

These ideas constitute an achievement of which man may well be proud. It is surely something for beings so utterly insignificant by comparison with the smallest of the stars that are scattered with reckless abandonment in the heavens to be able to understand some, at least, of the principles which control their existence and enable us to perceive them.

To see these principles as applying equally on earth, as manifest in the most varied phenomena—in the motions of the tides, in the blue of the sky, in the lightning flash, and in the falling apple; to prove our understanding by creating, on however small a scale, compositions of our own which use these principles in new ways of our own devising; to be beginning to see

some light on the nature of living matter and how living forms can transmit themselves to descendants—all these are worth while and worthy to rank with the achievement of sculpture, of music, or of literature.

Science is not merely the control but also the understanding of nature. Its two aspects must be held in equal honor.

Science in the News

Disarmament: America Is Finding That Its Proposals Have Less Appeal Than Those of the Soviet Union

From New York. The United States is finding itself in an awkward position on the disarmament question at the United Nations. For there is a widespread impression here that the United States is not yet ready to deal with the problem of disarmament, that the United States is interested only in controls over existing armaments. The Russians, on the other hand, have been talking disarmament at every opportunity, and although there is a great deal of skepticism regarding the Russian intentions, the Russians nevertheless are holding the initiative.

Speaker after speaker refers to disarmament as the main problem before the world. And logical as the American insistence on gaining experience on means of control and inspection may be, it does not have a very favorable effect on this war-worried assembly where it is accepted by everyone that controls are necessary but where the Russians have managed to put themselves in the position of advocating controlled disarmament while the United States, fairly or not, is widely regarded as advocating merely controlled armament. "It is perfectly clear," Nehru told the General Assembly last week, "that disarmament without controls is not a feasible proposition. It is even more

clear that controls without disarmament have no meaning." "It is not proposed, I hope," said Nehru, "to have controls of existing armaments and thus in a way to perpetuate those armaments."

In fact, there is good reason to believe that the basic attitudes of both the United States and Soviet Union regarding disarmament are essentially the same. That attitude is one of great skepticism. It is based on the awareness of both sides of the pitfalls inherent in almost any disarmament proposal and on the feeling on both sides that progress would be enormously difficult even if there were a great deal more good will in the air than is the case this week.

Given this skepticism on both sides, there is a good case to be made that the United States position is more realistic and more likely to decrease the chance of war. As noted in earlier reports in this space, the United States is putting an increasing amount of effort into the search for stability and into reducing the likelihood of war. The Russians appear to be taking this larger problem less seriously than we are. And, again quoting Nehru's speech to the General Assembly, "we must always remember that even in pursuing disarmament we have to keep in view our larger purpose [of avoiding war]."

The difficulty with the United States position is this: on the less sophisticated level the Russians' emphasis on disarmament has an enormously greater emo-

tional appeal than the American emphasis on controls; on a more sophisticated level the principal criticisms, and they can be heard from Westerners as well as neutralists, are that even granting the validity of the arguments pointing up the pitfalls of any disarmament scheme anyone has yet suggested, it can still be argued that the disaster of nuclear war would be so enormous that the United States should be willing to risk more than it has been up till now to make some progress on actual disarmament. Beyond this, the critics say, even granting that the American search for stability is more valid than the Soviet talk of grandiose disarmament schemes, the usefulness of the American stability proposals tends to be dissipated when it is so easy for the Russians to brand them as mere diversions by the United States to avoid coming to grips with disarmament proper.

Sources of Difficulty

There are a good many factors to explain the American position, but unfortunately few of them are things that American spokesmen are anxious to talk about in public. The basic source of American difficulty is this: Both the Americans and Russians are pessimistic about what can actually be achieved in the way of disarmament and skeptical of the actual value of disarmament in lessening the risk of war. Therefore neither side feels it can really risk anything important in the hope that disarmament will really go forward and that it will be a useful step.

But the United States, completely aside from disarmament, is anxious to push the Russians into opening up their country to foreigners, which makes the United States delighted to urge measures of inspection and control, completely aside from their undoubted importance toward paving the way for progress on disarmament.

The Russian point of view, of course,

is completely the opposite. The Russians recognize that they have a strategic advantage in their closed society. They are deeply suspicious that the United States really is interested in controls and inspection in order to gather intelligence information, and their argument that the United States is more interested in espionage than in disarmament carries greater weight with the uncommitted nations as a result of the U-2 incident.

Cost of Armaments

The Russians argue that they want the West to agree to some specific commitments on disarmament and that they will then sit down and work out the necessary control arrangements. The Russians are spending roughly the same amount of money on arms as the United States. But since the Soviet national income is less than half that of the United States, this means the Russians are spending about 25 percent of their national income on arms against only about 10 percent for the United States. Arms, therefore, are a heavier burden on the Russians than on ourselves, and it is in the Russian interest, completely aside from the question of whether the kinds of disarmament achieved will actually reduce the likelihood of war, for the Russians to try for some sort of arrangement that will reduce this burden.

Controls

The United States is as suspicious of the Russians' proposals for an immediate start on disarmament as the Russians are of our proposals for a preliminary period in which both sides can gain experience in working out effective control systems. If nothing else, we suspect that the Russians, once they have gotten an American commitment on some disarmament measures, will then refuse to agree to acceptable controls. This would leave the United States in the position of either having to accept disarmament on Russian terms, with inadequate controls, or of disappointing the world by backing out of the disarmament agreement. Many Americans fear that this is exactly what is happening at the Geneva test ban talks.

What all of this amounts to is that with neither side having much optimism about the possibility of real and useful progress on disarmament; and with neither willing, for this reason, to take substantial risks in order to move toward disarmament, both sides have been putting forward proposals

which are essentially self-serving. The proposals of both sides can be easily accounted for simply in terms of national self-interest, completely divorced from the mutual interest of both sides in avoiding a nuclear war. The United States can justly claim to hold the more reasonable position on the broader and more important questions of world stability and lessening the chances of war, but on the question of disarmament proper neither side can lay much claim to a clear position of moral leadership.

Unfortunately for the United States, though, our self-interest leads us to talk mostly about controls, while the self-interest of the Soviet Union leads the Russians to talk mostly about immediate steps toward actual disarmament. As noted above, the Soviet talk of disarmament has a far greater emotional appeal than the American talk of stability and controls.

What is more, the basic tactical advantage of the Russians in terms of what national self-interest leads the two sides to propose is only the beginning of the source of American awkwardness on the disarmament problem. A summary of the principal remaining difficulties will appear in this space next week.

Pauling and the Senate Committee

Linus Pauling returned to Washington this week to answer the subpoena of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. Pauling, as he has always said he would, refused to give the committee the names of those who helped him gather signatures for his 1957 petition to ban nuclear testing.

At a press conference the day before the hearing Pauling appeared to be virtually challenging the committee to cite him for contempt. He said that those who opposed his views were trying to prepare the American people for nuclear war and that they wanted to continue the cold war, "to make billions of dollars in profits." He announced that he would not answer the committee's subpoena because the Supreme Court had not yet acted on his petition for a judgment on whether the committee had a right to demand the names, although lower courts had already ruled that his request was premature and Chief Justice Warren had declined to order a stay of the hearing. A few hours later, though, Pauling changed his mind and announced that he would

appear at the hearing after all.

The next morning, at the hearing, Thomas Dodd of Connecticut, the acting chairman, was the only Senator present. Dodd is a liberal Democrat on domestic economic issues. On foreign policy he is one of the most consistent critics of a policy of trying to negotiate agreements with the Russians, which places him in opposition to Kennedy, Nixon, and the great majority of the country's political leaders. He has been as wholly opposed to a test ban as Pauling is committed to it.

But the hearing was marked by restraint on both sides. Pauling made no remarks like those of the press conference the day before. Dodd consistently ruled in favor of Pauling and against subcommittee chief counsel Sourwine on a number of questions of what documents should or should not appear in the record. Dodd rebuked the committee staff for distributing a summary of Pauling's activities under the heading of "Communist and Communist front activities," ordering instead that it be headed merely "certain activities." After the hearing, Pauling told Dodd that he thought he had been fairly treated.

The hearing dragged on for nearly 4 hours after Pauling, at the very beginning of the questioning, had refused to supply the names on the legal grounds that to do so under the circumstances could hardly fail to inhibit people who might like to circulate future petitions on unpopular or controversial matters. The remainder of the hearing was devoted to questions from committee counsel Sourwine about Pauling's past associations and activities, none of which turned up anything that really justified the title the committee staff has given the hearings: Communist Infiltration and the Use of Pressure Groups.

The Supreme Court recently supported a position similar to Pauling's when it ruled unconstitutional a California law requiring that pamphlets and leaflets must bear the names of their authors and of those responsible for distributing them. The court ruled that the law would tend to inhibit the freedom of expression of unpopular opinions guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. But the courts grant special leeway to legislative investigating committees, so it is not clear that the courts will uphold Pauling's position if his request for a declaratory judgment is granted or if the committee should cite him for contempt and bring him to trial.—H. M.