

Comments and Communications

Psychological vs. Bacteriological Warfare

IT WAS with interest I noted in your issue of April 25 (*SCIENCE*, 115, 472 [1952]) that you reproduced the telegram which I had sent to President Detlev W. Bronk of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA and also his cable in reply.

It would no doubt interest your readers to know that I replied to Mr. Bronk's telegram on April 9, 1952. Unfortunately, I have so far received no answer to this second cable. I enclose a copy of my second communication to Mr. Bronk, trusting that you will wish to publish this later part of our correspondence in order to give your readers a full picture of the exchange of opinions which took place.

ISTVÁN RUSZNYÁK

*Hungarian Academy of Sciences
Budapest*

BUDAPEST, April 9, 1952

*Mr. Detlev W. Bronk
President of the National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, D. C.*

We have been shocked to see from your cable to me that those responsible for the conduct of affairs in your Academy have completely abandoned adherence to those fundamental principles that we consider mandatory for all scientists: to put aside prejudice and base conclusions upon a study of facts, to refuse to be intimidated, but courageously to struggle to attain the use of the fruits of science for the benefit of mankind.

The facts that incontrovertibly prove that the United States forces in Korea are waging bacteriological warfare are known to all who live in countries with an unfettered press. In these countries we have read the report of the delegation of the International Federation of Democratic Lawyers, we have seen the photographs taken in Korea, have read the joint declaration made by all the foreign press correspondents on the spot. We have the word of the president of the Academia Sinica and of a number of Hungarian doctors—reliable men of science who are in Korea. The World Peace Council has published the documents and films that set all these items of objective evidence beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Of all this it seems that those who live in a country where the press is in the hands of men who want war do not know. We cannot, however, in any way regard this lack of knowledge as proof that otherwise substantiated facts did not occur. Even you must know that the United States is the only major power on earth that has refused to ratify the Geneva convention that outlaws the use of bacteriological weapons and you, too, must have read some of the many bloodthirsty utterances made by your generals upon this subject. We must therefore regretfully conclude that you—deliberately or otherwise—base your opinions on considerations other than the substantiated facts. This conclusion is further borne out by your reference to the so-called International Committee of the Red Cross—in fact a Swiss national organisation—as “a neutral and independent body.” We Hungarian scientists base our opinions of this body, too, on the facts: on the fact

that the present chief representative of this organisation in Korea at that time declared that there was nothing wrong with the Nazi extermination camps, where some of our most talented colleagues were gassed or tortured to death, and on the fact that this very same committee some months ago, when called upon to investigate the atrocities perpetrated by the interventionist troops in Korea itself, declared it was not competent to conduct investigations into breaches of international law. It is precisely for this reason that the World Peace Council has now decided to set up a truly independent and neutral committee of investigation.

Mister President, I have shown at some length that the facts prove that you have either been grossly misled or stand too much in awe of one or other of the thought-control agencies that limit the freedom of thought in your country today, to base your judgments and actions on the truth instead of the unsubstantiated generalities of which your cable unfortunately contains so many. I nevertheless once more turn to you with my earnest request. I do so because not only the integrity of science but the lives of women and children, of the old and of the babes, are menaced. Once more, in the name of science and of humanity, I call upon you not to let prejudice blindfold you or terrorism gag you. Do not permit your stand to be dictated by the yellow press and the “Voice of America,” but make a scientifically thorough study of the documents issued by the World Peace Council, and when you have become convinced of their truth raise your voices in protest against the ghastly fact of bacteriological warfare in Korea and demand of your government that it ratify the Geneva convention of all civilised nations.

ISTVÁN RUSZNYÁK

President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

EDITORIAL NOTE: *The Editorial Board voted to publish the preceding correspondence and telegram on condition that Dr. Ruzsnyák publish the complete exchange of cablegrams in the official journal of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. To this stipulation he agreed in a letter dated August 25. He is correct in stating that his second cablegram was not answered, for the obvious reason that it merely repeats the unfounded charges contained in the first and rejects the proposal of a neutral investigation by casting aspersions at an agency—the International Red Cross—in which the Western democracies have confidence, and by bolstering allegations from “The World Peace Council,” a pure—and rather simple—Communist mouthpiece. The editors have studied “confessions” of two captured American airmen, released by “The World Peace Council,” and the point where their testimony stops and the Communist propaganda begins is as sharply defined as the period that ends this sentence. The flyers admitted they had been lectured on the methods of bacteriological warfare, and that they had flown on a mission on which they dropped “duds,” instead of live bombs behind enemy lines. Despite the official refusal of the USSR to support a demand for a neutral investigation of charges that have filtered through highly prejudiced media, some*

organizations are hesitant about dismissing them, as the ensuing item demonstrates:

The National Committees of Science for Peace and the Medical Association for the Prevention of War have jointly investigated the reports of biological warfare in Korea and North East China.

They have examined the bacteriological, entomological, and epidemiological reports submitted to them. These have undoubtedly been furnished by Chinese scientists of repute, some known personally to British scientists. While there is nothing to suggest that the bacteriological and entomological findings are not genuine, the reports of the investigations are incomplete and, taken by itself, the scientific evidence so far examined by the committees is inconclusive.

In view of the gravity of the charges, and of the circumstantial evidence available, the committees consider that the charge that biological warfare has been waged by American forces should be investigated by a commission of impartial persons expert in bacteriology, entomology, and epidemiology.

The committees will give all possible support to the formation of such a commission.

Resolution passed unanimously on 20th May, 1952.

A. H. GORDON

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Fluorometric Determination of N_1 -Methylniacinamide¹

HUFF and Perlzweig (1) have reported a sharp fluorometric determination of N_1 -methylniacinamide by treatment with alkaline acetone solution under specified condition. In this case, interference caused by kynurenine and 3-hydroxykynurenine can occur.

We have already pointed out (2) that the fluorescence caused by these compounds can be eliminated completely by successive purification with the strong-base-type anion exchange resin, Amberlite IRA-400, and we have now found that the fluorescence of N_1 -methylniacinamide treated with alkaline acetone reagent is intensified by pretreatment of the sample with alkaline-oxydol solution before Huff's alkaline acetone treatment.

This operation makes the analysis clear and sharp. We have also been able to determine both N_1 -methylniacinamide and niacinamide separately in the same sample by the use of the carboxylic-type cation exchange resin KH-4B, which absorbs N_1 -methylniacinamide but not niacinamide. The anionic impurities in an extract solution are adsorbed by filtration through Amberlite IRA-400-OH (hydroxide-type of Amberlite IRA-400) at pH 5, but niacinamide and N_1 -methylniacinamide are not adsorbed by such an operation. The cationic impurities and N_1 -methylniacinamide in extract solution are adsorbed by filtration through KH-4B-Na (sodium salt-type of KH-4B) at pH 5 completely, but niacinamide is not adsorbed by such an operation.

¹This work was supported in part by a grant from the Science Research Fund No. 4009, Ministry of Education. The authors are indebted to K. Nakamura, M. Fujiwara, H. Kikawa, and R. Oda.

By this method, the estimation of niacinamide and N_1 -methylniacinamide is performed without difficulty in the same sample, separately. And our alkali-oxydol pretreatment for the N_1 -methylniacinamide estimation provides an excellent way to determine the intensity of the fluorescence of N_1 -methylniacinamide treated with alkali acetone.

The new method of determining N_1 -methylniacinamide and niacinamide in the same sample by use of synthetic ion exchange resins as described above should be especially useful in the investigation of tryptophane metabolism.

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References

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- KATO, M., and SHIMIZU, H. *Science*, **114**, 12 (1951).

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The Road to Survival

I AM disappointed in Dr. Mather's statement (*SCIENCE*, **115**, 534 [1952]) that "it is war itself that is immoral, not the weapons used by warriors." Deadly weapons are a part of the environments that favor immoral acts. A case can be made for the view that diabolic weapons, those persons making them, and warriors using them both in practice and in actual attacks on people are as immoral as the war they help make by their thoughts and activities. Dr. Mather's statement implies that weapons and warriors are not among the causes of war. On the contrary, armaments and trained "killers," as our officials sometimes frankly call soldiers, are among the causes, not only of tensions that lead to war, but of deaths of large numbers of people in war. Any scientific program for the cure of war and the eradication of its causes will have to include an early removal of the tools of war and the cessation of training of men and women in immoral thoughts and acts. Nor can we civilians ignore our share of immoral decisions and activities, without which war and its preparations could not go on.

In order to win back the confidence of the world, scientists will have to demonstrate a new kind of manhood and womanhood, in which courage will stand alone without weapons of destruction, and in which humane feelings will brook neither postponement nor isolation.

FRANCIS D. HOLE

Madison, Wisconsin

CORRECTION: In the communication from me entitled "Science Teaching in the Secondary Schools" (*SCIENCE*, **116**, 261 [1952]), there is an error in the table on page 262: for "Political Science" read "Physical Science."

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