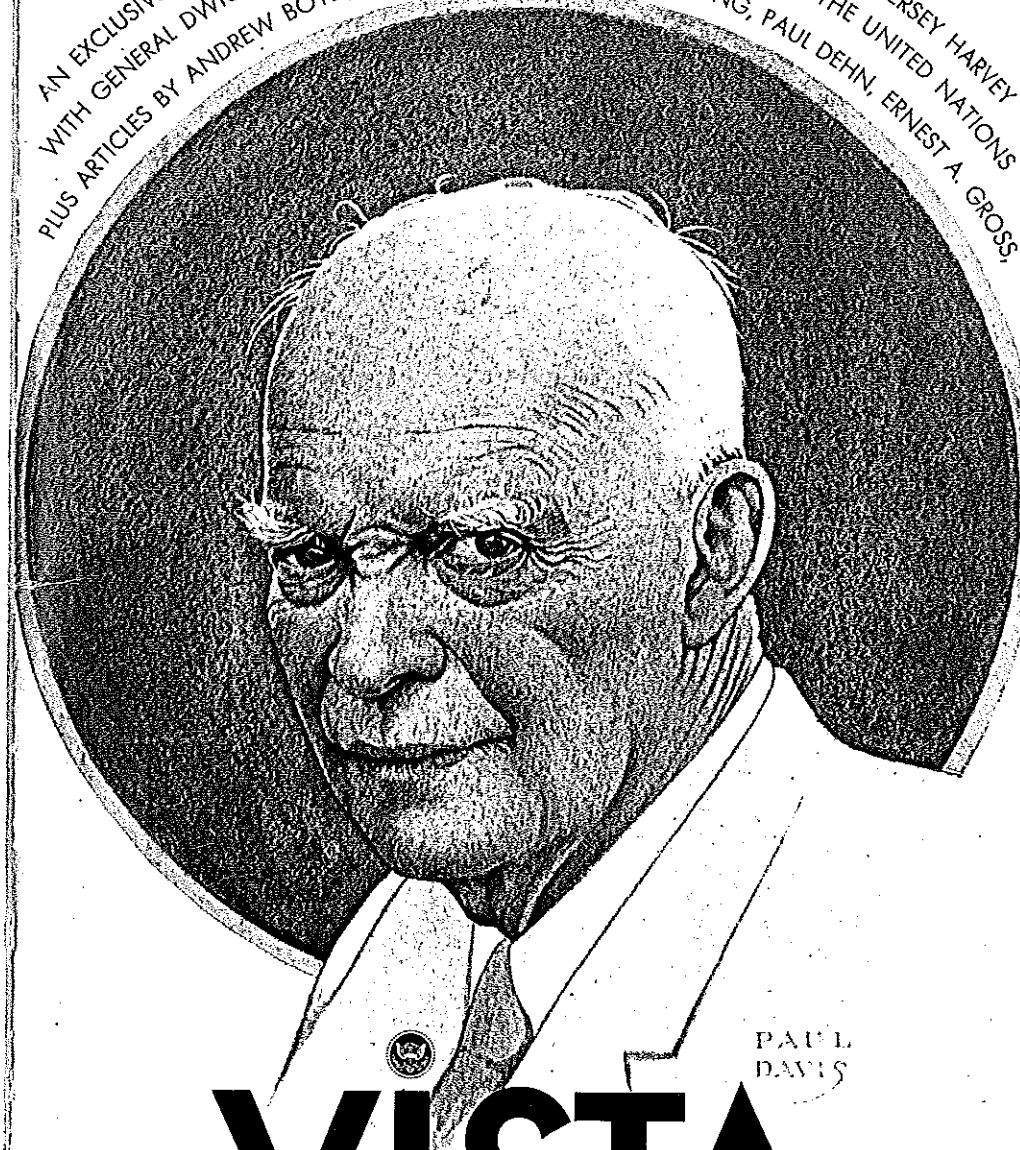


AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
WITH GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER — OF WAR AND PEACE AND THE UNITED NATIONS
PLUS ARTICLES BY ANDREW BOYD, TRISTRAM COFFIN, BERN KEATING, PAUL DEHN, ERNEST A. GROSS,
BY MARY KERSEY HARVEY



VISTA

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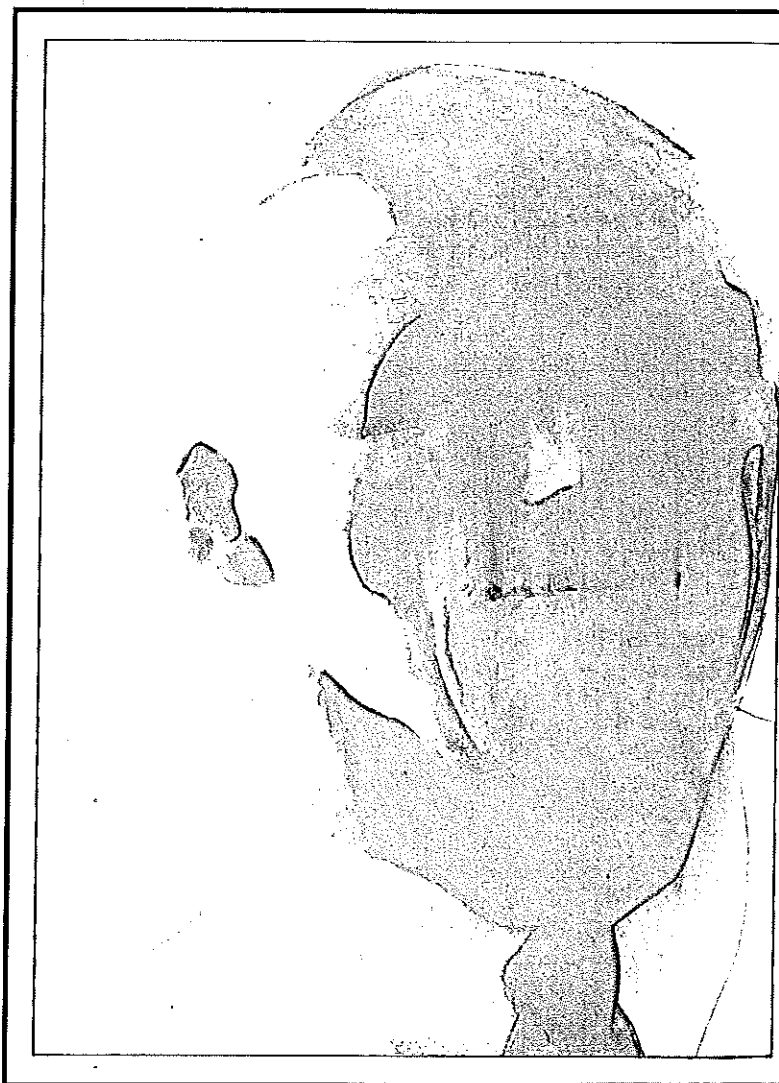
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Some Thoughts on the Mood of Scientists

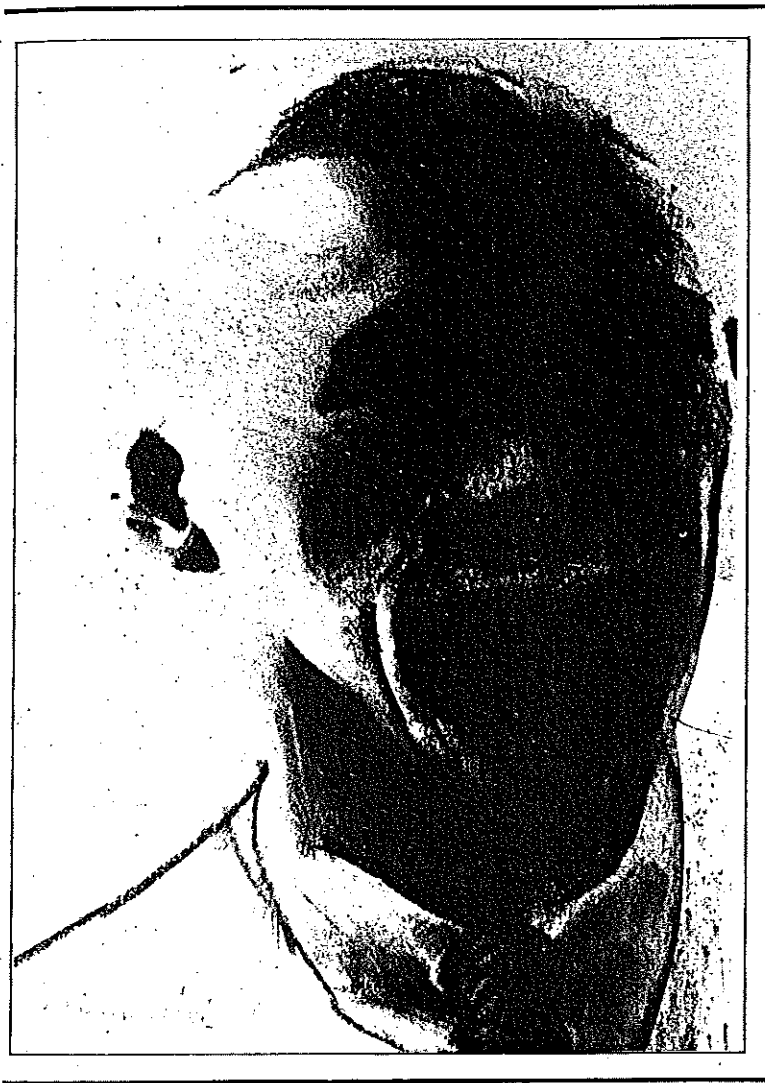
by Robert H. Socolow



ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN MANDEL

Twenty-two years have passed since the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Physicists have a great deal to do with build-

ing atom bombs. I am a physicist and I feel a strong obligation to speak out about some of the moods of scientists today.



Robert H. Socolow is a member of the Physics Department of Yale University.

Rarely can you find a scientist working harder than he wants to, or working on a problem that he does not find interesting. The scientist, along with the artist and along with other individuals seriously at work, is a free man while he is working, whatever the nature of the society in which he resides. It is therefore a legitimate question to ask *why* the scientist has chosen the work he is doing.

This question is inevitable when we seek to understand the behavior of the scientists who designed and built the atomic bomb during World War II in this country. Nearly all of the leaders of this project had been active in a very different kind of enterprise before the war. They had participated in a period which I am inclined to call the Golden Age of Pure Physics. During this period, from about 1905-1935, the laws of relativity and quantum mechanics were discovered and the first quantitative understanding of the atomic world was achieved. J. Robert Oppenheimer who became the director of the project in Los Alamos, New Mexico is an example of the scientists who made major contributions to pure research in the 1930s, and who abandoned pure research for the bomb project. These men, at the outbreak of the war, set aside the universal, humanistic goals of the Golden Age, and accepted the national, political goals of wartime. What prompted these men, who had been joyfully occupied in the private satisfactions of pure research before the war broke out, to

turn to the development of new and devastating weapons of war?

To be sure, there were private, selfish reasons for these decisions, which cannot be minimized: the nuclear weapons project was where the action was, and where the good company was. There were guaranteed to be challenging, tough problems to solve that would test a man's mettle. And if the project succeeded, there would be glory and fame for those who worked on it. But equally important motives of these scientists were social and political. As Oppenheimer explained, looking back in November 1945: "There was... the great concern that our enemy might develop these weapons before we did, and the feeling—that without atomic weapons it might be... an incredibly long thing to win the war... And there was..., and I think rightly, the feeling that there was probably no place in the world where the development of atomic weapons would have a better chance of leading to a reasonable solution, and a smaller chance of leading to disaster, than within the United States."

The mood of anxiety and patriotism proved to be just as productive of scientific results as the mood of relaxed adventure and internationalism had been in the pre-War period. The bomb was built about as quickly as possible; no serious mistakes were made. By contrast, another social mood enveloped the scientists who remained in Hitler's Germany. In Germany, there was a lack of spirit

and imagination among Hitler's nuclear physicists, fortunately for all of us. One can draw the conclusion, I think, that science will prosper if scientists have their hearts in their work, whatever their motives.

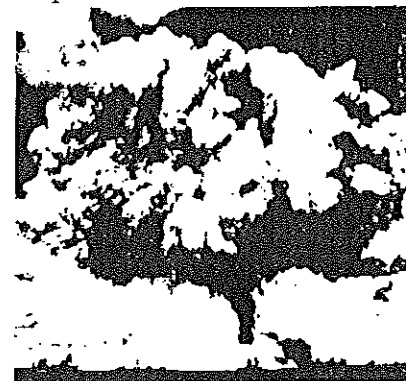
The relation of Western scientists to society was permanently changed by the atom bomb. Society would never again be so oblivious to the scientists in their midst. With this attention came an enormous increase in the scale of science. And with this attention, also, came a mood of social responsibility and accountability among many of the scientists here in America.

However, we now find ourselves in a period when the mood of scientists no longer means just the mood of American scientists, or even the mood of scientists from the developed countries of the world. Science is now an enterprise carried out around the world, and we must take into account the moods of the scientists from what is sometimes called the Third World, in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The enterprise of science is now more vigorously and consciously international than ever before, including the period between the World Wars which I described earlier. For many scientists, and I include myself among them, the opportunity to affirm the principle of international cooperation in one's daily work represents one of the major rewards of a career in science. On the fourth floor in

Gibbs Laboratory at Yale where I work, there are offices of a Brazilian, a Turk, a Japanese, a Swiss, a Pakistani, and two Israelis. The Department of Physics now has 26 graduate students from 15 foreign countries. Yale's Department of Physics is a witness to the feasibility of a world in which disparate peoples live together at peace.

A personal story symbolizes for me the promise of science. Last summer I spent a week in Hungary at a conference in my field of specialization, high energy physics. I met a North Vietnamese physicist there, who had been trained in Hanoi and was working in the Soviet Union on precisely the same questions that were concerning me at that time. He had checked all of the results in a paper of mine, in connection with a monograph which he was preparing. I had also read some of his papers. Out of such a bond came the trust which made us eager to discuss the Vietnam War with one another, carefully and openly. We spoke for several days in a row, and we were surprised to see how little divided



The Mood of Scientists

us, once the trust was there. He was returning to North Vietnam later that summer, to visit his mother who had been evacuated from Hanoi to a small village; he would have to get to the village by bicycle, traveling at night, for reasons which all of us know.

But to describe such a warm and symbolically promising interaction between a scientist of the West and a scientist from a country new to the scientific tradition is, unfortunately, not to give a very balanced view of these relationships. For there is another kind of interaction between scientists from the Third World and the society of the West which I feel obliged to describe at this time. In fact, one of the main reasons that I felt compelled to write this article is because I want to warn about a particular spirit among many young physicists from foreign countries. I believe this spirit is new, and it should sober us all. Consider one graduate student who had just finished my course in mathematical physics. He comes from a country which does not yet possess nuclear weapons, and he intends to help his Government produce atom bombs—so that, as he says, they will no longer be pushed around by Americans. Consider a former Arab student who will willingly use his expertise on nuclear weapon development in the Egyptian desert, if Israel initiates an atomic arms program. Consider a faculty member of another top-notch institution, a Latin American who walked out quietly when

President Johnson arrived to address a physics meeting in Washington.

I hope no one supposes that the answer is to stop letting foreign physicists into the American universities, to learn and teach physics. No such head-in-the-sand solutions are sensible, and foreign scientists who want to build nuclear weapons for their countries can stay at home and learn everything they need to know from books.

I do not find the nationalism of the young scientists from the Third World alarming by itself. I am full of admiration for the scientist who returns to his own country to develop its scientific standing at the sacrifice of personal comfort and professional stimulation. But we must understand that the form which their nationalism takes is determined in no small way by the policies of the major powers in the world today, particularly by the policies of our own country. Today, English is the international language of science. The new countries are imitating our science and much of our culture. They will also imitate our values. It is in our hands to determine whether the physicists from the new countries express their nationalism by imitating the Oppenheimer who strove to build up the level of physics in American universities in the 1930s or the Oppenheimer who headed the Los Alamos bomb project in the war years.

At this time, my impression is that our policies are pushing more and more foreign scientists to imi-

tate the Oppenheimer of the war years. They are experiencing the kind of change of mood that came over the Western scientists who committed themselves to our atom bomb project twenty-five years ago. Our influence is, to be sure, not the only influence on these men. In Asia, one can imagine that the present policies of China are as serious a factor in their thinking as anything we do. But, of course, one can also regard the Chinese bomb project as itself a response to our muscle, and a foretaste of what lies ahead.

Our policies have their legacy in the minds of the foreign students in our country. The daily attacks by our bombers and fighter planes in Vietnam are carrying a message which, around the world, is being read to say: "*We* got the goods, so *you* gotta do what we like." The foreign students respond viscerally to that message. Their attitude is that in order not to be forced to do what *we* want, *they* have to get the goods. Their reactions are no less frightening because they are understandable.

Is it too late? I am an optimist. I don't think it is ever too late. But I think I know the price of reversing these moods, and I want to know how many of us are willing to pay it. As Oppenheimer said in that same speech in 1945 which I quoted from earlier: "Only /by/ a profound revision of what it is that constitutes a thing worth fighting for and a thing worth living for can this crisis be met." We must in other words develop a toleration

for other styles of living and a generosity of spirit when confronted with styles that seem unnatural to us. People around the world must be convinced that they are going to be allowed to decide their futures for themselves.

It is always difficult to be a strong man. Simply by our appearance of strength, we are regarded as a threat to those less strong. Now that we have already used our muscular bulk to bully others, it is going to be that much more difficult to disavow our reputation, because we cannot repudiate our strength itself, only our abuse of that strength. Since 1945, there is not very much evidence that we, as Americans, have understood that this self-control is what we must demand of ourselves in order to bring about a world which does not grow steadily more dangerous.

Let me summarize. I have tried to show that scientists are productive and effective, thereby changing the societies in which they live, whenever they care about what they are doing. Their goals usually include social goals, and these social goals are often chauvinistic. The chauvinism of scientists, in turn, can either be directed toward putting their country on the map, or toward wiping their enemy off it. Today, the young scientists are unusually sensitive to the behavior of our own country and the example it sets. We must work for the re-appearance of toleration and generosity and the abandonment of the use of wanton force in our country's foreign policy.