

GENERAL SCIENCE

Condemns Secrecy Policy

Secrecy around military and atomic matters results in misinformation, half-truths and distortion of facts, a Nobelist charged. Most scientists look toward an "open" world.

GOVERNMENT MILITARY and atomic secrecy has been denounced. Dr. I. I. Rabi, Nobelist of Columbia University, indicated that secrecy was hampering negotiations to suspend nuclear bomb tests.

He said the secrecy surrounding the conduct of military and atomic matters results in a barrage of misinformation, half-truths and "outright distortion" of facts as the basis for public opinion. He spoke at the presentation ceremony of the Atoms for Peace Awards at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D. C. Dr. Rabi is a member of President Eisenhower's Science Advisory Committee.

Although Dr. Rabi did not mention any names, his attack on secrecy in Government, particularly in the atomic field, was aimed at the minority of scientists who believe only the threat of mutual mass annihilation and a complete arsenal of nuclear weapons can prevent global war. One of the most vocal members of this group is Dr. Edward Teller of the University of California, who is sometimes called the

"father" of the hydrogen bomb.

Most scientists in the United States and allied countries, Dr. Rabi said, look toward a "more open world" where the shadow of destructive warfare will hang less heavily over mankind. They believe the future should hold some vision more pleasant than "a huge super nuclear explosion."

Neither the scientists alone, nor officials who have much power by election or appointment but little or no knowledge of science and technology, can solve the problems of living peacefully in an atomic world. Even a combination of the best brains from the fields of science, business, religion, and academic and political life, Dr. Rabi said, would be hardly equal to the "task of mapping a wise and safe course through the tangle of mistrust and terror" that has grown up in the postwar years.

One cause of present problems is the distortion caused by exaggerated secrecy, with its consequent lack of informed public opinion, Dr. Rabi charged. This secrecy has actually gained very little for the U. S.

The Russians are not far behind us in atomic weapons, while our allies are way behind after spending much money rediscovering facts and methods already known in both the U. S. and the USSR.

Although most policy makers, amateur or professional, are not deeply interested in or capable of judging the technological situation, Dr. Rabi said, secrecy results in frustration, doubt and timidity about the exercise of independent judgment. The result is that many judicious persons accept judgments by others whose knowledge is often even more limited than theirs but which extends into the "dread domain of the top secret."

To live at peace with the atom, Dr. Rabi concluded, the U. S. must find its way back to the fundamental principles on which it was founded.

"We must again become a nation of free men informed by a free press."

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PHYSICS

Four Scientists Given Atoms for Peace Awards

FOUR OUTSTANDING scientists in the field of nuclear reactions were awarded the Atoms for Peace Awards at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D. C.

Two of them, Drs. Leo Szilard of the University of Chicago and Eugene P. Wigner of Princeton University, were instrumental in having the famous letter of Albert Einstein sent to President Franklin D. Roosevelt—the one that finally resulted in Government support for studies of nuclear reactions.

Another recipient, Dr. Walter H. Zinn, now vice-president of Combustion Engineering, Inc., worked with Dr. Szilard in observing the neutrons released when uranium fissions. This observation demonstrated the possibility of a chain reaction.

Dr. Alvin M. Weinberg, director of the Atomic Energy Commission's Oak Ridge National Laboratory, won the award for his sustained contributions to nuclear reactor development.

The Atoms for Peace Awards are a memorial to Henry and Edsel Ford. Recipients this year will share a total grant of \$150,000.

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PHARMACOLOGY

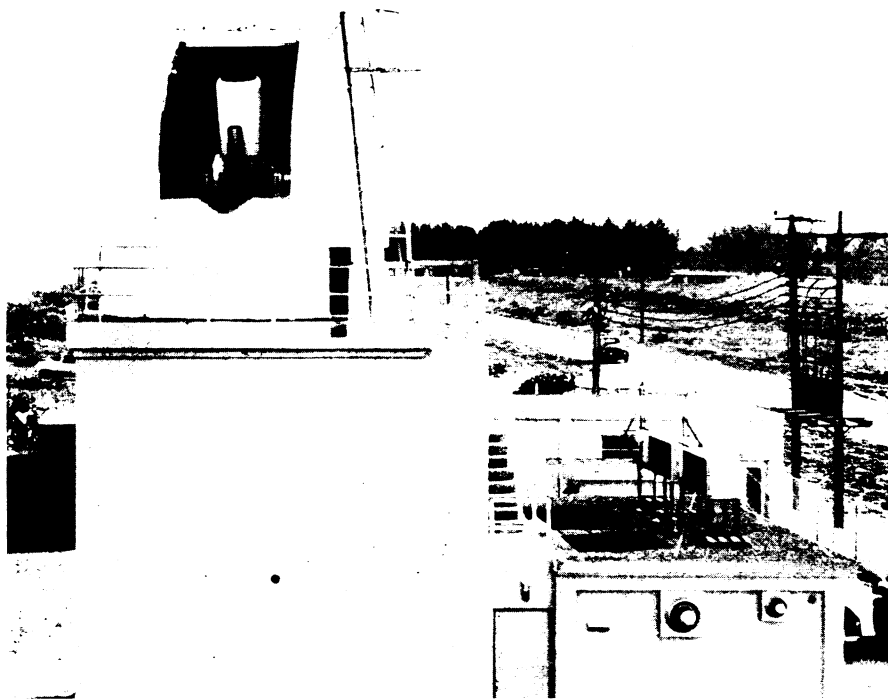
New Drug Controls Body Cholesterol

A NEW DRUG, claimed to reduce high level blood cholesterol in eight out of ten patients, has been released to physicians for prescription use.

Availability of the drug, triparanol (brand name MER/29), was announced at the American College of Cardiology meeting in Indianapolis, Ind., by the Wm. S. Merrell Company of Cincinnati, Ohio.

The drug is a capsule to be taken before breakfast. It has been clinically tested and reported free from bad side effects when taken in recommended dosages.

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INFRARED SCANNER—Infrared spectrometric studies of missiles fired from Cape Canaveral, Fla., are being made with an infrared rapid scan instrument. It was built by Perkin-Elmer Corp., Norwalk, Conn., and is located at Melbourne, Fla. The infrared measurement program, conducted under an Air Force contract, includes the nature and rates at which time reactions occur during powered flight. (See story opposite page.)