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The Scientists Must Speak Up

THE problem of the effects of H-bomb explosions is terribly disturbing, but I do not think that a conference of scientists is what is needed to deal with it. There are too many conferences in the world today and too many decisions taken by them.

What the world should do is to listen to the warnings of individual scientists who understand this terrible problem. That is what would impress people and give them understanding and make them realize the danger in which we find ourselves.

Just look at the influence Einstein has, because of the anguish he shows in face of the atomic bomb.

It must be the scientists, who comprehend thoroughly all the issues and the dangers involved, who speak to the world, as many as possible of them, all telling humanity the truth in speeches and articles.

If they all raised their voices, each one feeling himself impelled to tell the terrible truth, they would be listened to, for then humanity would understand that the issues were grave.

If you and Alexander Hadlow [who has pleaded for a United Nations conference of scientists on the H-bomb] can manage to persuade them to put before

mankind the thoughts by which they themselves are obsessed, then there will be some hope of stopping these horrible explosions and of bringing pressure to bear on the men who govern.

But the scientists must speak up. Only they have the authority to state that we can no longer take on ourselves the responsibility for these experiments; only they can say it.

There you have my opinion. I give it to you with anguish in my heart, anguish which holds me from day to day.

With my best wishes and in the hope that those who must advise us will make themselves heard.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER

This letter appeared originally in the London Daily Herald and is reprinted here with Dr. Schweitzer's permission. It also was reproduced in the Saturday Review for 17 July at the suggestion of Eugene Exman, who is Dr. Schweitzer's American editor. Dr. Schweitzer currently is dividing his time between his home in Gunsbach, Alsace, France, and his hospital in Lambaréné, French Equatorial Africa.

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