

and frequently adverted to in the public press that denial of clearance to Dr. Oppenheimer would do serious harm in the scientific community. This is a matter of vital concern to the Government and the people.

"We should express our considered view that, because the loyalty or security risk status of a scientist or any other intellectual may be brought into question, scientists and intellectuals are ill-advised to assert that a reasonable and sane inquiry constitutes an attack upon scientists and intellectuals generally. This Board would deplore deeply any notion that scientists are under attack in this country and that prudent study of any individual's conduct and character within the necessary demands of the national security could be either in fact or in appearance a reflection of anti-intellectualism.

"The Board has taken note of the fact that in some cases of this sort groups of scientists have tended toward an almost professional opposition to any inquiry about a member of the group. They thus, by moving in a body to the defense of one of their number, give currency, credence, and support to a notion that they, as a group, are under attack. A decision of a board of this sort, whether favorable or unfavorable to the individual whose case is before it, should be considered neither as an exoneration of all scientists from imputations of security risk nor a determination that all scientists are suspect."

The objections registered by scientists since publication of the report, however, reflect a quite different kind of uneasiness. One example is the following statement, which was released on June 12th on behalf of the Council of the American Physical Society by APS President H. A. Bethe:

The Council of the American Physical Society is deeply perturbed by the considerations used by the Gray Board in withdrawing the clearance of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, while at the same time attesting to his loyalty and discretion. Many members of the American Physical Society have known and worked with Dr. Oppenheimer for many years and as a consequence of this association have great confidence in the value of Dr. Oppenheimer as a public servant. The Council of the American Physical Society is, for obvious reasons, in no position to render a judgment whether Dr. Oppenheimer meets the present requirements of the AEC for clearance. There is, however, one matter of principle which emerges as a serious problem from the majority report of the Gray Board upon which we feel it a duty to comment.

The chief new charges against Dr. Oppenheimer arose from the advice he gave on request and his subsequent attitude concerning the H bomb. This question was a very difficult technical and policy matter on which opinions widely differed with many men of assured loyalty and competence sharing Dr. Oppenheimer's views. Charges based on policy disagreement appear to be customary in Russia but we regard them as not only morally reprehensible but also very harmful to our national welfare. If a man whose advice is sought must fear that his potential utility to the

Government may be challenged because his reasoned recommendations later become politically unpopular, he may be tempted to give advice that is politically safe rather than technically valid.

The opinion rendered by the majority of the Gray Board leaves this important question in doubt. While clearing Dr. Oppenheimer of all specific charges raised against him in connection with the H bomb development, they reprimand him for his lack of enthusiasm for the program after it was officially adopted. To require such subservience to an official viewpoint as a proof of trustworthiness is to prevent the development of the best thought.

There can be little doubt that the majority report of the Gray Board will have an adverse effect upon the utilization of scientists in the Government. It is to be hoped that these issues will be clarified by the AEC in the course of its final rulings on Dr. Oppenheimer's clearance.

Other groups, including the Federation of American Scientists and the bulk of the scientific staff at Los Alamos, have made public statements in earnest support of Oppenheimer, as have numerous individual scientists. It should be recorded, however, that there has been a singular absence of the kind of group hysteria deplored by the board majority.

Dirac Denied Visa

NOBEL LAUREATE P. A. M. Dirac, Lucasian professor of mathematics at Cambridge University, is reported to have been denied permission to enter the United States. Dirac, who has been in this country several times in recent years, was invited to come to Princeton this year as a visiting physicist at the Institute for Advanced Study, which is directed by J. R. Oppenheimer. On May 26th Dirac said that his visa application had been "turned down flat" under the terms of Section 212 A of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, a lengthy list of reasons for denying entry that covers categories of undesirables ranging from vagrants to stowaways.

His exclusion was protested vigorously in a letter to the editor of *The New York Times* of June 3rd which was signed by three Princeton physicists, W. Bleakney, J. A. Wheeler, and M. G. White. Their letter said, in part, "We do not pretend to be experts in the law which governs the issuance of visas. However, if this is what the McCarran Act means in practice, it seems to us a form of organized cultural suicide. We are very strongly aware of the advantages to this country of Professor Dirac's proposed visit. We are aware of no disadvantage. We also know that his case is only a particularly obvious example of a general policy which operates to this country's detriment."

On June 10th it was reported that the State Department had ordered a review of the decision. Said the *Times*: "One of the factors contributing to the ruling against Professor Dirac, it is understood, was the 'atmosphere' in this country. This appeared to indicate that an application that might have been approved a few years ago might be rejected today."