

society for social responsibility in science

SSRS Newsletter

No. 41

OCTOBER 1955

SSRS ANNUAL MEETING AUTHORIZES PUBLIC

STATEMENT ON EINSTEIN AND OPPOSITION TO WAR

Editor's note: a statement on the SSRS and Albert Einstein was passed at the final session of the Annual Meeting at Swarthmore September 11. A news release covering the Einstein statement was prepared and sent to metropolitan newspapers. This news release, in full, as sent out, appears below. Other news concerning the Annual Meeting will appear in the November Newsletter.
--T.K.

Swarthmore, Pa., Sept. 11.--Twenty-seven scientists today called on "all governments urgently to seek means other than warfare for settling disputes." The twenty-seven are members of the Society for Social Responsibility in Science, an organization of scientists and engineers whose purpose is to keep their scientific skills from being used for destructive ends.

"Increasing numbers of scientists in many nations find themselves incapable of serving the needs of scientific warfare in spite of the fact that they fully realize the resulting weakening of their country's military strength," the scientists said. "They see a danger far greater than that of material weakness; the danger that the creative urge of humanity will be destroyed even though national structures remain intact."

The occasion of this statement was the adoption at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Responsibility in Science, of a resolution in memory of the death, last spring, of the Society's most prominent member, Albert Einstein, who had issued a number of warnings of the danger to the human

race resulting from continued trust in war as a method of protection.

The Society for Social Responsibility in Science was founded in 1949 as a fellowship of scientists concerned with the constructive use of science. The Society counts among its members two Nobel laureates, Max Born and Hideki Yukawa, two Fellows of the Royal Society of England, Charles Coulson and Kathleen Lonsdale; A. J. Carlson, past president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science; Priyada Ranjan Ray, past President of the Chemical Society of India; K.F. Bonhoeffer, Director of the Max Planck Institute of Goettingen; D. Robert Yarnall, past President of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers; Comfort A. Adams, past President of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and of the American Welding Society.

Text of the resolution follows:

Albert Einstein, War and Society

The Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Responsibility in Science records with deep regret the passing of its member Albert Einstein. He was a man of great simplicity and utter humility. He was as concerned with the relief of human suffering as he was with the solving of scientific problems.

We wish to call public attention to one facet of Einstein's personality. He was profoundly concerned about the transformation urgently required in international affairs: the replacement of violent by non-violent means for the settlement of disputes among nations. We point out that this concern for the elimination of warfare cannot be separated from his greatness as a scientist. In this dual concern he

was by no means unique. Throughout history there have been eminent men of science who were appalled by the powers available to man and their potentiality for misuse. Leonardo da Vinci refused to publish the design of a submarine, Napier the ingredients of an explosive, Boyle the nature of some poisons. James Joule warned against the possible death of science through the ever closer alliance of science and warfare. And Descartes at the end of his Discourse on Method doubted if henceforth he would be able to succeed in any pursuit that "cannot be useful to some without being hurtful to others."

The qualms of conscience of some of the most brilliant scientists are a direct consequence of the sensitivity and allegiance to truth that are demanded for any advance into the unknown. Increasing numbers of scientists in many nations find themselves incapable of serving the needs of scientific warfare in spite of the fact that they fully realize the resulting weakening of their country's material strength. They see a danger far greater than that of material weakness: the danger that the creative urge of humanity will be destroyed even though national structures remain intact. As did Einstein, we call on governments urgently to seek means other than warfare for the settling of international disputes. We are grateful that our age has encompassed the life of Albert Einstein, a pioneer in creative science and a humble servant of mankind.

SCOTT TO SPEAK

William T. Scott, the new President of SSRS, has been invited to be one of the main speakers at a dinner in Philadelphia October 17, speaking on the subject "Non-Violent Alternatives to Military Defense." The dinner is in honor of Pearl Buck, author and Nobel Prizewinner. Mordecai Johnson, President of Howard University and a specialist in underdeveloped areas, will also speak. The dinner, the 40th anniversary dinner of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, is expected to have 600 guests. The banquet will be held at the Drake Hotel in Philadelphia. A summary of Scott's remarks will appear in a future issue of this Newsletter.



SCOTT

This Newsletter is published by the Society for Social Responsibility in Science, an organization of scientists and engineers whose purpose, according to its constitution, is "to foster throughout the world a functioning cooperative tradition of personal moral responsibility for the consequences for humanity of professional activity, with emphasis on constructive alternatives to militarism;...to embody in this tradition the principle that the individual must abstain from destructive work and devote himself to constructive work, drawing the line between the two according to his own moral judgment;...to ascertain through open and free discussion the boundary between constructive and destructive work to serve as a guide for individual and group decisions and action..."

Statements made in the Newsletter do not necessarily represent the official policies of the Society unless so stated. Signed articles are the responsibility of their authors; other material is the responsibility of the Editor.

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Editorial correspondence should be addressed to Truman Kirkpatrick, 663 Rochdale Circle, Lombard, Ill. Changes of address, additions to the mailing list, etc., should be sent to Franklin Miller, Jr., Gambier, O. General correspondence regarding SSRS should be sent to its Secretary, Elmer Goetz, 1319 Wakeling Street, Philadelphia 24, Pennsylvania.

EDITORIALS

THE GLOOMY VIEW

(written after Geneva)

Loud cries of rejoicing are being heard on all sides, and the general feeling seems to be that peace and world stability are here at last. War has been averted and all is well again. There has been a conference, and although little was agreed on, all the participating heads of state smiled at each other and acted jolly.

We hate to act the part of a spoilsport, but this seems to us wishful thinking of an extremely dangerous kind. Here are some of the reasons why a durable and lasting peace is far, far distant.

First, we are in the midst of an armaments race, and in the past, armaments races have invariably ended in war.

Second, the most potent psychological force in the past which tended to

produce wars has been the spirit of nationalism. This tribal religion, with its belief that our people are good, while their people are bad, is the world's champion producer of the desire to kill. And nationalism is now stronger and more widespread than ever before in history, and it seems to be on its upswing still. The number of people who acknowledge any loyalty higher than national loyalty is extremely small today, in whatever part of the globe one cares to look.

Third, the political machinery needed to preserve peace has not yet been constructed--perhaps not yet invented. No large group of people has ever lived together in peace and tranquillity for any extended period of time, except when it was overarched by a government, an authority which could and would settle disputes. Government on the world scale must eventually come, but it will come slowly because two of its greatest opponents are the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., whose positions on this issue are almost identical.

Fourth, even the rather mild international peacemaking body which now exists is powerless to act in one of the chief potential areas of war--the conflict between the United States and China. The Chinese leaders have been aggressive in spirit, and the United States has equipped itself with two military allies in the Asian theater who may fairly be described as war-hungry. That tinder box may flare at any minute.

Fifth, the super weapons. In our concern over the destructive power of these devices, let us not overlook the fact that they make war easier to start. As the art of weaponizing advances, the cooperation of fewer and fewer people is required to trigger a war. And parallel to the nuclear menace is the more secret menace of bacterial warfare, to which the same reasoning applies. When only a few can precipitate the holocaust, the possibility of psychopathic behavior becomes more likely.

This is not to say that we should become discouraged and give up. Far from it! The struggle for a peaceful world has now become the struggle for the continued existence of *homo sapiens*, and there can be no thought of quitting or shirking this effort.

We merely wish to warn that those who are unduly optimistic at this juncture may be due for a rude awakening. The kind of world we seek is far

distant. We need people who will enlist for the long pull, who have no hope of an easy, short answer. The gloomy view is the most realistic, and the most practical in the long run.

OCCUPATION DIVISION POLICY

This editorial is a call for Letters to the Editor about the policies of the Occupation Division of the SSRS.

Our Society has two principal ways of carrying out its main purpose, which is to foster the growth of a spirit of conscience among scientists. On the one hand, we carry on an educational campaign, of which this Newsletter is a part. On the other hand, we try to lend a helping hand when a person suffers economic hardships as a result of conscience. We do this through our Occupation Division, and the job listings on the fourth page of the Newsletter are one of the main activities of this Division.

Some members have criticized the job listings for what were felt to be defects. It was suggested that if we limit our listings to SSRS members only, we are unfair to conscientious scientists who are outside our group, and perhaps are not being sufficiently responsible ourselves. This difficulty was resolved by the SSRS Council on June 10, 1955, when it voted to accept "situations wanted" ads from conscientious scientists who are not SSRS members, and to print a notice to this effect at the head of the job listings column. Such a notice appears for the first time in this issue.

Another criticism was that some of the "situations open" were found to involve duties which a member-applicant felt conscientiously unable to accept. Should we have printed such ads? Does printing them violate the principles of the SSRS? The Occupation Division leaders feel, at present, that it is impossible to decide which ads to exclude on this basis, because the consciences of our members differ so widely. However, it was recommended that a disclaimer notice appear above the job listings, to make it clear that the SSRS, as a Society, does not commit itself to anything by publishing the listings. When an ad is answered, the decisions are between the employer and the prospective employee, without involving the SSRS.

Another problem concerns discrimination on the basis of sex. At least one

SSRS member has written at length to protest our advertising policy in this regard. The argument runs as follows. Our Newsletter has printed, at least once, an ad for a teaching position in a men's college. The position was presumably open only to men. This ad, therefore, discriminated against female members of SSRS; it thus helped to maintain the present situation in our civilization, where in women are unfairly forced into an inferior status. The SSRS, it is said, has no business printing such ads, and its members should not work for such discriminatory institutions.

In the past, the Occupation Division favored the printing of such job notices, on the ground that to do otherwise would mean that the Society was determining what constituted right behavior instead of allowing each member to decide for herself or himself. But this policy did not satisfy everyone, and the Council on September 9 decided to invite the membership to join in a discussion of this question, through the Letters column of our Newsletter.

The question has several facets. What constitutes discrimination in our advertisements? Does a "men only" institution engage in unfair discrimination just by its existence? If such situations are regarded as discriminatory, should the ads be excluded, or should we publish them and let the prospective employees decide for themselves? How much responsibility should the Occupation Division take upon itself, for positions and for employees? And should our Society treat the problem of women's rights as one of its major concerns, or is this a side issue on which we should not waste too much time? We would like to hear from you.

A word of caution. Please confine yourselves to issues and avoid personalities. We do not intend to print letters which single out an individual SSRS member and accuse him or her of unconscientious behavior. The policy, not the person, is the legitimate subject of debate. --T.K.

In connection with the review last month of the novel "The New Men" by C. P. Snow, we neglected to mention that this book is now in the SSRS library and can be borrowed simply by writing Daniel Smiley, Mohonk Lake, New York.

PASCHKIS ARTICLE

"Military preparation for war brings war, not peace; a war with Russia may be avoided; and the individual scientist is personally responsible for the social implications of his work, as he foresees them. If for reasons of conscience he does not agree to the armaments race, it is his moral duty not to cooperate with it."

In these words, Victor Paschkis states the theme of his article "The Scientist's Responsibility: A Pacifist View," which appears in the current (September 1955) issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. The article is an eloquent statement of the case for non-violent defense as an alternative to the nuclear suicide which threatens the human race.

Nobel Prize Winners' Statement

The following is the authorized English version of a statement (known as the Mainau Statement) issued, on July 15, over the signatures of 18 Nobel Prize winners.

WE who sign this appeal are scientists from many countries, of several races, of different creeds, of different political convictions. Our association is that we have all been privileged to be awarded Nobel Prizes.

We have given freely a lifetime to the service of science. Science, we think, is a way to a fuller life for mankind. But we are alarmed at realizing that this same science is providing man with the instruments for self-destruction. In a full-scale war the earth can be so infested with radioactivity as to destroy whole nations. This destruction can strike down neutrals as well as combatants.

If the major powers engage in a war, who can guarantee that it will not develop into such a deadly struggle? Thus a nation that engages in an all-out war invites its own destruction and endangers the whole world.

We do not deny that today the peace of the world may be maintained by the fear of these deadly weapons. Yet we feel that it would be self-deception if governments should believe that over a long period the fear of these weapons will prevent war from occurring. Fear and tension have too frequently produced war. Likewise, it would be self-deception to believe that minor conflicts could always be settled by the use of traditional weapons. In extreme need, no warring nation will deny itself the use of any weapon that scientific techniques can supply.

All nations must bring themselves to the decision by which they voluntarily renounce force as the last recourse in foreign policy. They will cease to exist if they are not prepared to do this.

The statement is signed by KURT ALDER (Cologne), MAX BORN (Bad Pyrmont), ADOLF BUTENANDT (Tubingen), ARTHUR H. COMPTON (Saint Louis), GERHARD DOMACK (Wuppertal), HANS VON EUWER (Stockholm), OTTO HAHN (Göttingen), WERNER HEISENBERG (Göttingen), GEORGE HEVESY (Stockholm), RICHARD KUHN (Heidelberg), F. LIPMANN (Boston), H. J. MULLER (Bloomington), PAUL MULLER (Basel), L. RUZICKA (Zürich), FREDERICK SODDY (Brighton), W. M. STANLEY (Berkeley), HERMANN STAUDINGER (Freiburg), HIDEKI YUKAWA (Kyoto).

A CORRECTION

BCRN APPROVED THE RUSSELL STATEMENT

We are happy to make a correction of the article headlined "Nobel Prize-winning Scientists Warn the Human Race: Don't Commit Suicide!" which appeared on Page 1 of the August Newsletter.

The article said that SSRS Member Max Born had been asked to sign the Bertrand Russell statement opposing nuclear warfare, but that Born had refused to add his signature. (Our source of information had been a press conference with Russell as reported in the daily newspapers.)

We have now been informed by Max Born himself that this is not correct. Born was in agreement with the Russell statement; he had indicated his approval; but due to a misunderstanding his name was not included in the list of signers which was given to the newspapers. After the news stories appeared, Born informed news agencies his name should have been included, but this information was not printed.

Another bit of follow-up information is at hand regarding the two statements by noted scientists warning of the necessity to eliminate war. We now have the full text of the second statement, issued by 18 Nobel Prize-winners on July 15. This text is reproduced in the adjoining column. It will be seen that this is a much stronger statement than the brief fragment we were able to quote in August. It is a manifesto which most SSRS members would be proud to sign. And its sponsors are one of the most distinguished groups of scientists who ever agreed on anything.

Walter Gormly, Treasurer, SSRS
412 N. Third St. W.
Mt. Vernon, Iowa

I would like to help pay the expenses of circulating the SSRS Newsletter (cost: about \$1.00 per year per addressee.)

Enclosed is \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor of the Newsletter:

I doubt if Howard Alexander (SSRS Newsletter No. 41) meant to imply that the use of science for peaceful industrial purposes falls in the same category as its use for the improvement of the machinery of war.

The danger is that basic science will be crowded out.

Research requires support. It is easy to get research funds from governmental agencies for the improvement of war machines. It is easy to get funds from industry for the improvement of its products. But it is not easy to get support for a research project whose sole objective is the improvement of our understanding of the universe, if this has no obvious "practical" importance or relation to the "defense" effort. Yet history shows that such projects often lead to the greatest advance for mankind.

The scientist is thus under some pressure to write research proposals which will be "practical" or of importance to "defense."

The basic scientist must resist this pressure. He must be great enough to work on the thing that seems to be the next logical step in his field, whether or not he can secure adequate funds.

Applied science for justifiable ends is important, and those who are interested in such work should by all means apply themselves to it. But without dedicated effort in basic science whose purpose is to understand the nature of things in general, applied science will wither away and the progress of man as a spiritual and intellectual being will cease.

Forrest F. Cleveland
Illinois Institute of Technology
Chicago 16, Ill.

Editor's note: the following two communications were sent in in response to the recent ballot, which offered only one slate of candidates. This is a fairly significant subject, in the Editor's opinion, and comment from other readers will be welcomed.

I am not voting, because there is just one nominee for each position. This is not good democratic procedure! The SSRS is too important to let this

happen to it; therefore this protest. If the nominating committee cannot find more than one person for a particular job, *why not ask the membership for volunteers for the jobs?* The nominating committee should then have more than one person per job to choose from.

Reino W. Hakala
Fairfield, Conn.

Anyone who has ever been a member of a nominating committee can certainly appreciate the difficulties faced by such a committee in getting a full slate of competent willing workers. I am not sure that anything is gained in an organization such as SSRS by having the election turned into a competition with several candidates for each position. I am not familiar enough with the By-Laws to know how the Nominating Committee is selected or elected but--that is where precautions are more logically taken to ensure a fair, well-selected slate.

I wish I could be with you again at the Annual Meeting but I cannot. I hope that during this year there can be further clarification of the objectives of SSRS. Perhaps there could be a limited set of objectives annually, including one or two study items and one or two action items. This would allow the members to have a more concrete sense of accomplishment, and perhaps stimulate more membership participation. I think that this would help establish and clarify the broad objectives also.

Mrs. Dee Applezweig
New London, Conn.

OCCUPATION DIVISION

According to an action of the SSRS Council June 10, 1955, requests for aid in employment will no longer be limited to members, but this section of the Newsletter will be available to all persons conscientiously opposed to war work. We make no judgments about persons or companies using our employment service and do not recommend people for jobs. Send all inquiries in care of the Occupation Division Chairman, Norman E. Polster, R.1. Huntingdon Valley, Pa. --N.P.

SITUATIONS WANTED

53. Electronic Engineer, 29, B.S. in E.E., male, married, desires position in non-military work. Seven years ex-

perience in evaluation and development of radar and air navigation equipment and in related technical administration.

57. Physicist, M.A., with 15 years in aeronautics, seeks non-military employment in research laboratory or teaching electronics, television or applied mathematics.

58. Physical Chemist, Ph.D., desires research or teaching position. Experienced as supervisor in instrument laboratory, IR and UV spectrophotometers, polarograph, etc.

60. Physicist, B.S., experienced in magnetism and electricity, solid state, electrochemistry, radiation and heat, acoustics, mechanics, computing devices, wave propagation, technical writing and communication, desires non-military employment.

SITUATIONS OPEN

Theoretical physicist, applied mathematician, or someone with similar background interested in doing research along the lines suggested by the above title. Wanted by an oil company, which shortly expects to obtain delivery of an Elecom digital computer.

Resort Hotel in New York State seeks a Building Superintendent to be responsible for engineering, mechanical work, maintenance and repair. Applicant must be concerned with the spiritual values of his job.

Professor of Physics, University of Indonesia.

Professor of Physics, University of Manila, Philippines.

Expert in Oceanography, Geological Survey, Karachi, Pakistan

The above three posts are under UNESCO. They are one-year appointments, with English the only required language, and they pay \$6000-7300 net (national income tax reimbursed) plus family allowance and other allowances. A detailed description of each of these jobs is available without obligation.

The Near East College Association is also looking for scientists to work overseas. They still need, for the current (1955-56) season, a physics teacher and a mathematics teacher to teach in Istanbul, Turkey. For each job an M.A. and experience are preferred, but less will be accepted. The employer requests that the physics teacher, for Robert College, be a single man, and that the mathematics teacher, for the American College for Girls, be a single woman. See editorial.

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Society for Social Responsibility in Science
Gambier, Ohio

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