

GENERAL SCIENCE

Protest Loyalty Procedures

Scientists protest investigations into their political beliefs even when their research has no connection with the government.

► MANY scientists "are concerned over allegedly arbitrary dismissals of certain of their colleagues," a report on loyalty clearance procedures in research laboratories by a committee of the Federation of American Scientists has charged.

"Scientists who used to consider that their positions depended only on the value of their scientific work, now find that their political beliefs are also being investigated, even when their research has no connection with the government," the Federation's Committee on Secrecy and Clearance declared.

The report complained that laws and regulations for clearance procedures offer "few safeguards against mistakes or arbitrary abuses."

Clearance problems are threatening to cost the nation's atomic energy program and military research work the services of valuable scientists, the group concluded.

Members of the committee, all Cornell University scientists, include one of the world's best-known atomic scientists, Dr. Hans A. Bethe, and a Nobel prize winner, Dr. P. J. W. Debye, chairman of the department of chemistry at Cornell. Dr. S. H. Bauer is chairman of the group, which includes Drs. L. M. Brown, G. K. Fraenkel, A. R. Moore, P. Morrison, R. S. Rochlin and R. R. Wilson. Their report was published in both *Science* (April 2) and the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (April).

The scientists sent questionnaires on loyalty clearance to 140 laboratories and received 57 replies, the report stated.

In laboratories of the Atomic Energy Commission, the committee found that clearances may be costing the Commission the services of loyal scientists.

"We have learned that many loyal scientists, lacking either knowledge of the criteria for clearance or confidence in the fairness of their application, have considered leaving the employ of the Commission for positions where they would be secure against unfounded accusations," the report said.

"Others, not now employed by the AEC, hesitate to apply for such positions for similar reasons.

"To the extent that this has occurred or may occur, the nation's atomic energy research will be impaired," the committee cautioned.

They said the clearance problem was "especially acute" in atomic laboratories where non-secret work was going on, but scientists were required to have "some type of clearance."

Warning against an "atmosphere of fear and uncertainty," the report asserted this "may cause many scientists to withdraw entirely from any type of civic responsibility."

The Atomic Energy Commission, it was pointed out, has appointed a Personnel Security Review Board, headed by Owen J. Roberts, former associate justice of the Supreme Court, to help solve clearance problems.

Military laboratories, the committee reported, were least willing to reply to the questions on clearance, while individuals dismissed from these laboratories charged that they had not been given a fair hearing.

"It may be assumed," the report declared, "that military officials have little interest in safeguarding their employees or employees of their contractors against unfounded charges.

"This may help explain why these laboratories are having difficulty in obtaining and holding scientific personnel."

Clearance regulations apply in other government laboratories and even in some industrial and university laboratories where scientists are not doing secret work, the report said.

The committee cited resolutions of the Federation calling for no "loyalty check"



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on scientists doing work which is not classified, and that scientists be given a hearing in loyalty cases.

"The files of this committee contain many letters from biologists, chemists, engineers and physicists unable to learn why they are subjected to the financial loss and personal embarrassment of clearance denial.

"The letters often contain lengthy introspective passages on their belief in democracy and their frustration at being unable to speak on their own behalf," the report said.

The group of Cornell scientists said that the report was a summary. A more detailed statement of some clearance problems is now being prepared by the Federation committee, it was learned.

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Dr. Condon Is Defended

► REQUESTING that distinguished scientists be permitted to testify and that Dr. Edward U. Condon, director of the National Bureau of Standards, be given an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses, attorneys for Dr. Condon have sent a letter to the House Committee

on Un-American Activities regarding the hearing scheduled by the committee for April 21.

The letter from the attorneys, the firm of Arnold, Fortas and Porter, was signed by the three partners: Thurman Arnold, former assistant U. S. Attorney General;