

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"



MIRRORS AID PLANE PRODUCTION—A new industrial tool, mirrors, now plays a vital part in design, production and testing of modern airplanes. Used to measure and check accuracy of small tools and parts, this mirror magnifies the silhouette of the tested article, in this case, the threads of a screw.

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.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948

GENERAL SCIENCE

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;

Abe Fortas, former Under Secretary of the Interior; and Paul Porter, former administrator of the Office of Price Administration. They declared in part:

"The effect of the publication of your accusations against Dr. Condon, and of the inflammatory and reckless manner in which that was done, may be devastating to the national interest. There is abundant evidence that it has impaired the security and peace of mind of practically all of the leading scientists who are now employed on atomic bomb, radar, and related projects of fundamental importance to our security. Your actions must inevitably cause scientists to hesitate to accept work in these fields; and they will doubtless tempt scientists now employed in these activities to seek other work of less national importance where their reputations will not be exposed to irresponsible attack, and their civil rights will be safe.

"In fact, we respectfully suggest that the practices of your Committee may be retarding the scientific research which is the most vital part of our defense program.

"The number of scientists qualified for the exacting work required on many crucial projects is small. The need for their services at this critical point in history is great. Hitler drove out of Germany the very men qualified to discover the atomic bomb. Among them were Albert Einstein, Leo Szilard, James Franck, Hans A. Bethe, Otto Stern and others, who came to this country and made possible our development of the atomic bomb. Mussolini drove Enrico Fermi out of Italy. Dr. Fermi is now one of our most distinguished atomic scientists. The Com-

munist persecuted George Gamow, and forced him to flee the Soviet Union. Dr. Gamow is now one of our great nuclear physicists.

"These men and many others, including outstanding native American scientists like Dr. Condon, now have reason to wonder whether they will be allowed to work in this country, free from molestation.

"Nothing can serve the ends of Communism today better than the intimidation of American scientific personnel through such tactics as your Committee has followed in the Condon case to date. This Committee must avoid becoming an unconscious instrument of Communist purposes.

"We therefore respectfully suggest that the Committee exercise extreme care in proceedings involving this country's critically important scientific program and, further, that you avoid the possibility that your activities might aid and abet the very forces you seek to combat—namely, Communism and the apparent effort of its agents to create disunity and confusion in this nation."

Enclosed with the letter to the committee was a copy of an invitation letter sent out by Dr. Harold C. Urey, Nobelist in chemistry at the University of Chicago, as chairman of the Dinner to Edward U. Condon Committee. The dinner will be held "as a testimony of confidence by his scientific colleagues" in New York City, April 12. Sponsors of the dinner are more than 100 American leaders in various fields of science.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948

pose. WHO is not asking for more than \$6,000,000 from all its members combined for an entire year's work. And through WHO we and other nations could help Mexico wipe out smallpox so that the 6,000,000 persons who cross the border into our country each year would not be able to bring smallpox in with them.

Starvation and hunger in Europe, which is costing us in food, money, and worry over the danger of hunger-caused revolts and war, is directly tied up with the international health situation. There would be far fewer undernourished and starving men, women and children in Europe today if there were not so many people sick with malaria in other parts of the world.

Every year there are some 300,000,000 people in the world sick with malaria. About 3,000,000 die of it each year. Most of the world's malaria is in the world's bread basket areas. In India, China, and other agricultural regions of the world, the people are too weakened by malaria to work hard at farming, too sickly to learn modern methods of agriculture that would increase the yield of food for themselves and the rest of the hungry world. And they lack the strength and mental alertness to free themselves of this disease that drags them down.

Through WHO we could help them to wipe out malaria. Aside from humanitarian reasons, the financial outlay would be more than repaid in the reduced contribution we would have to make to feeding the world.

Our own health is in danger because of our failure to join and support WHO. Present-day quarantine methods can not be counted on to protect us from foreign diseases. Our health frontiers extend as far as our planes can fly. With India only 48 hours away, both plague and cholera can get into Chicago or other midwestern cities before any symptoms develop in the traveller importing it.

The only way we can protect ourselves from these diseases today is by helping to stamp them out at their source, in Egypt or China or India or anywhere else on the globe. Without help from an international organization, such as WHO, these nations cannot do the job. Without the help of our technical knowledge and financial support, WHO cannot do this important job effectively.

Commerce already is being aided by WHO's interim commission, just as that organization helped stop the spread of cholera from Egypt last winter. Its Singa-

PUBLIC HEALTH

U. S. Urged to Join WHO

Membership in the World Health Organization would offer the United States many advantages. Russia is now 24th member of this group.

► FAILURE of the United States to join the World Health Organization will be costly in health and money to the people of this nation.

We shall be letting the Kremlin outsmart us, instead of the other way around, if we fail to join, now that Russia has become the 24th member of WHO. We shall be denying ourselves a voice in deciding where WHO headquarters shall be located, who shall be its secretary general, what its policies and activities shall be.

A bill enabling us to join this organization was passed unanimously by the Senate last July. That same month the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously reported out the companion House bill. Medical, nursing, and other health organizations and organizations interested in furthering world coopera-

tion and world peace have united in support of the measure. But in spite of this support, and even because of it according to some rumors going the rounds in Washington, the House Rules Committee has tabled the bill indefinitely. This stops further action on the bill for this session of Congress, unless the committee can be induced to reconsider it.

To get an idea of the dollars and cents loss to the United States from failure to join WHO, you don't have to go any farther than the smallpox scare in New York last spring. One bus passenger with unsuspected smallpox crossing the border from Mexico cost Americans at least \$6,000,000. That sum is the estimated amount spent in New York City alone for vaccinations to stop an incipient smallpox epidemic. More money was spent in other cities for the same pur-