

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-

pore station broadcasts daily to ships at sea, informing them of health conditions in various ports, so they know each day which ones can be entered safely and without financial loss due to quarantine delays.

Better protection against cholera is another immediate benefit coming from WHO's interim commission. The Egyptian experience showed that anti-cholera vaccines from various parts of the world varied greatly in potency. An international standard is now being set up through WHO.

MEDICINE

Starve Malaria Germs

Malaria germs cannot grow and reproduce without methionine. Conquest of malaria would help stop starvation throughout the world.

► **DRUGS** to stop malaria by starving the germs may come as a result of research by Drs. Ralph W. McKee and Quentin M. Geiman of Harvard Medical School in Boston.

The germ-starvation treatment, if it can be developed to a practical point, will help stop starvation and undernutrition in humans the world over, even in regions where there is no malaria. Much more food could be grown on a world basis if there were not so many hundreds of millions of malaria-weakened people in agricultural regions of the world.

The possibility of the germ-starvation conquest of malaria comes from the discovery that malaria germs cannot grow and reproduce without methionine. This

Streptomycin, and other new disease remedies from molds and germs, will also get international standardization through WHO. Patriotic Americans may feel a little unhappy if our scientists can have no part in standardizing the life-saving drug that we gave the world.

These are some of the more selfish reasons for our joining WHO. Americans who have always been ready to help unfortunate people anywhere know for themselves the unselfish reasons for joining an organization devoted to promoting world health.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948

chemical is one of the protein building blocks, needed by man as well as malaria parasites. The malaria germs get the chemical from the blood plasma surrounding the red blood cells in which the germs live.

Growth of the germs in the test tube can be stopped by chemicals that are enough like methionine to fool the germs but which can not be used by them for growth and reproduction. Or other chemicals which react with methionine to stop it as a protein builder might be used.

Trial of such compounds in monkeys with malaria and search for other chemicals required by the germs is continuing.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948

GEOLOGY

Earth's Crust Redated

► **ROCKS** and meteorites may be only about half the age that scientists have estimated in the past, thanks to the discovery that cosmic rays continuously generate within them helium gas that has been used as a geological calendar.

This means that a meteorite that was supposed to have fallen 100,000,000 years ago probably is only half that age.

This redating of the earth's crust arises from the research in South Africa by Prof. H. E. Huntley of the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

In photographic plates exposed on a

11,000-foot mountain peak to capture cosmic rays bombarding the earth from outer space, Prof. Huntley found that in the glass base of the plates the radiation disintegrates the glass atoms and produces helium at a considerable rate, at least 100,000 atoms per cubic centimeter each year.

Helium found generally in rocks has been attributed to radioactive minerals found throughout the earth's crust which also produce helium. This allowed scientists to set up a time-scale based on helium content.

If both the radioactive material in the rocks and the cosmic rays produce helium at about the same rate, then the ages assigned to rocks may have to be cut about in half. But the usual rocks are still many millions of years old.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948

AERONAUTICS

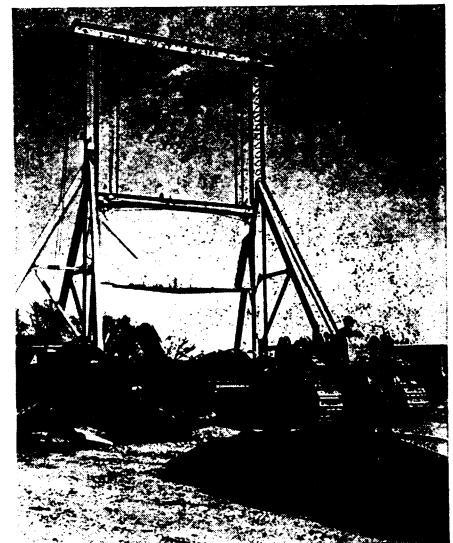
Giant Guillotine Chops Obsolete Airplanes

► A **GIANT** guillotine with a three-ton blade is busy daily at the Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Va., chopping obsolete and wrecked airplanes into sections so that the metals may be salvaged.

When the great knife is dropped 26 feet from the top of its standard, its force is enough to make a clean cut through the fuselage, wing or tail sections of a discarded plane, resulting in pieces small enough to put in melting pots for reduction to ingots. The blade of the guillotine is raised by electric power; it falls by gravity. The machine can handle 16 planes per day.

The salvage materials obtained from planes consist of heavy steel, light iron, aluminum, condemned tires, instruments and miscellaneous items. Reusable accessories are kept for future applications. All scrap batteries or other material containing lead are stockpiled for future military use.

Science News Letter, April 10, 1948



GUILLOTINE OF PLANES—
Wrecked airplanes are chopped into scrap by this giant guillotine. The three-ton blade is raised by electric power, dropped by gravity.