

October 12, 1945
TASS Digest, 'The Mexican Press about Byrnes'
Statement; etc.'

Citation:

"TASS Digest, 'The Mexican Press about Byrnes' Statement; etc.", October 12, 1945, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 97, ll. 49-60. Contributed by Sergey Radchenko and translated by Gary Goldberg.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/134691>

Summary:

Excerpts from articles on James Byrnes, General Mark W. Clark, Clement Attlee, and US refusal to share technical information about the atomic bomb.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

12 October 1945 TASS Secret

THE MEXICAN PRESS ABOUT BYRNES' STATEMENT

RG.IN.51[3]. MEXICO [CITY], 8 October (TASS). Jorge de Pallares, diplomatic observer of the newspaper La Prensa, commenting on the recent statements of Byrnes, writes, "It is hard to defend the assertions that the governments of Bulgaria, Romania, and other countries cannot be recognized by Washington since they do not represent the will of the people. There is full recognition of governments which undoubtedly are harsher dictatorships and which hid under the protection of the armed forces of totalitarian states such as Italy and Germany.

How can they in the Kremlin understand the words of Mr. Byrnes seriously if along with his refusal to recognize the regime in Sofia as the government he keeps an ambassador of the first rank with the government in Madrid?...Evidently, there is a difference between a government which peacefully enjoys the support of the Russians and a government imposed by Mussolini and Hitler with the aid of aerial bombardment. It is completely obvious that recognition of this Spanish government by the great democratic powers has created serious obstacles in the peace talks and had dealt a fatal blow to the sound intention which was expressed in speeches worthy of praise".

ARRIVAL OF GENERAL CLARK IN NEW YORK

GB.IN.345. NEW YORK, 11 October (TASS). As the United Press agency reports, General Clark, Commanding General of the American Forces in Austria, arrived in New York from Paris for 10 days. General Clark will consult with the War Department. Clark declared that the occupation forces of the Red Army in Austria are cooperating with the Americans. The condition of transportation in Austria has improved and the food situation has become much better.

ATLEE'S STATEMENT ABOUT GERMAN LOSSES

ZN.IN.108211 LONDON, 11 October. As the Reuters agency transmits, Prime Minister Attlee declared in the House of Commons on 11 October that, according to available information, the total losses of the German armed forces in killed, wounded, and casualties between 1 September 1939 and 10 May 1945 were 7,400,000 men.

DISCUSSION OF A BILL ABOUT ATOMIC ENERGY BY THE US CONGRESS

TM.IN.3344,3287,3307,3288,3291.3309.3295.3310.3318.3304.3293. NEW YORK, 9 October (TASS) The New York press has still not commented on Truman's statement of 8 October that the US does not intend to communicate the technical methods of producing atomic bombs to other countries. Among the first comments received is an article of the Washington newspaper, Evening Star, which sharply criticized this statement, pointing out that it was not well thought-out and that possibly changes and explanations would be required later. In the newspaper's words, Truman "obviously" is calculating that the Western democracies are seeking mutual understanding and good relations with Russia. Then it is possible to explain his unexpected statement which almost indisputably will be interpreted as an attempt to put pressure on the Russians, that "probably will provoke their indignation...We can be confident that the Russians will get to work to create an atomic bomb with redoubled energy. The majority of scientists think that the Russians will eventually achieve success, which the President himself does not deny. Then we will be confronted with a competition in atomic weapons and will even be deprived of the consolation of knowing that we tried to find any other solution to the problem. If Truman has said the last word in the country's name then the prospects are poor. Evidently, hope will need to be abandoned of creating definite international control which would provide the US with an opportunity to communicate the secret of the

atomic bomb without risk.

Harvard University astronomer Professor Shapley spoke at a 9 October joint meeting of a Senate Commerce subcommission and the Military Affairs Commission. His statement showed that he, too, does not agree with Truman. In Shapley's words, the main scientific research achievements should become common property, "and in some cases, for example, in the present case about atomic energy, I consider it inadvisable to conceal the main information which might be for the good of the whole world for any significant period". As Shapley said, the US should agree with the principle that scientists are citizens of the whole world and serve the future of all mankind. "But the future - if it should be safe for civilization - should lead to a reduction of national interests and an increase of international responsibility...Our scientific achievements, provided they do not serve the defense of the country, should be published right now for everyone who can make use of this information, and we should expect that the scientists of other countries will respond in the same way. Scientists and many other people with whom I have talked hope that in the future our foreign and domestic policy will be mainly based not on the good and bad traditions of the past, but on the kaleidoscopic and unavoidable achievements in the future".

Responding to questions of members of Congress, Shapley declared that the Soviet Union is thoroughly familiar with the technical and theoretical secrets of the atomic bomb. In his words, the Soviet Union and Germany have considerable information and "it is inadvisable" to discuss the question of keeping this information secret. "We should not deceive ourselves, thinking that we can ensure our security with the aid of keeping secret the results" of the achievements. Shapley declared that he has been familiar with the scientific work of the Soviet Union for many years, but during a recent trip to this country he was especially struck by the Soviet Union's interest in science. Shapley stressed that Soviet scientists have complete freedom and called the progress of the Soviet Union in the field of theoretical and scientific research work "outstanding". He noted that the Soviet Union might be equal to any country in the field of applied mathematics, but in the field of pure mathematics it has almost caught up to the US. Thus, in his statement, although he also supports the same bills about government support of scientific research work, Shapley expressed views distinct from the statement made on 8 October by Langmuir, Assistant Director of the General Electric Company's scientific research laboratories, who evidently wanted to scare members of Congress with reports about Soviet science.

After the 8 October commission meeting statements with slanderous intent were fanned that the Soviet Union might overtake the US in the field of scientific achievements in 20 years and that it might create a sufficient quantity of atomic bomb to destroy everything in the US. According to a report of a correspondent of the newspaper New York Herald Tribune in Washington Langmuir declared, "If we cannot advance further at a time when Russia's progress scientific research work progresses, then international control will never be created. If the atomic bomb ends up in the Russians' hands and our country does not seek further achievements, then Russia will rather destroy us and put an end to this question than take upon itself the labor of holding negotiations".

Another prominent scientist, Nobel Laureate Compton, who headed the so-called "Metallurgical Laboratory [raboty v oblasti metallurgii]" at the University of Chicago, an important field of work on the atomic bomb, giving a speech at the Chamber of Commerce in Chicago on 8 October, declared that the US has many secret technical methods "and I see no grounds for revealing these secrets without getting corresponding valuable information in exchange. However, it is completely mistaken to suppose that keeping this information secret will significantly delay the progress of a determined competitor in the matter of creating an atomic bomb". Then Compton declared that, "It will require five years for any country (except Britain, which has already achieved considerable results) to get the ability to use atomic means to wage

war, but considering the natural delays in connection with the tests and perfection we can name 1955 as a possible date when we can live in peace armed with atomic means, only if no agreements about this question are signed by this time". Compton declared that atomic energy will unavoidably lead to the creation of an international government and "if we have sufficient intelligence we can take immediate steps to form this government through an international agreement, and not wait for a Third World War, which would be distinguished by exceptional destructiveness, determines the world's rulers".

At a time when debates continued on the question of the importance of the atomic bomb on an international scale on 8 October Congress began to consider a bill about the creation of a government commission to have full control over the development of atomic energy. The creation of this commission was recently proposed by Truman. The Military Affairs Commission of the House of Representatives has begun to consider the bill; however Secretary Patterson and the leader of the work to create the atomic bomb Major General Groves spoke at the meeting. Patterson, demanding approval of the bill, declared that "even military victory seems insignificant compared to the important question of the full use and reasonable control of atomic energy. If we do not correctly use the information which we have at the present time, or in the future we do not work with maximum energy in the field of scientific research, then it is possible that we will hand down a death sentence to the future of our country and the whole world". In Groves' words, at the present time three fields have been chosen to carry out scientific research work in connection with atomic energy: 1) the development of atomic energy as a source of energy, 2) the use of atomic energy in the creation of a weapon ("this question can be regulated by international agreements which might be reached in the future"), and 3) the use of atomic energy in medicine, chemistry, and physics. Groves also insisted that Congress approve the bill which, in his words, considers "the importance of maintaining the US lead in the field of scientific progress". In reply to a question from members of Congress, how much time will the Soviet Union need to create an atomic bomb, Groves declared that any such country will need from 5 to 20 years to achieve what the US has already achieved. In Groves' words, the difficulties which other countries experience do not relate to the scientific, but to the industrial field. The period of time required for another country to create an atomic bomb is partly determined by whether secrecy is abolished, since some needed equipment can be produced only in the US or, possibly, in Switzerland. However, if another country tries to buy such equipment, then this will mean an abandonment of secrecy. Groves declared that the very fact of the use of the bomb revealed the biggest secret. At the present time the most important secret is in the art and the capability of American workers and leaders since the theoretical basis is well-known to the world's leading scientists and, given time and considerable resources, other countries can master the technical methods of purifying metals, the means of employing dangerous compounds, etc. In Groves' opinion, the US is basically familiar with the achievements of other countries and knows exactly the degree of progress achieved by Germany and Japan, which were far behind the US. In reply to the question, has any progress been made in the matter of creating a defense against the atomic bomb, Groves declared that he cannot provide information about this, but that the US "is not sleeping".

During Patterson's and Groves' statements some members of Congress declared that they oppose the US revealing the "secrets" of the atomic bomb. The Republican Johnson (from the state of California), a member of the House of Representatives, declared that the proposed law in no way inhibits the President from "entering into negotiations in several months and bartering away this secret". In similar manner member of the House of Representatives Thomason (from the state of Texas) pointed out that according to the bill the President, and not Congress, receives the right to make a final decision on whether to report information about atomic energy to other countries. He demanded an amendment be made to the bill prohibiting the transfer of such information.

The bill, which is supported by the government and which was submitted for

consideration of the House of Representatives on 3 October by Democrat May, a member of the House of Representatives (from the state of Kentucky), and for the consideration of the Senate by Democratic Senator Johnston (from the state of Colorado), grants the commission the right on the question of atomic energy to give permission to any person or governmental organization to use the resources under the commission's control for research work or the development of atomic energy. However, the bill prohibits granting such permission "to a foreign government or person outside US jurisdiction" without the permission of the President of the United States. The bill begins with a definition of policy, and notes the need for supervision and monitoring of the future development and exploitation of atomic energy for the good of the entire country. "This declares that US policy is directed at controlling all sources of this energy, is exercised by the commission created in accordance with this law, and that any activity connected with research work in the field of the transformation of atomic energy, splitting the atom, and obtaining atomic energy should be conducted in the interests of the country and international peace under the supervision and observation of the commission. The basic goals of all the measures undertaken in accordance with this law should be directed at ensuring national security and the defense of the residents of the US, at protecting peace, and continuing the accumulation of information about atomic energy". According to the bill, the President should appoint with the Senate's approval nine members of the Atomic Energy Commission for a period of nine years each. The commission should be entrusted with complete observation and monitoring "of all sources of atomic energy and all questions connected with the research work" on atomic energy. "When carrying out its functions" the commission should pursue a policy of minimal interference in private research work and use other government institutions, educational and research institutions, and private initiative to the maximum in accordance with the goals set by law". According to the bill, the commission also acquires control over all reserves of thorium, uranium, and uranium ore in the US, and also over the materials and property of the organization to create an atomic bomb in wartime (the so-called "Manhattan Technical District"). The bill gives the commission broad powers in the area of the acquisition and confiscation of mineral deposits directly needed to obtain atomic energy, and requires that persons living in the US report their possession [nalichie] of such materials, technical information, patents, etc. relating to atomic energy. The commission is given the right to pursue or permit the conduct of research work on atomic energy. A maximum prison sentence of 10 years and a fine of \$100,000 is imposed for violation of the law or the rules established by the commission with the exception of cases of persons communicating about the acquisition of atomic energy to those not having the right to have this information and with the intention to create a threat to the interests of the US, for which a maximum of 30 years of imprisonment and a fine of \$300,000 is imposed. Some members of Congress think the last conditions are insufficient. According to a report of a United Press correspondent from Washington, when submitting the above bill for the consideration of the Senate, Senator Johnson declared that it was necessary to set a stricter punishment. "I think that any person who reports any secret concerning atomic energy should be taken before a court for an accusation of treason and he should be given the death sentence".

STRIKE AT THE FIAT PLANT IN TURIN

VB.IN.3189. ROME, 11 October (TASS). The newspaper Unita reports that a spontaneous strike began at the Fiat plant in Mirafiori (Turin) on 10 October as a sign of protest against an order of American Colonel [Fiope], the regional commissar of AMGOT [American Military Government for Occupied Territories] in the Piedmont, who ordered the Committee of National Liberation and the Turin organizations of political parties to clean the premises they occupy. A representative of the Communist Party in the Committee of National Liberation of the Fiat plant together with a group of Communist Party members tried to persuade the workers to resume work. Representatives of other parties limited themselves to the adoption of resolutions condemning the strike.

The ANSA agency reports another version of the events at the Fiat plant, asserting that the protest strike was "imposed" by the Communists. "In the words of ANSA, the labor exchange [palata truda], the Socialist Workers, the Christian Democrats, members of the Action Party, and the liberals, did not support the strike".

The monarchist newspaper Italia Nuova, speculating on the complicated relations between the AMGOT authorities and the working masses of Northern Italy, hastened to report today that the postponement of the handover of the northern provinces to Italian administration was caused by the "behavior" of the local committees of national liberation who are allegedly "recently striving to step up their activity with all their might, unceremoniously ascribing to themselves the functions of absolute power, and standing above the civil administration". These "discoveries" of the monarchist newspaper are presented under the headline, "Provocative maneuvers in the North: the Committees of National Liberation against the allied authorities".

12 October 1945 TASS Secret

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ABOUT THEIR TRIP TO EUROPE

TA.IN.3393.3373.3385.3381. WASHINGTON, 10 October (TASS). Seven members of the House of Representatives Commission on Postwar Economic Policy, returning from a trip to Europe, made statements to representatives of the press in which they called upon the US to refrain from offering a loan to the Soviet Union "until the following questions are clarified: 1) what will the Soviet Union's policy be with regard to the use of the industry under their control for the production of weapons, what part of Russian industry will produce military materials, and what quantity the Soviet Union actually needs. 2) statistical information about Russian industry in all its vast ranges should be reported. 3) the Russians should perform their political obligations, including with regard to the withdrawal of troops from occupied countries in accordance with the Potsdam and Yalta agreements. 4) the terms of trade agreements between the Soviet Union and its satellite neighbors should be reported so that the United States can work out policy with regard to these countries on this basis. 5) the activity of the administration to aid these countries does not have a political nature, and this does not allow Russia to ship out materials to itself which the UNRRA or United States has to then replace".

In addition, the Committee thinks that "full freedom for each of our correspondents and the protection of our rights to distribute books, magazines, newspapers, and films in the countries of Eastern Europe controlled by Russia should be a condition of aid to these countries". Besides this, the Commission of the House of Representatives proposes that the Soviet Union pursue an open door policy which would allow a free exchange of information to be implemented just like the US pursues with respect to all of its international friends". The Commission also calls for the elimination of trade barriers which have a ruinous effect on American commerce.

In the Commission's opinion, it is necessary to "restore Germany, of course, with the exception of weapons, so that Germany is again able to play a role in American and world commerce".

According to the Committee's assertion, the liquidation of excess American property abroad should be reorganized so that it can "ensure the means to help unfortunate people and at the same time contribute dollars to Americans".

Democrat Colmer, the Chairman of the Commission) from the state of Mississippi), declared that the Commission will submit its recommendations to Congress in the next 10 days and will meet with Truman and Byrnes. According to Colmer's statement

“as a result of the trip to Europe the entire group thinks that the United States ought to take a firmer position during discussions with European leaders”. Colmer heartily approved the position with Byrnes took at the London Conference. Noting that the United States had lost half a million men and had acquired a military debt of over \$25 billion, Colmer asserted that the US is not demanding territorial acquisitions and reparations like the Soviet Union, Britain, and France, and therefore, “we think that the US is right to expect the sincere support of our allies in arms in the matter of restoring and maintaining worldwide peace as the only compensation”.

The Commission of the House of Representatives visited the Soviet Union, Britain, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iran, Egypt, Greece, and Italy. Commission members met with Stalin, Attlee, Eisenhower, Pope Pius, General Clay, Ambassadors Winant and Harriman, and also with Secretary of State Byrnes.

The Commission suggests that the State Department come to agreement about concessions by the Allied countries as at least partial payment for Lend Lease, for example, with respect to the rights of air navigation and bases, the rights to raw materials, and the construction of American embassy buildings.

In Colmer’s words, the reconstruction of Germany “is a very important project in the matter of a healthy economy in the very near future”. In his words, Eisenhower’s plan for the demilitarization of Germany is being successfully carried out and Germany is ceasing to be a military threat. Colmer criticized the fact “that the Russians are shipping out all the German industrial enterprises from the zones they occupy, regardless of the nature of these enterprises”. Colmer says that this “might destroy Germany’s capacity to provide for itself and, thus place a heavy burden on the Western allies”. In his words, Germany needs transportation equipment, medical service, and food. Colmer is convinced that keeping a part of German civilian industry has vital importance for the peacetime economy.

In his words, offering large loans to Britain “should depend on how much Britain abandons its policy in the area of trade, which in the past was harmful from the point of view of American interests. Colmer insisted that the US restore the property rights to the maximum possible quantity of materials sent via Lend Lease so that the US increases the number of workers in places dealing with the liquidation of goods and equipment, and so that the equipment that the United States gives to the UNRRA is mainly from this surplus. “Before every loan request from other countries it is necessary for these countries to first show their readiness to use those capabilities which are being granted them in accordance with the decisions adopted at Bretton Woods, and also by the Export-Import Bank”. A loan should first be accompanied by assurances that the countries receiving the loan has developed a firm financial policy”.

Besides Colmer, the Committee included Democrat Zimmerman (from the state of Missouri), Republican Wolverton (from the state of New Jersey), Republican Hope (from the state of Kansas), Republican Wolcott (from the state of Michigan), Republican Le Fevre (from the state of New York), and Republican Simpson (from the state of Illinois).

[date missing] October 1945 TASS Secret

THE “TIMES” ON CONTROL OF THE ATOMIC BOMB

KP.MA.3923. LONDON, 9 October (TASS). An editorial was published in an early edition of the Times entitled “Peace and the Atom”. The article commented on Truman’s message to Congress about the atomic bomb. Truman, writes the Times, is naturally concerned firstly that a power having such incalculable possibilities to bring good and harm, be put under reliable control. There should be no objections about his

decision to collect all the national echelons of control over the atomic bomb in the government's hands. The British government is obviously going in the same direction, writes the Times. "Domestic control over the exploitation of atomic energy in the US and Britain", continues the Times, "can only be the first, albeit necessary, step in the path to limiting its use on an international scale so that nations are not subjected to the temptation to use it for purposes of destruction and collective suicide".

It is impossible to prevent other nations from getting the secret of the atomic bomb. Even if one makes participation in possession of this secret dependent on giving guarantees which other nations might find incompatible with their self-respect this would be ineffective and could only cause hostility between those countries which will be armed with the same weapon in the near future. Control over the last and most lethal weapon with full and open participation of the main governments of the United Nations should occupy a proper place as part (where it is the most important part) of control over all kinds of weapons. This control cannot be separated from the overall work in the planning of peace and the halting of wars. At the present time this responsibility rests on the same shoulders in the Security Council, an organization designed by the United Nations in accordance with the intentions of the powers.

Scientists themselves, writes the Times in conclusion, "demand that there be no exceptional rights to their revelation and that the benefit brought by it be shared unconditionally and without delay".