

## NUCLEAR PHYSICS

# Atomic Warfare Is Feared

The creators of the atomic bomb are the most fearful of such a war. They know that it would be mutually destructive and there is no known physical defense.

By WATSON DAVIS

► THE FEAR of war, waged by atomic bombs, blankets the world like a radioactive cloud, unseen but deadly. The atomic scientists, who gave birth to the atomic weapon under the stress of war, are among the world's most frightened men.

Communism's elite in the Kremlin may be as badly scared, but the scientists may have the psychological disadvantage of knowing more about what the atomic bombs can do and therefore fearing them more. Why are the atomic scientists worried?

They tell us these facts, repeatedly:

The atomic bomb is destructive beyond all previous measure. Physical means of defense are unknown. Other nations—Russia, that is—can rediscover secret processes. Atomic war would be mutual destruction. Another war would reintroduce the dark ages. The only defense is attack or counter-attack. Safety of distance does not operate because atomic destruction is concentrated

in small packages. Surprise attack may be decisive, if not conclusive. This contributes to the likelihood of war. A preventive war might be waged against an expected aggressor. A nation might even launch a preventive war to anticipate a preventive war. Population, army divisions, naval vessels and industrial resources won't necessarily count in making a nation safe from atomic attack. A country inferior in conventional war potential might make itself atomically superior.

Only international control of atomic energy can neutralize the use of atomic weapons. But the United Nations is deadlocked on atomic energy. The fundamental reason for this is:

Adequate control requires the surrender of some degree of national sovereignty. Put more bluntly, you wouldn't pledge complete loyalty to the USA, right or wrong, and neither would the Soviet citizen to his country.

The Soviet Union won't stand for inspec-

tions of its territory by United Nations officials. This is a symptom of the complete suspicion of motives and actions in dealings between the West and East.

Solve the problems of Berlin, Germany, Austria, Trieste, China, Korea, Japan and all other hot borders, and atomic energy would still be an area of cold if not actual war.

Along with control of atomic energy, there must be disarmament of conventional weapons and prohibition of biological (germ) weapons.

War and use of atomic weapons can be avoided only by the development of world authority with adequate power to enforce the peace. That means world government, so far as war and peace are concerned—a world police force, and all people represented in a legislative, executive and judicial system to enforce the peace.

Despite the mastering influence of atomic energy, most of the world's peoples are concerned with getting enough food, clothing and shelter. For peace these needs must be met.

If the United States led a campaign for world government, it might result in many other nations pooling their sovereignties, although the Soviet Union and its satellites probably would not. All powers would have to join to prevent war.

This is the way some of our atomic scientists are thinking (Association of Scientists for Atomic Education). This is a summary of a working memorandum I have seen.

The world is told that "a technological revolution has occurred which makes intolerable the continued division of the world among sovereign powers." Is its choice one world or none?

Science News Letter, January 8, 1949



**MOUNTAIN LION ADOPTS TIGER CUBS**—Taken from their mother because of "killing kindness" which had destroyed other tiger cubs, these youngsters are being raised by a Puma at the National Zoological Park in Washington. Dr. William Mann, director of the zoo, stated that this strange adoption is very rare but has proved successful, although the adopted mother is puzzled by the stripes on her charges.

## BOTANY

## New Variety of Holly Has Just Been Patented

► THE YULETIDE week was appropriately celebrated by the U. S. Patent Office, in the issuance of plant patent 817, on a new variety of holly, to John F. Styer of Concordville, Pa. His plant is a variant from the Japanese holly, already cultivated in this country though not to the same extent as the European and native American species. The bush is described as having a horizontal branching habit, and smaller leaves than usual.

A second plant patent No. 816 was granted to Charles H. Hamburg of Whittier, Calif., on a late-maturing avocado, that bears medium-sized, thin-skinned fruits, ripening most of them in June and July, after the main crop of similar avocados has matured. The new variety originated as a chance seedling from a Guatemalan tree.

Science News Letter, January 8, 1949