

GENERAL SCIENCE

Police State In Making?

Clearance procedures and restrictions to protect our war secrets may lead us toward laying the foundation for a police state, scientist warns.

➤ THE existence of mechanisms for a sort of industrial police state created in the interests of industrial and military security was evident in the American Chemical Society's discussions of security clearances for scientists in Atlantic City, N. J.

Some of these are:

1. A white list called a central security file of all individuals, organizations, facilities, factories, etc. cleared by all military departments. A corresponding black list of those denied clearance undoubtedly exists in the FBI files.

2. A personnel security board and an industrial employment review board for the armed services which are the bodies that can deny security clearances.

3. Control of all visitors to factories and laboratories doing confidential and secret work for the armed forces.

Col. E. M. Tally of the Munitions Board told the chemists that "the American people are faced with a three-headed monster in providing security in industry for our defense trade secrets." The dangers are failure to protect trade secrets of defense, stifling production and scientific progress by too rigid control, and injury of the innocent.

Restrictions could be made so tight that no foreign agent steals our trade secrets, Col. Tally said, but this would deprive many innocent persons of their jobs and hamper production for defense.

The Army, Navy and Air Force by joint action are attempting to simplify the methods of protecting secret war production so that manufacturers follow the same rules for all government contracts, Col. Tally explained.

Because a large part of American industry is geared to military production in an emergency even if not actually working on secret war material now, some industries and research laboratories are making it the practice to clear all employees, especially scientists, so they can be available to do anything that the company needs done, even if they are hired for non-military work. This puts an increasing number of the scientists under military clearance control.

Even when a scientist or other employee is finally cleared, which is a matter of months of waiting in some cases, he may be subjected to further clearance procedures at the whim of some administrator. Dr. John A. Swartout, scientists' representative on the Oak Ridge review board, told the chemists that clearance should erase all doubt about a man's reliability unless there

is subsequent action on his part to raise the question of his loyalty.

It became known that wholesale clearances in the Department of Commerce have been ordered within the past few weeks, affecting even scientists originally cleared before the war and responsible for the creation of some of the most valuable and secret of the military devices and weapons. This is having a disastrous effect upon morale and operation of government scientific research.

Special steps are taken quietly to exclude from government and industrial laboratories many visitors, especially those from abroad, even when they have been invited by international organizations cooperating with official U.S.A. functions. Reports and publications presumably freely available and non-secret are also being withheld from "Iron Curtain" countries when it is known that is their destination.

Extension of the already gigantic government file of detailed information about individuals is feared by Dr. Swartout. A prior police investigation would be required for everyone upon whom public money is spent for education, if there were a logical development of the principle that Congress advocates in requiring clearance of all applicants for Atomic Energy Commission fellowships, Dr. Swartout pointed out. Next in line are the students of state universities and the families of students in our public schools, he suggested.

"The ultimate result is the establishment of the foundation for a police state," Dr. Swartout warned.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Ink-Blot Test Forecasts Approach to Research

➤ THE Rorschach test of personality, in which the individual tells what pictures he sees in ink blots, shows how a student will attack a research problem. This is the conclusion of Dr. Lee J. Cronbach, of the University of Illinois, after study of 75 graduate students in education at the University of Chicago.

The thinking habits which show up on the Rorschach test have their parallel in the performance on research, he found. The method of approach, accuracy, and organization on the test corresponds to the treatment of the research problem. And individual assets and limitations in

research are forecast in feelings of inadequacy, self-criticism and reaction to authority revealed by the personality test.

Dr. Cronbach reported the results of his studies to the American Psychological Association in Denver, Colo.

Science News Letter, October 1, 1949

CHEMISTRY

Synthetic Rubber Polymer Gives Arctic Weather Tire

➤ A NEW synthetic rubber polymer will make possible automobile tires which will remain in condition for use at temperatures as low as 75 degrees below zero Fahrenheit, the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio, claims.

The amazing resiliency of this new Arctic rubber may enable engineers to solve innumerable problems in the operation of machinery, motor vehicles and aircraft at sub-zero Arctic temperatures, Raymond C. Firestone stated. Rubber tires, hose, gaskets and belting in the past have frozen as hard as rock at temperatures below minus 60 degrees.

Tests under extreme sub-zero laboratory conditions show two outstanding advantages in tires made with the new polymer. They do not stiffen so much that they develop permanent flat spots when parked, and treads do not harden and chip out. Mileage tests in Texas indicate that the rate of wear of this cold weather tire will be satisfactory under normal highway driving conditions.

Science News Letter, October 1, 1949



COLD WEATHER RUBBER—This deep freeze is used to test the resiliency of a new synthetic rubber polymer in tires. The tire is being checked for possible air leakage from a special test valve.