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The New Government Employee Security Program

ON April 27, President Eisenhower issued an executive order establishing a new security program for Federal employees, scrapping the old loyalty check system and substituting the single criterion of security risk. Since the new program affects all scientists now in Government employment as well as all future applicants, and may, directly and indirectly, profoundly influence the progress of American science in the next few years, the Scientists' Committee on Loyalty and Security desires to bring the new program to the attention of American scientists and to explain the Committee's objectives.

The Scientists' Committee on Loyalty and Security,¹ a committee of the Federation of American Scientists, centered in the New Haven area, succeeds the Scientists' Committee on Loyalty Problems (*SCIENCE*, 111, 220 [1950]) and is concerned with security programs as they affect individual scientists, leaving to other groups the study of such programs with respect to civil liberties and democratic processes. A file of up-to-date information on loyalty and security regulations is maintained, and this information and informal advice is available to interested scientists upon request, but the Committee does not attempt under any circumstances to judge the merits of individual cases.

The Committee believes that national security can be maintained only by a proper balance of the need for security by secrecy, where it is necessary, against the need for long-range security by continuing scientific achievement. A major objective of the Committee is to make known the views of responsible American scientists, through the Federation of American Scientists and other interested organizations, and to cooperate with Government agencies and offer constructive advice on loyalty and security programs wherever feasible. The Committee attempts to remain alert to the broader problems of science and security, and may occasionally bring important facts and pressing problems to the attention of American scientists.

¹ E. C. Pollard, Chairman; R. S. Brown, Jr., E. C. Fowler, S. A. Goudsmit, H. G. Graetzer, M. A. Heald, G. A. Hedlund, F. Hutchinson, G. E. Hutchinson, W. J. Knox, J. K. Major, J. Phelps, J. M. Sturtevant, W. Rail, H. C. Wolfe.

The new Government employees security program represents an apparent major effort by the new administration to establish a workable program to clear up some of the confusion and shortcomings of the old system, and possibly arrest the trend toward ever increasing investigations by Congressional committees. Briefly, the new program abolishes the old Loyalty Review Board and replaces "loyalty" by "security" as a criterion of eligibility for Federal employment, leaves the agency head the final judge of eligibility, and extends the provisions of Public Law 733 (81st Congress, 2nd Session) to all departments and agencies of the Government.

The Scientists' Committee on Loyalty and Security believes that the efforts of the administration to bring the enforcement of security safeguards under the executive branch of the Government, and to replace unwieldy loyalty criteria with those of security, may be steps in the right direction. The Committee is conscious, however, of the great responsibility which the new program places on department heads and of the inequities and procedural differences which may arise unless the new program is administered with the greatest care. It remains to be seen how security standards will, in practice, be scaled to the actual requirements of an agency or of a particular project within an agency. The actual effect of the program on scientists in Government employment will not be clear until some procedural precedents have been established in the weeks and months just ahead. For this reason, the Committee feels further comments at this time would be premature, but intends to review the program after it has passed through its initial phases and has achieved some stability.

The Committee intends to continue its informal consultations with public officials, to offer constructive advice on how the program may best be administered in the interests of national security and how security standards may be scaled to the nature of the scientific work, and to call attention to injustices arising under the program. The Committee will welcome the views of responsible scientists on the new program, and is anxious to have cases of genuine injustice to scientists brought to its immediate attention. Correspondence should be addressed to the Scientists' Committee on Loyalty and Security, Box 2153 Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut.

SCIENTISTS' COMMITTEE ON LOYALTY AND SECURITY
New Haven, Connecticut

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