

GENERAL SCIENCE

Loyalty Order Harmful

Brilliant scientific minds will be denied to the furtherance of research in atomic energy under present security clearance procedures, AAAS warns.

➤ A WARNING that atomic energy development "will be shunned by men of ability and pride" if present trends in security clearance of scientists continue was sounded by a special committee of the nation's largest general science organization, the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Conclusions of the AAAS's special committee on civil liberties for scientists, which include an attack on the loyalty order for federal employees, were published in the Association's journal, *SCIENCE* (Aug. 19). The full, 77-page report of the six-man committee is still undergoing revision prior to publication, it was announced.

Three main conclusions of the report are:

1. "Secrecy is damaging to both science and democracy."

2. "If nothing is done to reverse the present trend to require security clearance of scientists who do not have or desire to have access to restricted data, it is likely that many of the most penetrating and original scientific minds will be turned to pursuits unrelated to further development of the atomic energy program.

"Work in that field will be shunned by men of ability and pride if they are constantly treated as objects of suspicion and possible calumny."

3. "Until the loyalty order deals with the way employees act rather than with the way they supposedly think, we shall inhibit the freedom and encourage the insecurity of our public servants."

The committee was formed in Dec. 1947, with Dr. Maurice B. Visscher, University of Minnesota physiologist, as chairman. At present, Dr. Visscher and Dr. E. C. Stakman, University of Minnesota plant pathologist and president of the Association, are working on revision of the full report, the journal stated.

Members of the committee are: Dr. Philip Bard, physiologist of the Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Robert E. Cushman, Cornell University political scientist; Dr. Richard L. Meier, an American scientist now working in an English research laboratory; and James R. Newman, a Washington lawyer and author who is a contributing editor of *New Republic* magazine. Walter Gellhorn of the Columbia University Law School served as consultant to the committee.

Military clearance procedures for civilian scientists are attacked by the report on grounds that military men determine

whether or not clearance is granted, and the only appeal for the civilian scientist not cleared is to another military body, the Industrial Employment Review Board.

"Such subjection of the destinies of civilians to military tribunals is contrary to national tradition," the report asserts.

The U. S. Atomic Energy Commission is accused by the committee of "excessive precautions" which, it finds, "discourage participation in important research activities closely linked to the nation's well-being."

There is, the report suggests, a tendency to require security clearance of scientists who will not be dealing with classified, or restricted data, except through personal contact with other scientists. Only one-tenth of the scientists at the Brookhaven National Laboratory of the AEC on Long Island work with secret material, the committee estimates, but all scientists at the laboratory must be cleared before they can work there.

"This apparently reflects a yielding to uninformed or sensationalist legislators and others who tend to exaggerate the

problem of 'keeping our atomic secrets,'" the report contends.

The report says that the problem of "faithless scientific personnel in this country appears to be markedly less grave than the public has been led to suppose." And, it is added, it's harder to give away a scientific secret than most people realize.

Fewer scientists need to be given security clearance, the committee urges.

The President's loyalty order needs "a drastic revision," the AAAS group charges.

Arguing that present laws already protect the government from employees who advocate its overthrow, the report contends that the order is "superfluous."

"The cost (of continuing the loyalty order) will in the end be borne not by the employees who are deprived of their normal freedom to believe and behave as they wish within the limits law has set. It will be borne by the nation as a whole," the committee concludes.

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ZOOLOGY

Tail of a Running Lizard Serves as a Balance

➤ BASILISKS, which are large lizards from the American tropics, rise up and run on their two hind legs when they are in a real hurry. There is a temptation to describe the basilisk as the lizard that runs like a man; but this would not be quite accurate. There are some rather wide differences in the two modes of bipedal movement, Dr. Richard C. Snyder, now of the



HIGH-TAILING LIZARD—Running basilisk lizard springs clear of the ground as it hits the top of its stride, upflung tail balancing forward-thrust body.