

5,000 Scientists vs. CBW

More than 5,000 scientists, including 17 Nobel Prize winners and 129 members of the National Academy of Sciences, last week petitioned President Johnson to halt the use of chemical weapons—riot gas and anti-crop chemicals—in Vietnam.

The petition signers contended that the use of such weapons sets a "dangerous precedent, with long-term hazards far outweighing any probable short-term military advantage." The scientists stressed that there is no lasting distinction between weapons that are incapacitating and those that are lethal, nor is there any line between chemical warfare and biological warfare.

They noted that the great variety of possible agents available for chemical or biological warfare, dubbed CBW, forms a continuous spectrum from the temporarily incapacitating to the highly lethal. If the restraints on the use of one kind of CB weapons are breached, the use of others will be encouraged.

The scientists therefore called for a halt to any use of such weapons in combat, until the U.S. Government has made a thorough review of its policy on CBW. They also asked the President

to "reestablish and categorically declare" that the U.S. would refrain from initiating the use of chemical or bacteriological weapons.

This policy would be in line with a resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations last Dec. 5, reaffirming the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol of June 1925 concerning the "prohibition of the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of bacteriological methods of warfare."

Although the U.S. was an initiator, unlike most other nations it has never formally accepted the protocol.

Because the chemical and biological materials now available for waging war have been considerably refined since 1925, particularly in the last 15 years, the scientists stress the urgency of U.S. ratification of the Geneva Protocol now.

Making the U.S. position clear and unequivocal against the use of CBW at this time would be the equivalent in international relations of constructing the "firebreak" by which firemen contain otherwise uncontrollable fires, several of the scientists contend.

EDUCATION

Integration: New Answer

Despite the Supreme Court's command 13 years ago to end school segregation, educational separation between the races remains severe and is growing. School integration cannot await changes of complexion in housing; it should actually precede, not follow, residential integration. The best way to integrate schools is to offer better education to all—Negro and white alike—through totally new educational complexes, which are, in fact, already underway in a number of cities.

In a nutshell, this is the message President Johnson's Commission on Civil Rights presented last week in its report, "Racial Isolation in the Public Schools." Virtually inviting controversy, the Commission calls upon Congress to set standards for desegregation and provide new funds. It asks cities to promote racial balance by building new complexes and where necessary to cross traditional lines, bringing urban and suburban children together. Implementation would require proposals to Congress by the President.

The report pointed out that as of now nearly 9 of every 10 urban Negro

elementary students attend majority Negro schools and the extent of segregation in the North does not differ substantially from that in the South.

Compensatory education, no matter how fine, does not make up the deficits Negroes suffer in Negro schools. Negro students, teachers and parents know the Negro school is stigmatized; that knowledge cripples motivation, said the Commission.

The most promising answer, said the Commission, is a new concept called education parks, already planned in Syracuse, N.Y., Berkeley, Calif., Pittsburgh, Pa., Albuquerque, N. Mex., and East Orange, N.J.

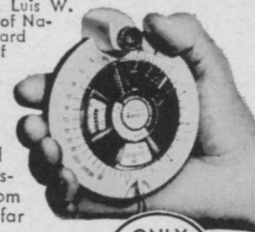
The parks replace several racially segregated schools with one wholly new establishment. Depending on the city, a park covers any range of grade levels, from the first grade through high school and serves from 5,000 to 30,000 students.

Though size is a legitimate complaint, the Commission said the new parks can offer technical innovation, a chance for nongraded classes and team teaching.

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