



ATOMS-FOR-PEACE STAMP—This new blue stamp, placed on sale in the nation's capital, commemorates President Eisenhower's proposals to use atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

GENERAL SCIENCE

Atoms-for-Peace Meeting

Second Geneva conference this summer to discuss everything about atoms except bombs. Several thousand experts will be on a 90-hour-per-week schedule for two weeks.

The Geneva Conference on the peaceful atom will be covered by Watson Davis, director of Science Service, and Helen M. Davis, editor of Science Service's Chemistry magazine.

► **THE AGENDA** for this summer's second Geneva conference, devoted to the peaceful atom, shows that almost everything except bombs will be discussed. Power plants, medical uses, food sterilization, fissionable elements and even electricity direct from radiation are on the program.

The atomic meeting will begin Aug. 8 after the "summit" meeting has passed into history. Formally titled United Nations International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, the several thousand experts and press will work a 90-hour week for two weeks, that is, 180 hours of actual sessions are scheduled.

Soviet and American experts will talk on the same subject at some of the sessions, the first time in the atomic era that has happened.

While the official U. S. attitude is that the conference is not a contest, competition or debate, nevertheless, on the second day's session, the Russian Nikolayev is scheduled to discuss the first atomic power station in the USSR and Dr. Walter H. Zinn of Argonne National Laboratory, near Chicago, will discuss the American boiling water power reactor.

On the last day of the conference, Dr. Willard F. Libby, Atomic Energy Commissioner, will tell about U. S. international cooperation, while the Russian Lavrishchev will explain Soviet atomic assistance to other nations.

No obvious surprises or releases of secret information are evident in the titles of the 400 papers to be presented orally and the thousand to appear eventually in the printed proceedings.

But there is a chance of some new information being revealed in the discussions that will follow the presentation of formal papers at each of the many sessions. There will undoubtedly be security officers of each country at the elbows of their scientific and industrial representatives.

The barn door may be opened a little wider. The "barn" is the unit of atomic cross-section, a measure of the number of hits that radiation particles make on susceptible material. It got its name because the atom was said to be as big as a barn door.

There has been a lot of secrecy on cross-section of atomic fissionable (power and bomb-making) material, but more information must be known in order to build atomic power plants. The AEC has published several big technical books, but all has not yet been told.

Papers by the Russians Gerasimov, Nikitin, Kukavade and Vladimirskiy on cross-sections of fissionable materials will be

eagerly scanned when they are available.

The only actual atomic reactor at the conference will be the American swimming-pool reactor flown there and installed in the Palace of Nations, where the sessions will be held.

Americans undoubtedly look forward to allowing Soviet atomic power experts to sit at the control and brighten the intense blue light in the water's depth as atomic power is produced.

Science News Letter, July 30, 1955

METEOROLOGY

Hot Weather Predicted For Most of Nation

► **MOST OF** the nation is scheduled for hotter than usual weather until mid-August, long-range forecasters of the U. S. Weather Bureau have predicted.

The only exceptions they foresaw are the Southeast and the Far West, where temperatures are expected to average below normal.

The Central Plains and Great Lakes regions will be especially hotter than normal until mid-August, the weatherman said.

Precipitation is expected to exceed normal in the southeast and northwest sectors of the nation. Below normal amounts are anticipated in a broad zone extending from New England southwestward through the middle Mississippi Valley to the Central Plains. Elsewhere, near normal precipitation is forecast.

Science News Letter, July 30, 1955

ASTRONOMY

Russian Discovered Bright Comet First

► **THE RUSSIAN** astronomer, A. M. Bakharev of Stalinabad Astronomical Observatory, first discovered the bright comet now in the constellation of Pegasus.

He spotted the object on July 13, one day earlier than astronomers Lewis MacFarlane of Seattle and Karl Krienke of Seattle Pacific College sighted it.

The sixth comet to be found this year, it is now known as 1955F but will later be named after its discoverer. The object is of eighth magnitude, too faint to be seen without good binoculars or a small telescope.

Its position on July 19 was approximately 22 hours, 42 minutes in right ascension and plus 30 degrees in declination, which is in Pegasus, visible low in the northeast in the early evening.

Astronomers from all over the world reported their observations of the comet to Harvard College Observatory, Cambridge, Mass., clearing house for astronomical information in the Western Hemisphere.

The Russian Observatory is located in Stalinabad, the capital of the Tadjik Soviet Socialist Republic, just north of Afghanistan.

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