

# Book Reviews

**Security, Loyalty, and Science.** Walter Gellhorn. Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1950. 300 pp. \$3.00.

It would be naïve to expect members of Congress to read this review, but, in the remote possibility that one of them may pick up this issue of *SCIENCE* and get to this page, I recommend the book for his consideration. As for the regular customers of this journal, Professor Gellhorn's contribution cannot be too strongly recommended to all those concerned not only with the state of science today but with the state of the Union. Some of the facts assembled in this book are so bizarre as to make every intelligent layman wonder that some scientists of force and originality still remain in government service. That they have done so is no fault of military intelligence or the House Committee of Un-American Activities. To what extent these two agencies have reduced our scientific advantage is, of course, difficult to determine.

It is said that, in order to avoid the unpleasantness resulting from the interruption of their research, a number of government scientists are seriously considering joining the Communist Party. They reason if they join "the Party" and then resign they become "ex-Communists," and practically everybody knows that to some public officials there is no one more loyal, more honorable, or more patriotic than an ex-Communist—except possibly an ex-Nazi. The idea may perhaps have something to recommend it but it won't work, for they'd still be scientists, and practically everybody knows that to some public officials there is no one more cunning, more treacherous, or more suspect than a scientist—except possibly a social scientist. So low a fellow is he that many states have seen fit to pass special laws concerning him and to require special oaths from him. These also apply to all his nonscientific academic associates, except college presidents. The latter, so I hear, can mingle with anyone and be free of guilt by association. One prexy has been heard to object to this type of class distinction (based on immunological criteria) on the grounds that it is very undemocratic and discriminates against college presidents. His name cannot be revealed for reasons of national security.

Another deterrent, so it is claimed, that keeps strong research men away from government laboratories is the overclassification of the work. This prevents the investigator from publishing—or, to be more correct—submitting for publication, the results of his research. Actually this is a boon to the editors of our more critical scientific journals. Nevertheless, the military and the AEC should avoid classifying as "secret" such data as are found in the first editions of *Kirkes' Physiology* (1848) and the *Handbook of Chemistry and Physics* (1914). Also, if they haven't got around to it yet, "Mothersill's" seasickness remedy should be removed from the "restricted" category.

Overclassification may also be hazardous to health. There is a rumor concerning a scientist who, while working in a military laboratory, wrote a report which was promptly classified as "secret." Now, he was only cleared to receive "confidential" material, and one day when he went to the laboratory's library to request a copy of his report, it was refused him as he was not cleared to receive "secret" material. This caused him no end of confusion and anxiety and he had to be placed in an asylum. Incidentally, he was a psychoanalyst. I am quite certain that all men of civilized feelings will agree that that is no way to treat an investigator, even a psychoanalyst.

And so those are some of the thoughts that come to mind while reading Professor Gellhorn's excellent and very serious survey of the sad situation of science and scientists, not only in our government laboratories, but also in many of our universities. That so important a book about so serious a situation should provoke in this reviewer whimsical and even incongruous thoughts is not intended as a detractor of its excellence. The undersigned, having had some contact and a little experience with the military, has come to the conclusion that this attitude is our best defense and probably our most effective offense. Remember what happened to that poor psychoanalyst!

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**Contributions to Mathematical Statistics.** R. A. Fisher. New York: Wiley; London: Chapman & Hall, 1950. 655 pp. \$7.50.

This volume is the twelfth of the "Wiley Publications in Statistics," edited by W. A. Shewhart, of the Bell Telephone Laboratories. It provides the scientist with a compendium of Fisher's 42 most important papers in their original familiar form, thanks to the industrial uses of photography. Each paper is preceded by a note by the author; also included are a biography of Fisher written by P. C. Mahalanobis, F.R.S., Statistical Adviser to the Cabinet of India, and an excellent index contributed by John W. Tukey, of Princeton. Errors and misprints in the original papers are corrected, and there are occasional modifications of notation for the sake of uniformity. Publication of his collected works, during the author's lifetime, while he is still vigorously turning out statistical research of undiminished quality, canonizes him while he yet lives. May there be a second edition with many additions!

A curious omission may be observed—an omission not chargeable to the author or publisher: the first paper (No. 1), "On the Probable Error of a Coefficient of Correlation Deduced from a Small Sample," *Metron*, 1921, is not there. The author's note is there, but not the paper itself, permission for republication