

NEWSLETTER #2

May 1974

In this Newsletter, as in the previous one, an asterisk in the left column indicates a request for suggestions or information. The consecutive numbers in parentheses, at extreme left, are for ease of reference, e.g., "Item 4, Newsletter #2." The reports, below, have been edited, except when in quotes. There are several new sections.

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REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

President Peter G. Granford reports on...

- (1) Founding members' suggestions. All letters from founding members, that had been written during the nearly two years that preceded the founding meeting, were reviewed, and the suggestions contained in them were condensed into 22 pages, in advance of the meeting. "We have considered almost all of them."
- (2) BRS of Japan. "On the day we organized, Professor Tsutomu Makino of the BRS of Japan sent us a cablegram of congratulations. He has just finished writing a book, 'The Range of Bertrand Russell's Thoughts on Life.' He states, 'I have been faced with the problem as to how the BRS of Japan should proceed from now on.' I will send him our Newsletter."
- (3) New preamble. "All who have replied so far — 6 or 7 — are satisfied with the preamble as is. Several agree with Lee Eisler (who had submitted a new preamble) on the point of logic. Jack Pitt pointed out that we have a formal method of changing the Constitution."
- (4) * BR Foundation is being set up, at a cost of \$300 for attorney fees plus about \$150 for advertising, seals, court costs, etc. "If you have any ideas about this, write me at once." (The Foundation will be eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions.)
- (5) Membership. All BRS members are equal — all votes carry equal weight — but we can think of members as falling into 3 classes:
 First, there are those who join because of an interest in BR, and wish to be kept informed of BRS activities. They are very welcome. The BRS is open to everyone provided he/she has an interest in BR and agrees to abide by the BRS Constitution. (See Item 49, below.)
 Second, "from this level, you can graduate to activity, engaging in spreading BR's ideas."
 Third, there are the "Russellites, the hard core who...will work intensively and presumably for a lifetime for the BRS, are guided by a love for humanity and have an authoritative knowledge of BR himself.
 "If, by next February, we can bring together only 40 Russellites of the same mind as ourselves, we can feel satisfied. In the long run, these people will be more valuable to the BRS than any other category...for they will give the BRS its permanent character.

"However, this does not mean that we should think small. I am not arguing against bigness as such. I would much prefer the 400 that Martin Garstens wants, (Hurst John wants 500 in a year), speakers of the highest calibre, and the getting and spending of money in large amounts...provided we build solidly."

So, giving free rein to imagination, "I am thinking in terms of chapters on every campus, BRS societies 'wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Russell,' Bertrand Russell retreats, The International Bertrand Russell Society, a Bertrand Russell University located next to the UN, the Bertrand Russell Bible in all motels, BR psychotherapy, the BR Monitor, BR Institutes in Applied Philosophy (after Dale Carnegie), a BRS Information Center, a moviê of BR, and some amusing ones I will keep to myself."

- (6) Recommended article. "I recently read the 24-page section on BR in 'The Encyclopedia of Philosophy,' edited by Paul Edwards (MacMillan.) It is very good."
- (7) Reading list. "We need a graduated list of readings to interest those who ask. MARRIAGE AND MORALS may be better than THE CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS because it is about sex, and its date of publication (1929) surprises most people. THE CONQUEST OF HAPPINESS grips those who are in trouble and are looking for something they can believe. Gary Slezak recommends NEW HOPES FOR A CHANGING WORLD for popular distribution. (Douglas Lackey would like to see an inexpensive republication of WHAT I BELIEVE (1925) .)
- (8) Taking a stand. "The time may come when one of us may have to 'take a stand.' By one of us, I mean any Russellite. We need to set up some guide-lines for them and for the BRS in this area. I suppose this is in your department, Martin Garstens."
- (9) The Vice-Presidency. "We also need some guide-lines for the office of Vice-president. It should be a meaningful and challenging position. I am trying to be a tabula rasa where the office of president is concerned, and think that basically the presidency should be 'created' by the needs of the Society. Perhaps this should be true of the vice-presidency."
- (10) The peace issue. "Bob Davis asked me to see who among our correspondents were interested in 'peace'. I could find only one. I think the reasons for this are that most feel impotent, that some are turned off by 'peace' ostensibly defined by the Russians, that to some degree the peace movement was self-serving, political, and aroused uneasy feelings in the patriotic. Of course there is a world-wide longing for a more genuine peace movement in the tradition of Russell. Best present bet: spread BR's ideas and hold 'peace' in limbo."
- (11) The Finance Committee. "Hurst John and Lee Eisler, both on the Finance Committee, have strong apparant differences of opinion on how money should be handled. "Since both have their hearts in the right place, I would think that the best solution would be to allow them to thrash things out and later expand the Committee, to include a pair of in-betweeners, such as Martin Garstens and Katherine Tait — or anyone else Hurst would like to have."

- (12) Being reminded. "I am sure I do not have a fool-proof system of tending to BRS business. Please remind me of anything I have failed to do."
- (13) Motivating ourselves. "When I am engaged in work that I should do — for my own long-range benefit — I give myself short-range rewards, knowing that my body cannot understand long-range goals, but does understand coffee and a cruller, a walk around the block, picking up some shrimp to boil later, a short ride on a quiet road, or hitting a bucket of golfballs. With this system of reinforcement, I can generally work indefinitely.
"Too, we should all get all the fun we can get out of being Russellites — the pleasure of being with like-minded people, excitement of the kind we had while working together, the resolution of differences, eating and drinking together (all this at the February meeting). We should consider all means of bringing people closer together, which have been developed by religious groups, civic clubs, sales organizations, and political organizations."
- (14) Committee on Applied Philosophy. Advises the Committee, "Take all the time you need. The work is too important to hurry."
- (15) Effective operating principles. "The preceding should not, however, negate what should be a permanent objective: 'Seek the blow of a thousand blows' (a basic Zen idea), (i.e., expend time and energy in ways that aim at large-scale rather than small-scale results, a letter to the New York Times as opposed to one to a friend.) And aim at doing all things yesterday.
"Some other operating favorites, while I am on the subject: apply Occam's Razor; have big margins of safety; seek permanent solutions; have problem-solving attitudes; have faith that there is an answer; eliminate anger except for effect; criticize ideas but not persons; no self-pity; assume that all work can be done within the available time."(Parkinson's Law in reverse.)
- (16) Relationships with each other. "For the time being, chairmen should be given the ball and be allowed to run with it. However we should follow Russell in being sceptical with ourselves, and express ourselves with the greatest freedom when we feel that any idea or activity does not measure up. This means that we must all absorb hostility much as a psychologist does, but we must not hesitate to confront each other with what we think is reality. Needless to say, in the spirit of Russell, our attacks should be directed at ideas rather than persons. In addition, we must balance this with notice, recognition, and accolades for accomplishment."
- (17) BRS stationery. "I feel guilty about asking Joe Neillands to head up our stationery committee. This is like asking Einstein to teach first grade arithmetic. (Later) I have seen the new stationery. It captures the spirit of the Society."
- (18) BRS publicity. "Although Lee Eisler and Ken Blackwell are still feeling their way, the work they have already done is impressive. I should reward such activities by sending labels from Red Hackle."
- (19) Committee on Science. "Joe Neillands presided at a 'Symposium on Chemical Weapons and U.S. Public Policy,' on April 1st. Joe, go ahead and work up your idea 'to do this kind of thing but on a higher intellectual level.'" (See Item 30, below.)

- (20) Protest on communist repression. This news item comes from a recent (April) issue of the London Times: "DISSIDENTS UNITE. A protest against intellectual repression in the Communist countries is being mounted as a result of a meeting in Rome between Ken Coates of the Bertrand Russell (Peace) Foundation and Pavel Litvinov, the Russian dissident author. The initiative has the endorsement in Russia of the scientist Sakharov, providing the first joint East-West protest of this kind. "Three days, all anniversaries of the imprisonment of Russian and Czech dissidents, have been selected: May 7, November 27, and March 29 next year."

Vice-President Robert Davis reports on...

- (21) Reading BR. In his circular letter of 3/13/74, Bob urged members to read more Russell, especially in unfamiliar areas. Bob offers to suggest titles * in any particular area you may wish to explore; write him. He also recommends THE BASIC WRITINGS OF BERTRAND RUSSELL, edited by Lester Denonn, which covers all the major areas.
- (22) "Credibility" issue. We're not quite sure how it got that name. It refers to the question: How do you get rid of someone who joins the BRS and then behaves irresponsibly? (We do not have this problem now; we may never have it; but we'd like to be prepared.)
Bob says that if the member consents to the aims and purposes and structure of the group as outlined in the Constitution, and then behaves irresponsibly, he/she can be expelled in the manner stated in the Constitution. Therefore we will add a NOTICE TO NEW MEMBERS later in this Newsletter (Item 49 .)
- (23) International Civil Liberties Committee. Bob (who is Chairman) and Kate Tait are educating themselves on the subject, and are in contact with other organizations. Kate has been in touch with Chris Farley, of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. Bob, following a suggestion by Hurst John, plans to send BRS members a copy of the International Bill of Rights.
- (24) BR Foundation. On the question — Is California a good state in which to incorporate the BRS as a non-profit corporation, eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions? — the advice (from books and lawyers) is against California, and to prefer a state that is not rigorous in its accounting demands.

Secretary Jack Pitt reports on...

- (25) The Constitution and Minutes. Jack edited and produced the Constitution, prepared the minutes of the February 1974 meeting, mailed both of these to the founding members, and to Lady Russell "at Ken Blackwell's excellent suggestion."
- (26) Local chapter. "I believe we might be ready in Fresno to explore the possibility of a 'Fresno local'. I suggest two items for general * consideration: (a) The relation between 'locals' and the national * organization, particularly as concerns money. (b) A coordination between our national advertising and local attempts to form chapters."

- (27) Amendments to minutes. Jack is aware that the minutes (of the February 1974 meeting) will benefit from certain amendments, and invites all those wishing to propose amendments to see him shortly before the next meeting. Those unable to attend are encouraged to contact him in writing.

Treasurer Katherine Tait reports, as of April 4, 1974:

- (28) Contributions: 882.66
- Expenditures: 5.56 for checkbook
35.34 for stationery
- Balance: 841.82

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REPORTS FROM CHAIRMEN

Committee on Applied Philosophy (Martin A. Garstens, Chairman):

- (29) The Committee is exploring its approach to the problem of attaining a more "philosophic" outlook in everyday life. It plans to produce a handbook on "great philosophy", and may hold small study-group meetings to discuss goals and the means of achieving them.

Committee on Science (J.B.Neilands, Chairman):

- (30) Symposium on chemical weapons and U.S. public policy, sponsored by American Chemical Society, held in Los Angeles on April 1st, was presided over by Dr. W. J. Bailey. (ACS President) and Joe Neilands. Joe spoke on "The U.S. chemical war in Indochina and the Geneva Protocol," and claimed that Nixon's rejection of the tear gas/herbicide ban is the sole reason for the U.S. Senate's failure to ratify the Geneva Protocol outlawing chemical weapons. For more details, see the SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER story (Page 10) and the press release on Joe's talk at the Symposium (Page 11.)
- Congressman Wayne Owens (D., Utah) spoke about "The need for a public examination of U.S. chemical warfare policies: treaties, stockpiles, and the new chemical system." Congressman Owens and others are continuing their efforts to get Congress to consider the problem, as can be seen in THE NEW YORK TIMES story of 4/29/74 (see Page 12) That Joe is working on a hot issue, which he is helping to heat up, is indicated by the prominence given by the TIMES to the herbicide damage story — 5 columns on its Page 2.

- (31) University course. At the University of California, Berkeley, where Joe is Professor of Biochemistry, they seem to think that scientists should not live in an ivory tower, indifferent to the consequences of their researches. We attach the schedule for the course, "Biochemistry and Society" (Page 13). Joe was scheduled to lecture on "Chemical-Biological Weapons" on April 5th.

- (32) The Committee's purpose. " To develop Science as an enterprise which is devoted to the enhancement of the quality of life and which, at the same time, does not jeopardize the long-term stability of the biosphere."

Annual Meeting Committee (Hurst John, Chairman):

- (33) Hurst has been in touch with 12 hotels in NYC, one of which will probably be selected for our February 1975 meeting. Hurst has already seen 4 of the 12, and plans to come to NYC to see the rest.

Information Committee (Lee Eisler, Chairman):

- (34) BRS ads appeared in SATURDAY REVIEW/WORLD, May 4th issue (classified ads, "Personal"), and in THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, May 2nd issue (classified ads, "ETC.")
- (35) Epstein head of BR. Wrote 3 firms and found one that might be willing to make replicas of the head, provided we can get permission to do so. We do not yet know what costs, if any, might be involved. You can see a photo of Epstein, Russell, and the head on Page 116 of Volume 3 of BR's AUTOBIOGRAPHY.
- (36) Letter of Welcome is sent to new members.
- (37) Member's Questionnaire aims to elicit a few facts about each member and about how he/she became interested in BR and in the BRS. A copy is enclosed (except to the most recent members, who have already * received it.) Please answer the Questionnaire, and return it.
- (38) "New member package." The following items are sent to a new member: Letter of Welcome, the Constitution, the Minutes of the first meeting, the Newsletter, the Member's Questionnaire.
- (39) Special publications. 8 publications were listed in Item 7, Newsletter #1. Remove PHILOSOPHY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS; it has no "News & Notes" Section. Add: THE BULLETIN OF THE ATOMIC SCIENTISTS, 1020-24 E. 58th St., Chicago 60637
SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, 415 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017
SCIENCE (A.A.A.S.), 1515 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20005
* Please suggest other publications that might be suitable for our list.
- (40) Original respondents. Sent "Bulletin March 1974" and Letter of Invitation to 44 people who answered Peter Cranford's first letter and said they might be interested in a Russell Society. To date, 6 have joined.
- (41) New member sheet, one sheet per member, is sent to Ken Blackwell (so he can enter or extend the subscription to "Russell"), to Kate Tait (along with dues), and to Peter Cranford (to keep him up-to-date on new members.)
- (42) BRS story in "Russell 12" Submitted story, which was used, with thanks to Ken Blackwell for editing, adding, and removing errors.
- (43) Clipping book. Started clipping book of "newspaper stories (based on BRS press releases) that members send me. I will bring it to the Annual Meetings, so that members who wish to can look at it."

(44) Wrote many letters, mostly to members.

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SPECIAL REQUESTS

(45) 1976. The U.S. Bicentennial may provide an opportunity for stimulating interest in BR's writings. BR had a lot to say about America, not all of it uncomplimentary. There was much that he found to admire.

* We would like to collect BR quotes on America and on its statesmen, both complimentary and uncomplimentary. Please keep an eye out for such quotes, and mail them in when and as you find them. BR scholars, please help! We would like to build up a collection of quotes.

Here are ways in which this material might be used: (1) As a book, to be published by a trade publisher (if we can find one) in 1976, perhaps with a title something like: "WHAT MAKES AMERICA WORTH PRESERVING. An assessment by America's good friend and severe critic, Bertrand Russell." (2) As a book, the cost of publishing to be subsidized by the BRS (if we can find the money.) (3) As a magazine article. (4) In press releases. (5) As an inexpensively produced booklet (mimeographed?) for BRS members.

None of these possible uses is guaranteed. We have to see what material we can gather. The next step would be to work it into a book, and then try publishers.

* Would someone like to take on the job of receiving the quotes and assembling them into a manuscript for a book?

Here is a sample quote from BR's FREEDOM AND ORGANIZATION (Norton paperback), Pages 229 to 231:

"Jefferson deserves to be regarded as the founder of American democracy for three reasons: first, he wrote the Declaration of Independence; second, he led and largely created the Republican party (not the ancestor of the present Republican Party), by which the Federalists, who were anti-democratic, were overthrown; third, he was the first President who believed in democracy and sought to establish it." (p. 229)

"Although he was a fine gentleman, his contempt for social distinctions was genuine and deep-seated, and enabled him, throughout the French Revolution, to avoid the false sentimentalism inculcated by Burke. In 1794, he hopes the French will 'bring, at length, kings, nobles, and priests, to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood.'" (p. 229)

"From this bare outline of his official career, it might have been supposed that he would not have time for many interests outside politics. In fact, however, his love for his home at Monticello, his interest in architecture, his omnivorous scientific curiosity, were all at least as strong as his political ambition, and caused him to be genuinely glad of his periods of leisure and retirement." (p.230)

"Everything that was admirable in eighteenth-century culture was to be found in Jefferson, without the somewhat limited and static quality that made that age unsatisfactory." (p. 231)

(46)

Russellite statement. Consider the following 2 statements:

(A) The most important thing we have to offer Russellites is the opportunity to serve.

(B) The most important thing we have to offer Russellites is the opportunity to further Russell's purposes.

* Which one do you prefer?

* If you'd like to try your hand at stating what the BRS offers (to present or potential Russellites,) please send us the results.

(47)

* Newsletter suggestions. If you have suggestions, comments or criticisms concerning the Newsletters, please send them in.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS

(48)

We welcome these new members:

Irvin Ashkenazy, 1435 Avenue 64, Pasadena, Cal. 91105
 Amy P. Block, Apt. 101, 2515 Benvenue, Berkeley, Cal. 94704
 Richard A. Hyman, 3-C, 157 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022
 Rebecca Hyman, 3-C, 157 East 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022
 Donald W. Jackanicz, 53 Washington Square South, New York, N.Y. 10012
 Gerald Kahan, 9813 Tolworth Circle, Randallstown, Md. 21133
 Darrell Kong, 2825 E. Swift, Fresno, Cal. 93726
 Henry Kraus, 9166 Gerald Avenue, Sepulveda, Cal. 91343
 Dr. Douglas Lackey, 50 Juniper Road, Wayne, N.J. 07470
 Dr. Corliss Lamont, 315 West 106th Street, New York, N.Y. 10025
 James B. Milne, 1126 Agincourt Road, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K2C 2H7
 Raymond Plant, 13 Kingsview Blvd., Brampton, Ontario, Canada L64 1C5

The BRS started with 12 members. There are now 24.

For the benefit of new members, here are the addresses of the other 12 members (home address, in most cases:)

Lorraine C. Beattie, 4-430 Hazel Street, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3P8
 Kenneth Blackwell, Archivist, The Bertrand Russell Archives, Mills
 Memorial Library, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 4L6
 Dr. Peter G. Cranford, 2108½ Walton Way, Augusta, Georgia. 30904
 Robert Davis, 1737 Silverwood Terrace, Los Angeles, Cal. 90026
 Lee Eisler, Box 409, R.D. 1, Coopersburg, Pa. 18036
 Dr. Martin A. Garstens, 913 Buckingham Drive, Silver Spring, Md. 20901
 Hurst John, 2011 Country Club Drive, Columbia, Mo. 65201
 Dr. J. B. Neilands, Dept. of Biochemistry, University of California,
 Berkeley, Cal. 94720
 Dr. Jack Pitt, Dept. of Philosophy, School of Humanities, California
 State University, Fresno, Cal. 93740
 Dr. Don D. Roberts, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Waterloo,
 Gary M. Slezak, 1768 West 95th Place, Chicago, Ill. 60643
 Dr. Katherine Tait, Box 45, Falls, Village, Conn. 06031

In the next Newsletter, we expect to report on members' special interests, etc., based on answers to the Questionnaire.

NOTICE TO NEW MEMBERS

(49) Each of you has been sent a copy of the BRS Constitution. Please read it through. We expect that you will find it satisfactory. If, however, you do not, let us know what your objections are. In the unlikely event that we cannot resolve our differences to your satisfaction and to ours, we will -- regretfully -- annul your membership and refund your dues.

* Note:if we do not hear from you by July 31, 1974 (or by 3 months after your enrollment, whichever period is longer,) we will assume that you find the Constitution satisfactory and agree to abide by it.

* * * * *

LOOSE ENDS

(50) Re the press releases that were sent to your home-town or home-campus newspapers: if you don't see the publication regularly, and don't know -- but would like to know -- whether the press release was used, visit the publication's office next time you are in its neighborhood, and look at back issues for the week or 10 days following the date of release (Feb. 20 or 27.)

* If you find the story, send us a clipping or copy, please.

* * * * *

SMALL TALK

(51) Bob Davis says he likes the photo of the founding members, at the February meeting, but feels that Jack Pitt and Lee Eisler stole the show. (Lee says he thinks he -- Lee -- stole too much Red Hackle, and it shows.)

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MISCELLANEOUS

(52) Note to Chairmen: in future reports on your activities, please -- when possible -- tell something about your intentions as to future activities (immediate future and long-range future), so that members who are interested in that kind of activity or project can write to you about it.

(53) To address all members:if you have a question or request that you'd like to put before the membership, via the next Newsletter, send it to Box 409, R.D. 1, Coopersburg, Pa. 18036

SCIENCE / MEDICINE

Chemical arsenal growth denounced

By Gobind Behari Lal
Science Writer

LOS ANGELES — The American Chemical Society's annual meeting opened

here today with a University of California biochemist's denunciation of America's expanding chemical warfare arsenal

He blamed President Nixon for U.S. failure to ratify a 49 year old international protocol on chemical warfare agents.

The Army's top chemist defended U.S. policy.

Keynote speaker, U.S. Rep. Wayne Owens of Utah, said the public must understand the issues and influence Congress' position.

The Army wants to spend \$200 million on new binary agents in the next few years, with expenditures eventually reaching \$1 billion.

Binary Agents are lethal nerve gases composed of two chemicals, harmless until mixed in a weapons system.

An apparent majority of the society agreed with UC Berkeley biochemistry professor Dr. John Neilands, who laid the blame for proliferation on President Nixon.

"The failure of the U.S. to ratify the 1925 Geneva Protocol on Chemical and Biological Warfare," he said, "has resulted in the continued making and storing of these weapons.

"President Nixon must be held personally accountable for this failure," Neilands said. There had been moves

to implement the pact, but the President had excluded herbicides and teargasses from the weapons to be banned, since both types were heavily used in the war in Vietnam, he explained.

"The important thing now is to induce the U.S. to conform to the general informed opinion on the definition of chemical weapons and the scope of the Geneva Protocol," he concluded.

Army chemist Col. William E. Dismore Jr., chief of the chemical branch of the chemical and nuclear division of the Army chemical Corps defended the planned weapons.

"A small but important part of our deterrent capability is chemical weaponry. The Army's approach to modernization of the deterrent chemical weapons stockpile is compatible with U.S. objectives of negotiations for effective chemical arms restraint."

Dr. Robert Roberts, a social chemist of the Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City, argued that chemical weapons will not prevent or win a war.

SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN CALLS FOR
BAN ON MILITARY USE OF TEAR GAS AND HERBICIDES

J. B. Neilands, Chairman of the Committee on Science of the BRS, spoke in Los Angeles on April 1 in favor of eliminating tear gas and herbicides from military arsenals. The occasion was the 167th national meeting of the American Chemical Society, an association of 110,000 professional chemists. Neilands, who presided over a day-long symposium on "Chemical Weapons and U.S. Policy", claims that President Nixon's rejection of the tear gas/herbicide ban is the sole reason for failure of the Senate to give advice and consent to ratification of the Geneva Protocol, a 1925 accord which outlaws the use in war of all "chemicals, liquids, analogous materials and devices". The U.S. is practically the only nation, major or minor, which has not yet approved the treaty. According to Neilands, Senator Fulbright will move the Protocol to the Senate floor once the tear gas/herbicide impasse has been resolved.

President Nixon called for ratification in 1969 but made it clear that the measure should not extend to tear gas and herbicides, two agents which had been heavily deployed in the Indochina War. The U.N. subsequently voted 80-3 to classify tear gas and herbicides as chemical weapons specifically disallowed by the Protocol; the three negative votes were cast by Australia, Portugal, and the U.S.

Neilands, a biochemistry professor at the University of California at Berkeley, concluded:

Watergate is a mere misdemeanor compared to the war crimes perpetrated by the Johnson-Nixon Administration in Indochina. Obviously, tear gas and herbicides are coveted weapons in the hands of an imperialist power. Nonetheless, chemists must assume the responsibility to stigmatize these agents along with the nuclear weapons. While general and complete disarmament is a necessary ultimate objective if mankind is to survive, we can advance to this goal and save lives by ostracizing particularly odious (and, in terms of international law, illegal) weapons.

U.S. Panel to Study Steps to Heal Herbicide Damage in Vietnam

By JOHN W. FINNEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 28—The Defense Department next month will convene a committee from eight Government agencies to study what steps the United States can take to help South Vietnam cope with the ecological damage caused by the American use of herbicides during the war.

The formation of this committee is the first direct United States Government response to a report to Congress in February by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences.

The committee said that the extensive use of herbicides by the United States between 1962 and 1971 had caused "extensive and serious" damage to the inland forests of South Vietnam and had destroyed 36 per cent of the mangrove forests in the Mekong Delta region.

At the same time, the committee found no evidence that the herbicides, which were basically the same as those used for agricultural purposes in the United States, had caused long-term damage to the fertility of the South Vietnamese soil.

Before its publication, the report was the subject of considerable controversy in the National Academy of Sciences, with two members of the committee protesting that the damage to the inland forests was being underestimated by the committee.

Since its publication the controversy has continued, with Dr. Anton Lang of Michigan State University, the chairman of the committee, accusing some unidentified members of the National Academy of having leaked an incomplete, slanted and erroneous summary of the report to The New York Times. An article on a summary of the report was published in The Times on Feb. 22.

The report has meanwhile become caught up in the political controversy over whether

the United States should renounce the military use of herbicides.

To some members of Congress, including Senator Gaylord Nelson, Democrat of Wisconsin, and Representative Wayne Owens, Democrat of Utah, supports their contention that the United States should interpret the 1925 Geneva Convention on chemical warfare to ban the use of herbicides. The Administration has thus far refused to accept this in submitting the Geneva Convention, which has never been ratified by the United States, to the Senate for approval.

The Defense Department, which is the principal opponent within the Administration of a herbicide ban, reached the following "general conclusion" on the report:

"Some damage has resulted from the military use of herbicides in Vietnam. However, most of the allegations of massive, permanent ecological and psychological damage are unfounded. It should also be remembered that herbicides were used to save American and allied lives in a combat situation, not to collect scientific data."

The herbicides were primarily used to clear away foliage in areas believed to be occupied by North Vietnamese or Vietcong forces, exposing them to attack. The herbicides were also used, to a lesser extent, to destroy crops that provided food sources to the Communists.

The academy report contains a number of what Dr. Lang has described as "strong recommendations." To study what action to take on the recommendations, the Defense Department has decided to convene a committee with representatives from the Defense Department, State Department, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Agriculture Department, Interior Department, National Science Foundation, Agency for International Development and Environmental Protection Agency.

Aid Agency Short of Funds

One of the committee's principal recommendations was that the United States provide "financial and technical support" to a "Vietnamese effort to cope with the consequences of herbicide use." The committee gave no figure for although the report said that reforestation of the mangrove forests would require "a considerable input of labor and capital.

Without such reforestation, the committee estimated, it would take the mangrove forests "well over 100 years" to recover.

Privately officials expect this recommendation to raise an immediate controversy over which Government agency should assume the budgetary responsibility.

Senator John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, made clear nearly a year ago that he believed the Defense Department should turn over responsibility for further action on the herbicide issue to other agencies. The logical choice, officials suggest, would be the Agency for International Development, but it is already short of funds for its economic aid program for South Vietnam.

The academy committee also recommended "further studies in collaboration with the Vietnamese with a view to promoting greater understanding of the properties of these herbicides, of their peaceful uses and their hazards." The report noted that, particularly among urban populations, the American use of herbicides "came to be an emotionally charged symbol standing for many apprehensions and distresses, especially those for which Americans are blamed."

Other Recommendations

On a more technical level, the academy committee concluded the following actions:

¶ A systematic sampling program to determine whether dioxin — a highly toxic sub-

stance in Agent Orange, one of the defoliants widely used in South Vietnam—had found its way into the Vietnamese food chain. The reported noted that there had been preliminary findings that dioxin was present in shellfish in South Vietnamese waters draining areas that had been subjected to heavy herbicide spraying.

¶ Intensive studies, once peace has been restored in the Vietnamese highlands, into reports that herbicides caused illness and deaths among children of the Montagnard tribesmen. The reports were based on interviews with montagnard refugees, but the committee found the reports "so consistent that despite the lack of medical and toxicological evidence" they "cannot be dismissed out of hand."

¶ Prompt evaluation of hospital data to determine whether there is any relationship between exposure to herbicides and birth defects. The report said the committee could find "no conclusive evidence" of association between herbicides and congenital defects but acknowledged that the "material available is not adequate for definite conclusions."

Controls Held Adequate

¶ Epidemiological studies on whether potential disease carriers, such as mosquitoes and rats, had increased in defoliated areas that might be used as refugee resettlement sites.

¶ "Serious consideration" of reforestation of at least part of the mangrove forests, which the report noted play an important role as a breeding ground for fish and shellfish as well as providing fuel for South Vietnamese peasants. With "a massive reforestation program," the report estimated, the destroyed mangrove forests, representing about 0.5 per cent of the South Vietnamese land area, can be restored in approximately 20 years.

¶ A "systematic inventory"

as soon as possible of damage to the inland forests, which received three-quarters of the 18.8 million gallons of herbicide sprayed on South Vietnam. About 10 per cent of the inland forest area was sprayed, most of it only once but some areas several times. On the basis of study of aerial photographs, the committee concluded that the herbicides had destroyed 500,000 to 2,000,000 cubic meters of merchantable timber and 5 million to 11 million cubic meters of nonmerchantable timber, with the extent of damage depending heavily on the number of times an area had been sprayed.

These damage estimates were considerably lower than those offered earlier by other scientific groups and they prompted two members of the panel, Pham Hoang Ho of the University of Saigon and Paul W. Richards of the University College of North Wales, to submit dissenting views complaining that the committee report underestimated the damage to the inland forests.

One recommendation that the Defense Department feels is necessary is a proposal that Congress require independent scientific studies of the possible ecological or physiological effects of new weapons proposed by the Pentagon. In commenting on the academy report, the Defense Department said that "adequate control now exists" through environmental legislation.

The academy committee urged that work on its recommendations "be initiated promptly, since any delay will make its accomplishment more difficult."

BIOCHEMISTRY AND SOCIETY

BIOCHEMISTRY 150, SPRING 1974

Staff: J. B. Neilands
Rush Wayne

Schedule: MF, 12:10 - 1:00 P.M., Room 101 Biochemistry Building

Prerequisites: Biochemistry 102; Biochemistry 100A, or consent of instructor

Formalities: 2 units, P/NP; term paper or project; no final or other exams

Information: 642-7460 or 642-7452

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Mondays

Fridays

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Mondays		Fridays	
1	Mathematicians and Society John Kelley, UCB	5	Chemical-Biological Weapons J. B. Neilands, UCB
8	Military Weapons Systems Doug Mattern, 2671 Southcourt Palo Alto 94306	12	Synanon Mel Simon, UCSD
15	Californians for Safe Nuclear Energy 2 Rowland St., S.F. (tel: 392-7092)	19	Science in Chile Rob and Mary Clair Colwell Zoology, UCB
22	Biomedical Aspects of Ionizing Radiation C. A. Tobias, UCB	26	Ethical Problems in Human Genetics Elizabeth Neufeld, NIH
29	Alternative Sources of Energy Rush Wayne		
		3	Biomedical Applications of Prostaglandins Robert Gorman, Upjohn Chemical Co.
6	Environmental Impact of the Auto Al Spivak, General Electric	10	Discussion
13	Benefit Risk Analysis in Biomedicine Daniel E. Koshland, Jr., UCB	17	Pesticides or Biological Control Judy Snyder, IDS 10, UCB
20	Politics of Nutrition Arnold Schaefer, U. Nebraska	24	Social Responsibility in Science Chandler Davis, U. Toronto
27	Holiday	31	Wine Making E. Wawsciewicz, U. Illinois
3	Natural Energy Design Center UCB (tel: 669-1585)	7	Discussion