

Time for Union of the Free

By HAROLD C. UREY

WITH THE Baruch proposals, we have engaged in an experiment in international political control of the atomic bomb, and today it seems to me that we should realize that that experiment is a failure. That is my conclusion, and it has been my conclusion for some time. Moreover, I believe the time is growing short and that alternative proposals and actions should be undertaken at once.

Many speculations can be made as to the reasons for the stand of the U.S.S.R. and its satellite Poland on the Baruch plan. None of us really knows what the reasons are, but I offer my own personal guesses. Probably the U.S.S.R. could not admit free inspection of the Soviet Union. Such inspection would probably learn that the Soviet Union is very weak from a military standpoint, and hence the possibility of Russia's continuing its immense bluff in the international poker game would be destroyed. Moreover, inspectors would probably learn that there are large numbers of political prisoners in Russia, perhaps as many as the reported 14 million, living in the prison camps. This would produce a very unfavorable reaction in the Western democracies if reported by an international inspection service.

Moreover, the subjects of the Russian dictatorship themselves would learn of the greatly advanced economic and social position of the peoples of the Western countries, and hence would become dissatisfied with the experiment of Communism, and hence the Communist dictatorship itself would be threatened. No doubt the leaders of the U.S.S.R. sincerely believe that they can improve the physical well-being of the people of their country by the government and economic structure which they have set up, and so they wish to maintain this experiment in Communism and will resist its destruction in every way they can.

Perhaps the most important objection to the Baruch proposals stems from the belief on the part of the government of

Atomic scientist tells why he would shift from Baruch proposal to this alternative.

the U.S.S.R. that the organization proposed and supported overwhelmingly by the Western democracies would result in economic and military domination of the Soviet Union.

These are plausible reasons why the Soviet Union can never admit international inspectors of the kind we believe are necessary. But regardless of whether these suggested reasons are the correct ones or not, it is highly improbable, it seems to me, that the U.S.S.R. will agree to the essentials of the Baruch proposals, and I believe it to be true also that the United States Senate will accept nothing except what is essentially included in the Baruch proposals. Whatever the reasons, the impasse is complete and probably permanent, for a number of years at least.

If these conclusions are correct, it is necessary to consider alternatives. Many are saying that we must secure agree-

The scientists were the first to see that atomic energy would demand new techniques of political control. No one has followed the discussion of these techniques with greater concern of mind and heart than Dr. Urey who now discusses not the ideal, but the practical, solution in this article adapted from the June issue of Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. Dr. Urey is a Nobel Prize Winner and was recently elected to the Royal Society of London. He is Distinguished Service Professor of Chemistry and a member of the Institute for Nuclear Studies at the University of Chicago. Formerly editor of the Journal of Chemical Physics (1933-40), Dr. Urey now does most of his article writing for magazines in his professional field.

ment along the lines of the Acheson-Lilienthal plan. I believe this statement is completely incorrect. To say that we must secure agreement is like saying that the tides must not rise.

There are others who believe that we should continue negotiations along the present lines because the time has not yet arrived when atomic bombs can be produced by other countries. Again, no one knows just how long it will be until atomic bombs can be produced. I myself have felt that they might be produced within ten years after Hiroshima, or perhaps less. Others believe that it will be at least ten years and probably longer. But we do not know whether it would be possible to convince the U.S.S.R. of the correctness of our propositions within that time or not. Perhaps we could.

U.N. Not Enough

But while this process of education through negotiations is going on, other groups in the U. S. and other countries will begin to formulate alternatives; they are likely to secure adherence to those alternatives, and they may not be the most desirable ones. In fact, it would seem that there is an alternative course of action growing in the U. S. now, consisting of purely military alliances such as existed in Europe before World War I, and at times it seems that this trend may be so powerful that it may be too late to suggest more constructive courses of action. The time limit on securing a solution to the problem is the time that we have before other alternatives are proposed and set irresistibly in motion.

What should be the alternative? I believe that there is no real solution to the atomic bomb problem except the complete solution of the problem of war. This has been stated by a great number of people in high official position and in responsible private positions. If another war comes, atomic bombs are almost certain to be used because of their decisive character, and therefore instead

of considering the limited objective of the control of atomic energy, we should consider the solution of the problem of war.

There are many causes for war, but there has never been but one cure for war, and that is the setting up, over all the possible warring groups, of a governmental structure such that it can settle by peaceful means the quarrels and disagreements that arise. Thus, it is my conclusion that only world government can prevent war in the future. Even this will not exclude the possibility of serious civil war, but civil wars are less probable than international wars.

What is world government? The United Nations does not represent a

But in order to be clear, let us repeat this.

A world government must have a certain limited sovereignty, and in this region of activities it makes the final decision from which there is no appeal. Then it must have some properly constituted organization that can make laws, an executive body that can enforce them, and courts that can make decisions when laws are violated. It must have taxation to support itself, for he who pays the piper calls the tune. Moreover, a government must have direct access to its citizens—i.e., it must make laws for its citizens, and enforce them directly upon its citizens. This relationship was discussed in this country in 1787, and its effectiveness has been demonstrated

making laws or regulations, and considerable executive powers. Very soon it would have been necessary for it to set up courts of some kind to adjudicate violations of these regulations, and in some way or other it would have been necessary for it to finance itself.

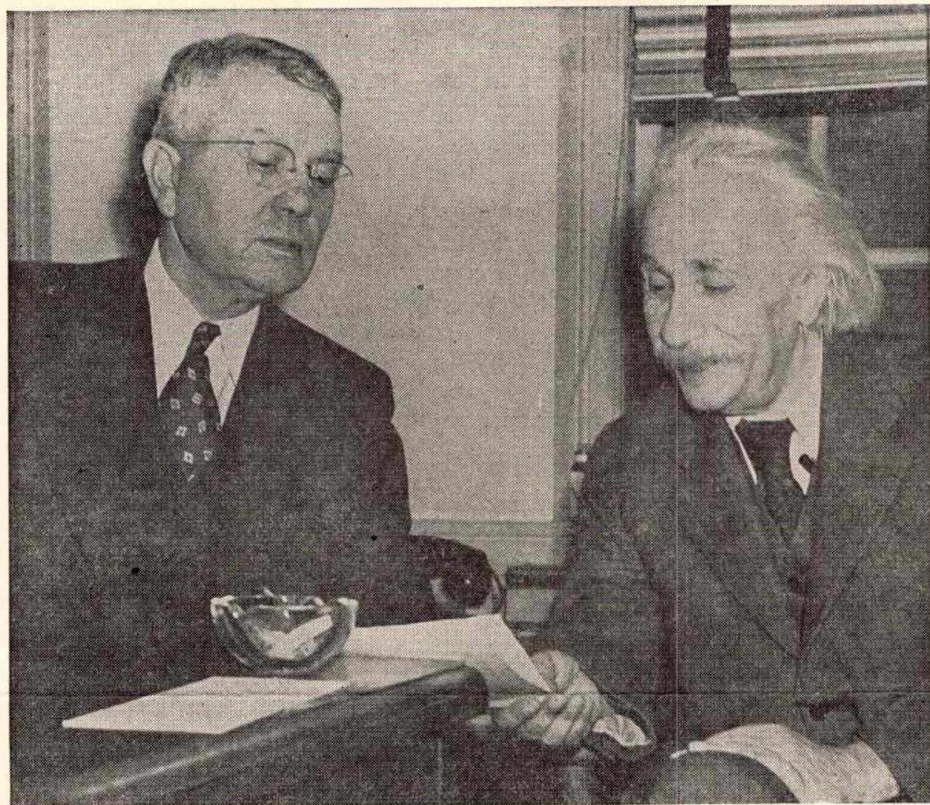
In spite of many misgivings in regard to the Baruch proposals, I supported them throughout the negotiations in the U. N. because I believed that they might grow into a properly constructed organization if sincere cooperation could be secured, and because I believed that it was a test of the sentiments of the world as to the possibility of a world government. If the countries of the world would approach the Baruch proposals in a constructive fashion, then it would be my conclusion that probably they would also approach the idea of world government in a constructive fashion. And if they should refuse any free and constructive approach to the Baruch proposals, then it seems that they would also refuse to approach the problem of world government in a constructive and cooperative fashion.

For Bill of Rights Union

If countries were disposed to view the world government problem constructively, it was very easy for them to make the proposal that we proceed to a general solution through world government. The U.S.S.R. and Poland made no such suggestions, and therefore I believe that a world government including Russia and her satellites, as well as the western democracies, is not possible. Temporarily, at least, an all-embracing world government cannot be secured.

It is therefore necessary to consider limited alternatives. As matters stand, the world is divided into two groups, the U.S.S.R. on the one hand and the U.S.A. on the other, together with a considerable number of countries in various parts of the world, but particularly in Western Europe, that are in the tragic position of lying between these two centers of power.

My proposal is that we set up a federal union of as many countries of the world as possible. I believe that a substantial area of agreement exists between the Western democracies. Their governmental structures, while disagreeing in details, are in an overwhelming degree similar to each other. We are very



—Press Association

Einstein initiated U. S. war work on atom; Urey led in making it a success.

government. It is analogous to the organization of this country under the Articles of Confederation between 1781 and 1789. It has no sovereignty. It has no proper governmental organization. There is no way of making laws or of enforcing them. It has no way of supporting itself except by passing the cup to 54 nations. To state what the U. N. is not is to state in a negative way what a world government should be.

by the success of our own federal government, as well as of others, since that time.

The Baruch proposals, if they had been carried through and had been further studied and expanded, would have constituted a limited world government. The proposals included the assignment of a very limited sovereignty to the Atomic Development Authority. This Authority would have had the power of

proud of our Bill of Rights, but that Bill of Rights is now practised, and has been practised for many years, by many other countries of Western Europe. Even the casual visitor to England, France, the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland will recognize that such is the case. Freedom of speech, of religion, the right of trial when accused of offenses, are all part of the tradition of these countries. Moreover, their governmental structure consists of parliaments, executive departments, and well-established courts, just as our own does. We may remark that these are all in marked contrast to what we find in the totalitarian countries.

In addition to a common governmental pattern, there has been marked intellectual association between these countries and our own and other countries distributed around the globe. The differences in language are no barrier. Surely the problems of the U. N. are not due to a language barrier. Translation is easy and can be made rapidly, and the faults of distribution of information do not lie in these fields.

A federal union such as is proposed here should be set up as a true government with a sovereignty limited to certain definite fields—the war departments and foreign offices, and probably also economic transactions between the divisions of the union, though at the present time the most important immediate problem is the question of war. Such a government should also have the power to support itself by taxation, so that it is not dependent upon appropriations from member countries.

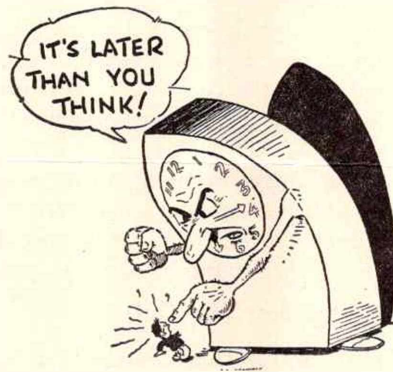
Unbalance of Power Needed

What would be the effects of such a limited world government, in which the word "limited" must be applied to the word "world" as well as to the word "government"? In the first place, it would produce a distinct unbalance of power, with an enormous advantage on the side of the democracies. I am not interested in balance of power, for it inevitably leads to war. I am interested in a distinct unbalance of power, so that the initiative is on our side.

If a federal union included only the British Commonwealth and the U. S., for example, there would be an enormous strength in our military and industrial potential. Such a concentration of

power on our side would keep the initiative in this terrible game of world politics in our hands, and if our government, in the sense of our federal limited world government, did not follow the lines that we as citizens thought it should, we might be able to influence it in our favor. If, on the other hand, the other side should acquire a dominant world position, we would have no influence on the course of world events.

If we had a powerful federal union



side by side with another powerful federal union such as the U.S.S.R., then the weaker of the two could hardly attack, and the stronger of the two would not need to, and some years of peace might be secured during which a number of things might happen on the favorable side.

Another effect of this union would be to strengthen the democratic elements in all the countries of the world. The situation of democratically inclined people in Europe at the present time is tragic. They live in fear for their very lives, for if totalitarianism spreads over Europe they will be exterminated. Hence on the part of each individual person there is a strong tendency to join that party or group which might make his record acceptable when the totalitarian power takes over. A strong democratic power in the world that had in it the possibility of adding other countries to it would strengthen the position of democratically inclined people and give them hope, and thus strengthen the democratic elements in the direction of favorable action toward our union.

Many people fear the spread of totalitarian ideas from Russia to the West. Such a strong union would give the best possible guarantee of forcing the wave of totalitarianism toward the East in

Europe. In fact, it is my personal belief that the totalitarian wave would move eastward immediately if such a strong group were organized. And in the end it might completely change the governmental and social structure of Russia itself in the direction of human freedom.

Objections to this federal union will be raised. One of the first is that Russia would not like the proposal. I admit that she would not, but I do not care much whether she likes it or not if we can keep our own political behavior proper and correct, by which I mean no military attack on Russia. Such an attack would be disastrous to this country, to the peoples of Western Europe, and to Russia herself, and cannot be made without losing a very substantial fraction of our individual freedom, and acquiring a very substantial degree of totalitarianism ourselves.

But regardless of whether the Soviet Union likes it or not, her actions will remain substantially the same. Countries act not on the basis of their likes and dislikes of what other people do. They act primarily on the basis of what they believe is good for their own peoples within the limitations of what they can do. Russia, even with atomic bombs, would certainly hesitate before she undertook any violent action against such a federal union. She would probably modify her foreign policy to prevent an armed conflict that would be so disastrous to her.

Any Solution May Lead to War

Others object to this proposal because they say it will lead to war by the most direct route. It might; the probability may be better than 50 per cent, but I maintain that any other alternative which seems at all possible at present also has an enormous risk of leading to war. For example, the present policy of the U. S. government in Greece and Turkey, with its possible extension to other fields, carries with it great probability of eventual war. And if this so-called Truman Doctrine is not followed, and if a policy of do-nothing and vacillation is followed, I think it will in all probability also lead to war. And neither the Truman Doctrine nor the vacillating doctrine has within it any constructive potential whatever.

The proposal made here does have a constructive objective—namely, the es-

establishment of law and order in at least part of the world at once, and with it the possibility of extending law and order over the rest of the world in the future. By merely supporting any sort of government in Greece and Turkey as long as they are against Communism, we arrive at a purely negative solution with no constructive end, so far as I can see.

Plan Keeps Atomic Secret

It is such alternatives that will be taken by various groups in this country and abroad that must always be compared with the proposal presented here. It is useless to compare this limited alternative with some idealistic solution which we all would like to have—that is, a broadly democratic world government over the whole surface of the globe, if this ideal solution cannot be secured, as I am convinced it cannot, in time to be useful in the present situation.

Other objections to this proposal are made on the ground that we would lose our atomic secrets, and of course our military secrets. I think it is not necessary to argue this point with scientists, for they all realize that our secrets are of a very temporary character and are not as important as a proper, all-embracing idea to which our whole line of action can be tied in a constructive fashion. The secrets of the atomic bomb will be acquired by other people in time in any case. But just to be specific, let us look at the situation as it exists at present. There are people in England, France, Denmark, who know a great deal about our atomic secrets. We have no control over their actions by any legal methods.

My proposal would replace this situation by a much more constructive one. We would not give the atomic secrets to France, to England, to Holland, any more than we give our present secrets to the State of Illinois. There might be citizens of other countries who would know these secrets, but if so, they would be controlled by law just as are the citizens of the State of Illinois at present. We would replace the situation in which we have no legal control over people who know atomic bomb secrets with one in which some sort of control would be set up, and thus, from the standpoint of military secrets, the situation would be improved. Of course, the more people who know atomic energy secrets or oth-

er military secrets, the more likely we are to have leaks of such information, but if some loss of information does occur, this would not be as important in a military way as the greatly increased military strength of such a federal union.

Today we are engaged in a contest for human freedom. During the last war we crushed one type of totalitarian tyranny in a military sense, but the ideological fight has not been won, for we cannot eliminate ideas by physical means and yet maintain freedom of thought. Only better and more inspiring ideas can be used to fight tyrannical ideas. The greatly increased physical strength to be secured from the course of action proposed here would make possible the furthering of constructive ideas without the great danger of trying to do so by the imposition of totalitarian control over the thoughts of our own people and the people of other countries.

Union—the Best Way Out

Many people are afraid that a world government, even of the partial kind proposed here, would become tyrannical. This is a danger that we always face no matter what our government structure may be. It is not particularly encouraging to observe the anti-Communist actions that are proposed by the President of the United States under present circumstances. It is easily possible that these anti-Communist actions with respect to members of our federal government will extend within a rela-

tively short time to other groups of citizens. I can even imagine that it would in time include anyone who had subscribed to the New Deal, in spite of the overwhelming majorities that were given to President Roosevelt in four elections.

The possibility of tyranny always exists, and there can be no security against this except vigilance. But tyranny will come to all of us as a result of the threat of modern war, and particularly because of the atomic bomb and the airplane, regardless of any governmental structure that we set up or do not set up. It is necessary in this case to take our chances, and I repeat, the price of freedom is vigilance.

I present these ideas on world government and ask only that they be weighed in terms of the possible alternatives that are available. I believe that it is unrealistic to say that we must secure agreement along the lines that we are at present following. It may not be possible to secure agreement along those lines because we are not able to convince other people that they should be followed, and I believe that we cannot convince the U.S.S.R. at present that these should be followed. If this premise is accepted, then what line of action should be recommended at present?

It is my belief that the line of action proposed here — creation of a federal union — is the best of the possible alternatives that have any chance of acceptance by the Western democracies in this present situation.

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