization in high circles of the facts, first, that nuclear stockpiles have reached such dimensions that inspection and control are no longer feasible; second, that the implications of atomic warfare are so well recognized that war is unthinkable unless opportunity for a decisive surprise attack exists; and third, that "the degree of mutual trust and confidence required to permit the successful operation of a global arms limitation and control system does not exist today" (Hanson Baldwin, July 24). These attitudes are implicit or explicit in a recent speech of Air Secretary Quarles to air attaches of foreign missions to this country. According to James Reston (N. Y. Times, Sept. 6), "He told the air attaches in plain words that the US was going to rest its security not on the abolition of power but on the retention of overwhelming air-atomic power; not on 'disarmament' in the old-fashioned sense but on the capacity to retaliate; not on 'banning' or 'destroying' atomic bombs but on retaining them in such quantities that no nation could hope to start a major
(Continued on Page 4, Column 1)

A- INFORMATION SEGRECY GLOAK PIERCED

Scientists both here and abroad have long maintained that security restrictions on release of atomic research results in non-military areas do far more harm than good. Considerable progress has been made recently toward declassification in these areas, but much pertinent information apparently remains unavailable.

PROGRESS CITED The stultifying effects of tight secrecy policies and the great advantages of free exchange of information were dramatically illustrated throughout the 2-week UN International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy (Geneva, Aug. 8-20). In an atmosphere of unprecedented freedom, leading atomic scientists from 72 nations were permitted by their governments to make detailed disclosures of their findings and activities in most of the non-military fields of atomic energy application. Representatives from both sides of the Iron Curtain discovered repeatedly that research results and practical developments handled at home until recently as official secrets were already well known in detail in other countries. Often countries from whom information had always been withheld turned out to be further advanced in some area than the withholding power was. Rapid progress in many countries may result from technical disclosures made in the course of the Geneva conference. Specifically, the release of hitherto secret information on such matters as the design, construction and operation of Russia's 5000 kw atomic power plant, British studies in the field of "breeder" reactors, the possibility of harnessing thermonuclear energy for power purposes, new uses for radioactive isotopes, and the protection of workers in A-power plants should contribute substantially to the development of atomic energy for peaceful uses in all countries.

DATA RELEASED To "complement President Eisenhower's atoms-for-peace program on the home front," Secretary of Commerce Weeks announced Aug. 21 that the US government had released 961 previously secret or restricted AEC research reports, covering many fields including geology, metallurgy, chemistry, mineralogy, instrumentation, physics, and reactor technology. Future AEC reports of like nature will be made available regularly to industry, and will be outlined in a monthly publication of the Office of Technical Services -- "US Govt. Research Reports" -- available @ \$6/year from the Superintendent of Documents, Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, DC.

PROBLEMS REMAIN But secrecy continues to hamper progress and understanding in the atomic energy area, and the AEC, ever the center of controversy, has been attacked from several sources. Thus, in an article in the September Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Lothar W. Nordheim, Duke Univ. physics professor, urges the AEC to declassify completely all information on the radioactive hazards of bombs and reactors.

And the cloak of secrecy surrounding US research on thermonuclear power projects has been brought under criticism since the revelation that such research is in progress. J. G. Beckerly, former Classification Director for the AEC, urged in an editorial in Nucleonics (Aug.) that at least the basic information concerning fusion reactors be released. He argued that the vast majority of American scientists now in the dark would thus become aware of the program and a more extensive source of new ideas would be opened. Beckerly points out further that the policy of secrecy inhibits student training and introduces uncertainty for industrial concerns interested in A-power development.

Secrecy concerning the administrative practices of the AEC is also subject to criticism. Citing 2 cases in which the AEC granted applications to build atomic power reactors to private utilities in preference to public power groups -- although the Commission is required by law to give preference to the latter -- The Nation editorialized Sept. 10: "The public has no way of knowing whether these decisions were wise or proper; the facts on which a judgment could be made have not been disclosed. At the earliest opportunity, the Joint Committee on Atomic [Energy] should appraise the conduct and direction of its most important establishment, the AEC, and make public all pertinent information."

COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF PEACEFUL A-POWER

Although slow in starting, more speed has been achieved in implementing President Eisenhower's proposal of December, 1953 for international cooperation towards the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. At the UN General Assembly session last September, Secretary Dulles outlined four steps in this direction. One was the Geneva atoms-for-peace conference. Another was establishment of an international atomic energy agency; some delegates remained in Geneva after the conference to complete plans for this. Countries concerned in drafting the plans are: US, Britain, France, Canada, Australia, Belgium, S. Africa and Portugal. The plans, now complete, are being circulated confidentially to 84 nations for comment.

It is understood the plans call for establishment of an agency which would buy or obtain by donation nuclear materials and sell these to various countries at cost. (During the Geneva conference, Adm. Strauss announced that the price of 200 kilograms of U-235 which the US has promised to make available to the agency has been set at \$25/gram.) The agency will probably be allied to the UN as a part of UNESCO, although consideration is being given to having it report to the General Assembly. The governing board of the agency would be composed of representatives of the above-mentioned nations plus the USSR, Czechoslovakia and 6 other nations to be elected. The USSR has not yet indicated its willingness to join, the main objection being that it wishes the agency to come under the Security Council, where the Soviets would have veto power.

INFORMATION THAW Easing of tensions and destruction of some secrecy barriers has been emphasized by several events. Many delegates to Geneva, including some from the USSR, East European countries and Communist China, visited the atomic energy establishment at Harwell, England. US Ambassador to the USSR Bohlen, along with diplomats from 10 other nations, went on an inspection trip September 6 to the atomic energy power plant located outside Moscow.

The US has also been active in disclosing and circulating new information. In addition to releasing nearly 1000 previously classified documents (see related article, this page), the US announced shipment of technical libraries of non-classified data on nuclear energy and its applications to 26 nations. Each library contained about 6500 research reports. The US State Dept. is also sponsoring lectures in European and Near Eastern countries by members of its delegation to the Geneva conference.

Continuing the tones of optimism concerning international cooperation in the future, there have been calls from several directions for a repetition of the Geneva conference. President Eisenhower, in a message on Aug. 16, expressed hope "that a second conference will be convened at a later date to continue this great beginning of international cooperation." UN Secretary General Hammarskjold confirmed that a successor to the Geneva conference was being planned, but will probably not be held until more than a year had elapsed. It was also reported that he is drafting recommendations that these conferences be made regular affairs.

POWER FROM NUCLEAR FUSION?

Harnessing within 20 years of the tremendous power available from nuclear fusion reactions involved in the H-bomb was predicted by Indian scientist Homi J. Bhabha at the opening of the Geneva atoms-for-peace conference. Such an accomplishment would truly solve the energy problems of the world, Bhabha stated, because the fuel would be as plentiful as the heavy hydrogen in the oceans. US, British and Russian delegates confirmed that their countries had research programs in this field, but released no details.

Sen. Anderson (D, N.M.), Joint Atomic Energy Committee chairman, has expressed concern that the AEC is not devoting sufficient funds, effort, and scientific personnel to the US program. Another committee member, however, Rep. Hinshaw (R, Cal.), was of the opinion that the AEC has accelerated it as rapidly as possible.

EAST-WEST EXCHANGE ENCOURAGED

The "spirit of Geneva" appears to be thawing the post-war freeze on exchange of persons, information and ideas between East and West. The President's Report to the Nation on the Geneva Conference emphasized the necessity and value of "increased visits by the citizens of one country into the territory of another . . . to give each the fullest opportunity to learn about the people of the other nation." Since mid-June more than 50 visas for visits to Russia have been issued to private American citizens and the number may reach 300 to 400 by the end of the year. This contrasts with a total of 30 or 40 over the past few years. A Gallup poll shows 34% of the American public would like to see Russia first hand.

Thus far, Soviet travel to the US has been almost exclusively official, partly because of the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act which requires fingerprints of all non-official visitors but not of official delegations.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE Further efforts by the Administration to liberalize cultural communication with the USSR are under consideration, and may form the basis for discussions at the 4-power Geneva conference beginning Oct. 27. The US hopes to make progress toward removing travel restrictions, ending radio jamming and opening newsstands and bookstores to the publications of both countries. A concrete step already taken has been the setting up by US Customs and Post Office authorities of new ground rules to eliminate delay and interference in the delivery of materials printed behind the Iron Curtain.

Sen. Kilgore (D, W. Va.) announced Sept. 12 that his Senate Judiciary Committee will re-examine the controversial McCarran-Walter Act. Hearings begin Nov. 21. Kilgore said he has been trying since April to obtain testimony on the subject from top administration policy spokesmen, and neither President Eisenhower nor any member of his administration had produced "a single concrete recommendation for fundamental immigration legislation." Kilgore is now making a trip to Europe and the Far East during which he will seek first-hand knowledge from our consular officials on immigration problems.

RELAXATION ON EXPORT OF DATA

On Sept. 8 the Commerce Department extended the scope of its general export license to cover the transmission of all unclassified technical data to countries this side of the Iron Curtain. The Bureau of Foreign Commerce had previously required a validated export license for such transmission.

Validated licenses are issued only on specific application and for limited periods of time. The general licenses require no application nor the issuance of any document. The 'exporter' is simply required to stamp the proper symbols on the wrapper of any material transmitted. Maximum penalties for violation of the general license requirements are \$10,000 fine or one year imprisonment or both, under the authority of the Export Control Act of 1949. The types of data now shifted from validated to general licensing are described under 53 headings (see NL 55-4). This change of licensing requirements does not apply to the transmission of technical data to countries in the Soviet Bloc, which still requires a validated license.

STATE DEPARTMENT YIELDING ON PASSPORTS

As a consequence of the Appeals Court passport decision last June in the Shachtman case (see Newsletter 55-6), the State Dept. has with one or two exceptions yielded in all passport contests where a suit has been filed. Shachtman himself received a passport on Aug. 3 after the Department decided not to carry his case to the Supreme Court. Although no change has yet been announced in the passport regulations, they are reported to be under study in an attempt to reconfirm with the court ruling. Also in progress is a general reorganization of the Passport Office, intended to reduce the average time needed to issue a passport from a few weeks to a few days.

In its challenge of the constitutionality of the Internal Security Act of 1950, the Communist Party has cited the denial of passports to those registered under the act as a violation of the First Amendment.

RADIATION HAZARD TO BE STUDIED

During the next few months, two international organizations in addition to the UN may be evaluating the potential hazards of radiation, including that involved in further weapons testing.

US Delegate to the UN Henry Cabot Lodge asked Aug. 4 to have the problem placed on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, which was convened in New York Sept. 20. Lodge reaffirmed the official US view that "properly safeguarded nuclear testing does not constitute a threat to human health." Nonetheless, he added that radiation damage information "has not been systematically assembled and internationally disseminated," and urged that this be done under UN auspices. The US move is along lines proposed by the FAS last spring. India made a similar request to the UN on Sept. 19, calling for immediate establishment of an international organization to accomplish the task.

Meanwhile, the International Council of Scientific Unions, at its 7th triennial General Assembly meeting in Oslo Aug. 9-13, authorized appointment of a committee to study radiation hazards and offered to cooperate in the UN study. Meeting in London in early August, the World Conference of Scientists set up a special commission, headed by British physicist J. Rotblat, to prepare a report on dangers arising from uses of atomic energy.

In addition, at least two national organizations -- the US National Academy of Sciences and the British Medical Council -- have announced plans to study the effects of nuclear radiation on living organisms.

MUDDLE OVER MULLER

Prof. Hermann J. Muller, Nobel laureate, and expert on the genetic effects of radiation, has charged the AEC with barring his participation in the recent Geneva conference. The reason, Muller claims (Washington Post, Sept. 17), was that "every effort was being made not to play up the danger of radiation in the minds of the participants or the public." The AEC correspondence with Muller implied the decision to reject his paper ("How Radiation Changes the Genetic Constitution") was made by the UN. This was promptly denied by a UN official. According to the N.Y. Times of Sept. 18, the AEC has conceded that it blocked presentation of Muller's paper but stated that the rejection was based on the inclusion of "material referring to the non-peaceful uses of atomic energy, namely, the bombing of the Japanese city of Hiroshima."

Muller declared that "at a conference of this kind, there should have been a full airing of the problem of genetic damage produced by radiation." In the view of AEC Chairman Strauss, expressed before the Muller controversy was disclosed, "There was a good deal of discussion of radiation hazards . . . some of the irresponsible statements that had been made on the subject were liquidated in the course of that conference."

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ARMS CONTROL: BOTH SIDES CAGEY (Cont. from Page 1). war without being destroyed by atomic and hydrogen retaliation; not on international monopolies of atomic power or 'foolproof' inspection systems but on mutual surveillance designed to prevent surprise attack by either side."

In this harder light of military evaluation, it seems generally agreed that the US stands to gain much more from aerial inspection than do the Russians, since the location, character and magnitudes of most of our military and industrial installations are well known (Chr. Science Monitor, Aug. 31) whereas, for example, the USSR apparently succeeded in concealing until recently the building of a fleet of intercontinental bombers. A correspondent to the Washington Post (Aug. 2) likens the US proposal to a request "that we be provided with a perfect map of bomber targets in the Soviet Union." The recent elaboration which the proposal has undergone in the hands of Stassen before the UN Disarmament Commission -- embracing military blueprinting and verification, systematic reporting and analysis of strongpoint and aerial surveillance, budgetary analysis, and extension to worldwide scope -- certainly has given the scheme an air of military unreality. It is difficult to visualize the US, as author of the proposal, embracing a system which, in effect, "involves . . . no less than the stationing of Soviet Air Force officers to look over the shoulder of Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, commanding general of the US Strategic Air Command . . ." (Chr. Science Monitor, Aug. 31).

The Monitor also notes that the implementation of the overall Eisenhower-Stassen proposal would involve staggering problems of manpower, logistics and communication. Doubts whether aerial inspection would avail against poor visibility, underground factories, camouflage or fake installations, have been expressed, but expert opinion is said (Washington Post, Aug. 14) to be that the combination of modern stereoscopic aerial cameras and trained photogrammatic analysis could ensure that nothing of military importance would be long undetected.

HEW RESEARCH REVIEWED

Part of the Government's medical research program, tagged as inadequate by the Hoover Commission, is undergoing review and re-evaluation. At the request of the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), the National Science Foundation has appointed a committee of eminent medical scientists headed by C. N. H. Long of Yale University School of Medicine. NSF Director Alan T. Waterman and HEW Director Marion B. Folsom announced on August 11 that the committee would study and make recommendations on the medical research supported by the department -- both in its own laboratories, such as the National Institutes of Health, and via its grant programs. The Hoover Commission had criticized the Administration for failing to allot enough funds for medical research projects and for giving inadequate support to medical schools.

F A S NEWSLETTER

Federation of American Scientists
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SECURITY PROBLEM IN FLUX

Recent developments in the loyalty-security area indicate that this issue is still in a state of flux. The darker side is displayed by continued acceptance and application of the concept of guilt-by-association -- and its offspring, "guilt-by-kinship." The latter came to public attention recently in connection with several well publicized cases involving military personnel as well as employees of the Federal government. In each instance, the loyalty of the individuals involved was called into question because of alleged affiliations of one or both parents with the Communist cause, and because a close and continuing filial relationship was allegedly maintained. As expressed by Airman 3/c Stephen Branzevich, "[I was] only accused of being the son of my father." Happily, several of the accused, including Branzevich, have been cleared.

On the brighter side, airing of the whole problem is in prospect as the result of a number of studies in process both in and out of government. A subcommittee of the Senate Post Office & Civil Service Committee, headed by Sen. Johnston (D, S. C.), plans to resume hearings this week in its inquiry into injustices said to have resulted from civil service firings under the security program. John Phelps, of Yale University, will testify Sept. 28 for FAS. A Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights under Sen. Hennings (D, Mo.), in an impressive ceremony in Washington Sept. 17, initiated its investigation into the extent to which constitutional rights are being respected and enforced. Earlier this year, Hennings invited FAS and other organizations to suggest topics for investigation by the committee. Also attracting attention are the several studies supported by the Fund for the Republic, aimed in general at alerting the nation to threats to our civil liberties. One of these studies produced "Case Studies in Personnel Security," by Adam Yarmolinsky (published by the Bureau of National Affairs, 1231 24th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.), containing details of 50 security proceedings.

While these developments provide some basis for optimism, much remains to be done. Former Sen. Harry P. Cain, a member of the Subversive Activities Control Board who has emerged as one of the Administration's sharpest critics with respect to the loyalty-security program, recently observed that the American people "are [today] much less free to speak, to think, to join, to learn, and to travel than we were 10 years ago."

ARMS CONTROL: OFFICIAL EXCHANGES (Cont. from Page 1). respect to overseas bases.

Though generally going along with the US proposal for reducing world tensions, Britain and France have each introduced additional suggestions. These include a British proposal to create a demilitarized buffer zone on either side of the Iron Curtain and a French proposal to set up budgetary limitations on armaments expenditures, coupled with the diversion of the resulting savings to the development of less advanced countries.

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