Reflections on Boris Pasternak, P. 4

Full Text: New Warning by East-West Scientists Who Met at Third Pugwash Nuclear Parley, Pages 2 & 3

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Why This Geneva Meeting May Be Mankind's Last Chance

The ancient Sanhedrin which met in the Temple at Jerusalem as the highest Rabbinic Court was made up of 71 learned men. Exactly the same number signed the manifesto with which the third Pugwash conference of nuclear scientists ended their meeting in September at Kitzbuhel, outside Vienna. This was a Sanhedrin of mankind's most learned and of some who are among its most wise. Bertrand Russell was there from England, Bhabha from India, Ogawa from Japan, Oliphant from Australia, Leopold Infeld from Poland, Topchiev from the Soviet Union and men like Linus Pauling and H. J. Muller from our own country. Nobel prize-winners were a commonplace among them. They transcended the current glowering divisions of the earth. The Western bloc, six Soviet States and the neutrals, including Yugoslavia, were represented. Yet the gravely considered warning which they issued at the end of their meeting has nowhere been made available to the general public. The newspapers, as full of chatter as a monkey cage, found no space for their conclusions; the meeting itself—made possible by the initiative and bounty of Cyrus Eaton—was barely noticed; indeed it was not quite respectable, since its sponsor, though a multi-millionaire capitalist, had rendered himself controversial by questioning an exalted figure, the head of our secret police, Mr. J. Edgar Hoover. It is a commentary on our times that a little paper like our own can have the honor of printing the text of the Pugwash declaration. We make it available here as our contribution to the success of the new parley opening (we hope) at Geneva the day after we go to press.

Big Brother Won't Like

The Pugwash declaration contains bad news. The arms race, as it picks up speed, passes one point of no return after another. The scientists warn that "a completely reliable system of controls for far-reaching nuclear disarmament" has become "extremely difficult, perhaps impossible." They warn that even though negotiation eliminated all nuclear weapons, the knowledge of how to make them remains "for all time, a potential threat to mankind." Should war come, any major industrial power could produce them within a year. The scientists regard the Pentagon dream of limited wars as a delusion. They see no alternative to peace. They see no substitute for the restoration of trust among men. They ask us to stop glorifying war and violence. They protest that science, harnessed everywhere to the arms race, has been diverted "from its true purpose." They call for an end of secrecy, and they affirm that science "can best serve mankind if it is free from interference by any dogma imposed from the outside, and if it exefcises its right to question all postulates, including its own." This—to which 16 Soviet bloc scientists appended their names—is not Marxism-Leninism; neither is it the milder plastic-packaged conformism of Madison Avenue; in our Orwellian world, these are words which Big Brother will not like on either side. But unless we can get people to heed these words soon, it will be too late. Thermonuclear war, reducing the remnants of mankind to a cancerous savagery, may come in our lifetime. Geneva may well be our last chance.

As before World War I and World War II, prolonged talks on disarmament are accompanied by a rising tempo of arms accumulation. This year's relatively successful negotiation toward a test ban has been accompanied by the highest level of testing yet reached; the Russians, by resuming, place supposed military over moral advantages just as we do, though both sides in this crazy contest already have more than enough monsters in stock to destroy the other. The General Staffs on both sides, now as before the other wars, work in covert and contrapuntal harmony to drown out the voices which plead the hard case of reason against the easy incitements of fear and hate. Every human being who cares must now do what he can to bring pressure on his own government. We must pressure ours at least as a starter to offer more at Geneva than a one-year ban on testing. This is no more than the quick breather required to try out new horrors, from bombs with dirtier fallout to devices so cute they can almost make the popgun nuclear, too.

Pot and Kettle Dept.

SECRETARY DULLES. I have a statement to read . . . Soviet insincerity has now been clearly exposed . . . Despite its professed concern for the effect of testing upon human health, the Soviet government has been testing at an intensive rate . . . This demonstrates the hollowness of these past Soviet expressions of concern. . . . The U. S. delegation is now on its way to Geneva. The Soviet attitude dims the chances of success . . .

Q. Mr. Secretary, what happens if word is received that the Soviets have exploded an atomic device after Oct. 31st? What effect will that have on U. S. policy or U. S. action?

A. Well, we would ourselves plan to resume testing. But the negotiations, so far as we are concerned, would go on . . .

Q. Mr. Secretary, to clarify one remark you made earlier, you said that we would continue to plan tests if the Russians did not suspend their tests on October 31st or thereafter, I think. Does that mean that if they don't have tests after October 31st that we will not then plan for any future tests?

A. We will not plan for future tests during the period that we proposed, the one-year period.

—Press Conference, October 28.

Full Text of Statement Issued By Famous Thinkers of East and West . . .

1. Necessity to End Wars

We met in Kitzbuhel and in Vienna at a time when it has become evident that the development of nuclear weapons makes it possible for man to destroy civilization and, indeed himself; the means of destruction are being made ever more efficient. The scientists attending our meetings have long been concerned with this development, and they are unanimous in the opinion that a full-scale nuclear war would be a world-wide catastrophe of unprecedented magnitude.

In our opinion defense against nuclear attack is very difficult. Unfounded faith in defensive measures may even contribute to an outbreak of war.

Although the nations may agree to eliminate nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction from the arsenals of the world, the knowledge of how to produce such weapons can never be destroyed. They remain for all time a potential threat for mankind. In any future major war, each belligerent state will feel not only free but compelled to undertake immediate production of nuclear weapons; for no state, when at war, can be sure that such steps are not being taken by the enemy. We believe that, in such a situation, a major industrial power would require less than one year to begin accumulating atomic weapons. From then on, the only restraint against their employment in war would be agreements not to use them, which were concluded in times of peace. The decisive power of nuclear weapons, however, would make the temptation to use them almost irresistible, particularly to leaders who are facing defeat. It appears therefore that atomic weapons are likely to be employed in any future major war with all their terrible consequences.

It is sometimes suggested that localized wars, with limited objectives, might still be fought without catastrophic consequences. History shows, however, that the risk of local conflicts growing into major wars is too great to be acceptable in the age of weapons of mass destruction. Mankind must therefore set itself the task of eliminating all wars, including local wars.

2. Requirements for Ending the Arms Race

The armaments race is the result of distrust between states; it also contributes to this distrust. Any step that mitigates the arms race, and leads to even small reductions in armaments and armed forces, on an equitable basis and subject to necessary control, is therefore desirable. We welcome all steps in this direction and, in particular, the recent agreement in Geneva between representatives of East and West about the feasibility of detecting test-explosions. As scientists, we take particular pleasure in the fact that this unanimous agreement, the first after a long series of unsuccessful international disarmament negotiations, was made possible by mutual understanding and a common objective approach by scientists from different countries. We note with satisfaction that the governments of the USA, USSR, and UK have approved the statements and the conclusion contained in the report of the technical experts. This is a significant success; we most earnestly hope that this approval will soon be followed by an international agreement leading to the cessation of all nuclear weapon tests and an effective system of control. This would be a first step toward the relaxation of international tension and the end of the arms race.

It is generally agreed that any agreement on disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament, requires measures of control to protect every part from possible evasion. Through their technical competence, scientists are well aware that effective control will in some cases by relatively easy, while it is very difficult in others. For example, the conference of experts in Geneva has agreed that the cessation of bomb tests could be monitored by a suitable network of detecting stations. On the other hand, it will be a technical problem of great difficulty to account fully for existing stocks of nuclear weapons and other means of mass destruction. An agreement to cease production of nuclear weapons presents a problem of intermediate technical difficulty between these two extreme examples.

We recognize that the accumulation of large stocks of nuclear weapons has made a completely reliable system of controls for far-reaching nuclear disarmament extremely difficult, perhaps impossible. For this disarmament to become possible, nations may have to depend, in addition to a practical degree of technical verification, on a combination of political agreements, of successful international security arrangements, and of experience of successful cooperation in various areas. Together, these can create the climax of mutual trust, which does not now exist, and an assurance that nations recognize the mutual political advantages of avoiding suspicion.

Recognizing the difficulties of the technological situation, scientists feel an obligation to impress on their peoples and on their governments the need for policies which will encourage international trust and reduce mutual apprehension. Mutual apprehensions cannot be reduced by assertions of good will; their reduction will require political adjustment and the establishment of active cooperation.

3. What War Would Mean

Our conclusions about the possible consequences of war have been supported by reports and papers submitted to our Conference. These documents indicate that if, in a future war, a substantial proportion of the nuclear weapons already manufactured were delivered against urban targets, most centres of civilization in the belligerent countries would be totally destroyed, and most of their populations killed. This would be true whether the bombs used derived most of their power from fusion reactions (so-called "clean" bombs) or principally from fission reactions (so-called "dirty" bombs). In addition to destroying major centres of population and industry, such bombs would also wreck the economy of the country attacked, through the destruction of vital means of distribution and communication.

Major states have already accumulated large stocks of "dirty" nuclear weapons; it appears that they are continuing to do so. From a strictly military point of view, dirty bombs have advantages in some situations; this makes likely their use in a major war.

The local fall-out resulting from extensive use of "dirty" bombs would cause the death of a large part of the population in the country attacked. Following their explosion in large numbers (each explosion equivalent to that of millions of tons of ordinary chemical explosive), radioactive fall-out would be distributed, not only over the territory to which they were delivered but, in varying intensity, over the rest of the earth's surface. Many millions of deaths would thus be produced, not only in belligerent but also in non-belligerent countries, by the acute effects of radiation.

There would be, further, substantial long-term radiation damage, to human and other organisms everywhere, from somatic effects such as leukemia, bone cancer, and shortening of the life span; and from genetic damage affecting the hereditary traits transmitted to the progeny.

Knowledge of human genetics is not yet sufficient to allow precise predictions of consequences likely to arise from the considerable increase in the rate of mutation which would ensue from unrestricted nuclear war. However, geneticists believe that they may well be serious for the future of a surviving world population.

It is sometimes suggested that in a future war, the use of nuclear weapons might be restricted to objectives such as military bases, troop concentrations, airfields, and other communication centres; and that attacks on large centres of population could thus be avoided.

Even tactical weapons now have a large radius of action; cities and towns are commonly closely associated with centres of supply and transportation. We, therefore, believe that even a "restricted" war would lead, despite attempted limitation of targets, to widespread devastation of the territory in which it took place, and to the destruction of much of its population. Further, an agreement not to use cities for military purposes, entered into in order to justify their immunity from attack, is unlikely to be maintained to the end of a war, particularly by the losing side. The latter would also be strongly tempted to use nuclear bombs against the population centres of the enemy, in the hope of breaking his will to continue the war.

4. Hazards of Bomb Tests

At our first conference it had been agreed that while the biological hazards of bomb tests may be small compared with similar hazards to which mankind is exposed from other sources, hazards from tests exist and should receive close and continued study. Since then, an extensive investigation by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of

. . . At Third Pugwash Nuclear Conference, Kitzbuhel, Austria, Sept. 14-21

Atomic Radiation has been carried out and its authoritative conclusions published. In this case, too, scientists from many different countries have been able to arrive at a unanimous agreement. Their conclusions confirm that the bomb tests produce a definite hazard and that they will claim a significant number of victims in present and following generations. Though the magnitude of the genetic damage appears to be relatively small compared with that produced by natural causes, the incidence of leukemia and bone cancer due to the radioactivity from test explosions may, in the estimate of the UN committee, add significantly to the natural incidence of these diseases. This conclusion depends on the assumption (not shared by all authorities in the field) that these effects can be produced even by the smallest amount of radiation. This uncertainty calls for extensive study and, in the meantime, for a prudent acceptance of the most pessimistic assumption. It lends emphasis to the generally agreed conclusion that all unnecessary exposure of mankind to radiation is undesirable and should be avoided.

It goes without saying that the biological damage from a war, in which many nuclear bombs would be used, would be incomparably larger than that from tests; the main immediate problem before mankind is thus the establishment of conditions that would eliminate war.

5. Science and International Cooperation

We believe that, as scientists, we have an important contribution to make toward establishing trust and cooperation among nations. Science is, by long tradition, an international undertaking. Scientists with different national allegiances easily find a common basis of understanding; they use the same concepts and the same methods; they work toward common intellectual goals, despite differences in philosophical, economic, or political views. The rapidly growing importance of science in the affairs of mankind increases the importance of the community of understanding.

The ability of scientists all over the world to understand one another, and to work together, is an excellent instrument for bridging the gap between nations and for uniting them around common aims. We believe that working together in every field where international cooperation proves possible makes an important contribution toward establishing an appreciation of the community of nations. It can contribute to the development of the climate of mutual trust, which is necessary for the resolution of political conflicts between nations, and which is an essential background to effective disarmament. We hope scientists everywhere will recognize their responsibility, to mankind and to their own nations, to contribute thought, time, and energy to the furthering of international cooperation.

Several international scientific undertakings have already had considerable success. We mention only the century-old, world-wide cooperation in weather science, the two International Polar Years which preceded (by seventy-five and twenty-five years respectively) the present International Geophysical Year, and the Atoms-for-Peace Conferences. We earnestly hope that efforts will be made to initiate similar collaboration in other fields of study. Certainly they will have the enthusiastic support of scientists all over the world.

We call for an increase in the unrestricted flow of scientific information among nations, and for a wide exchange of scientists. We believe that nations which build their national security on secrecy of scientific developments sacrifice the interests of peace, and of the progress of science, for temporary advantages. It is our belief that science can best serve mankind if it is free from interference by any dogma imposed from the outside, and if it exercises its right to question all postulates, including its own.

In our time, pure and applied science have become increasingly interdependent. The achievements of fundamental, experimental and theoretical science are more and more rapidly transformed into new technological developments. This accelerated trend is manifest, alike in the creation of weapons of increased destructiveness, and in the development of means for the increased wealth and well-being of mankind. We believe that the tradition of mutual understanding and of international cooperation, which have long existed in fundamental science, can and should be extended to many fields of technology. The International Atomic Energy Agency, for example, aims not merely at cooperation for establishing facts about atomic energy, but also at helping the nations of the world to develop a new source of energy as a basis for the improvement of their material welfare. We believe that international cooperation in this and other fields, such as economic development and the promotion of health, should be greatly strengthened.

The extremely low level of living in the industrially underdeveloped countries of the world is and will remain a source of international tension. We see an urgent need to forward studies and programs for the effective industralization of these countries. This would not only improve the level of living of the majority of the population of the world; it would also help reduce the sources of conflict between the highly industrialized powers. Such studies would offer fruitful scope for cooperative efforts between scientists of all nations.

The great increase in the ease and speed of communications, and our increasing understanding of how the forces of nature influence the living conditions of nations in different parts of the world, show us, in a way not previously possible, the extent to which the prosperity of individual nations is connected with, and dependent upon, that of mankind as a whole; and how rapidly it could be increased by common international effort. We believe that through such common effort, the coexistence between nations of different social and economic structure can become not merely peaceful and competitive, but to an increasing degree cooperative, and therefore more stable.

As scientists, we are deeply aware of the great change in the condition of mankind which has been brought about by the modern development and application of science. Given peace, mankind stands at the beginning of a great scientific age. Science can provide mankind with an ever-increasing understanding of the forces of nature, and the means of harnessing them. This will bring about a great increase in the well-being, health, and prosperity of all men.

6. The Responsibility of Scientists

We believe it to be a responsibility of scientists in all countries to contribute to the education of the peoples by spreading among them a wide understanding of the dangers and potentialities offered by the unprecedented growth of science. We appeal to our colleagues everywhere to contribute to this effort, both through enlightenment of adult populations, and through education of the coming generations. In particular, education should stress improvement of all forms of human relations and should eliminate any glorification of war and violence.

Scientists are, because of their special knowledge, well equipped for early awareness of the dangers and the promise arising from scientific discoveries. Hence, they have a special competence and a special responsibility in relation to the most pressing problems of our times.

In the present conditions of distrust between nations, and of the race for military supremacy which arises from it, all branches of science—physics, chemistry, biology, psychology — have become increasingly involved in military developments. In the eyes of the people of many countries, science has become associated with the development of weapons. Scientists are either admired for their contribution to national security, or damned for having brought mankind into jeopardy by their invention of weapons of mass destruction. The increasing material support which science now enjoys in many countries is mainly due to its importance, direct or indirect, to the military strength of the nation and to its degree of success in the arms race. This diverts science from its true purpose, which is to increase human knowledge, and to promote man's mastery over the forces of nature for the benefit of all.

We deplore the conditions which lead to this situation, and appeal to all peoples and their governments to establish conditions of lasting and stable peace.

U.S. Signers: **Prof. Harrison Brown, Dean David Cavers, Prof. Charles Coryell, Prof. William Davidon, Prof. Bernard Feld, Prof. Bentley Glass, Prof. Morton Grodzins, Dr. David Hill, Dr. Martin Kaplan, Prof. H. J. Muller, Prof. Jay Orear, Dr. Harry Palevsky, Prof. Linus Pauling, Prof. Eugene Rabinowitch, Prof. Frederick Seitz, Prof. Walter Selove, Prof. Leo Szilard, Dr. Alvin Weinberg, Prof. Victor Weisskopf, Prof. Eugene Wigner.**

We Applaud Russia's Critics and They Honor Ours, But Both Ostracize Their Dr. Zhivagos

The Test of Our Society's Freedom Is How We Treat Our Own Pasternaks

I read Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* with joy and admiration. In its sensitive pages one is back in the wonderful world of the Nineteenth Century Russian novelists. He is a fine writer, and a brave man; there are passages which, read against the background of Soviet realities, are of a sublime courage.

But I find myself more and more annoyed by the chorus of Pasternak's admirers in this country. I do not remember that *Life Magazine,* which glorifies Pasternak, ever showed itself any different from the *Pravda-Kommunist* crowd in dealing with our own Pasternaks. I do not recall that *Life* defended Howard Fast for receiving the Stalin award or deplored the venomous political hostility which drove Charlie Chaplin and more recently Paul Robeson into exile.

The Humiliation of Arthur Miller

Only a few years ago Arthur Miller, an American writer much less critical of our society than Pasternak is of his was summoned before the House Un-American Activities Committee, submitted to humiliating interrogation, and threatened covertly with perjury charges unless he recanted past political views.

Even today the one movie house in Washington which has revived the old Chaplin classics runs an apologetic note in its advertising.

It is easier for a critic of capitalism and the cold war to live in this country than for a critic of communism to live in Russia. But an unofficial blacklist still bars some of our best artists and actors and directors in Hollywood and from radio-TV work.

The closest analogue to Pasternak is Howard Fast, and until he broke with the Communists he was forced to publish his own books. All of us who are more or less heretical in our society are forced to live on its margin, grateful that we are able to speak (at the cost of abnormal exertions) to a small audience.

Pasternak has universal meaning, for he embodies the fight the artist and the seeker after truth must wage everywhere against official dogma and conformist pressures. Not a few of our intellectuals in Hollywood and elsewhere on their psychoanalyst's couch may say the very words Pasternak puts into the mouth of Dr. Zhivago.

Words Which Apply to Us As Well As Russia

"The great majority of us," he protests, "are required to live a life of constant, systematic duplicity. Your health is bound to be affected if, day after day, you say the opposite of what you feel, if you grovel before what you dislike and rejoice at what brings you nothing but misfortune. Our nervous system isn't just a fiction, it's a part of our physical body, and our soul exists in space and is inside us, like the teeth in our mouth. It can't be forever violated with impunity."

In another passage Dr. Zhivago tells his beloved, "The main misfortune, the root of all evil to come, was the loss of confidence in the value of one's own opinion. People imagined it was out of date to follow their own moral sense, that they must all sing in chorus, and live by other people's notions, notions that were being crammed down everybody's throat." This applies equally to present-day America.

If The Kremlin Were Wise

Unlike Ehrenbourg's pedestrian *The Thaw* and Dudinstev's wooden *Not by Bread Alone,* the other protest novels of the post-Stalin period, *Doctor Zhivago* is a work of art. Giving it the Nobel prize was a political act in the best sense of the word, for it put world pressure behind the struggle of Russia's writers for greater freedom. If the masters of the Kremlin were wise they would have let Pasternak go to Stockholm and they would publish his book in Russian; such magnanimity and the book's complete negativism about the revolution would have been a telling answer to its thesis and their critics. Bigness, obviously, is beyond them.

Whatever their folly, let us examine the mote in our own eye and remember that an American Pasternak who accepted a Soviet prize would be hauled up before the Un-American Activities Committee and blacklisted in Hollywood and on Madison Avenue. And few, *very few,* of those who are now praising Pasternak would then say one word in defense of the right to a free conscience.

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