

DDP ARIZONA NEWSLETTER **Doctors for Disaster Preparedness**

Nov. 1986 (vol. 3, #1) 1601 N. Tucson Blvd. #9, Tucson, AZ 85716 c 1986 J Orient

NUCLEAR WINTER THEORY MELTS DOWN; DOCTORS MARCH

The nuclear winter hypothesis lies a 'moulderin' in its scientific grave, but its myth goes marching on.

Scientists at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, using a 3 dimensional model of the atmosphere, concluded that "the global apocalyptic conclusions of the initial nuclear winter hypothesis can now be relegated to a vanishingly low level of probability" (Thompson SL, Schneider SH, Foreign Affairs, Summer, 1986).

In the realm of actual events, as opposed to computer simulations, wildfires devastated a vast area of Siberia in the summer of 1915, burning not only timber but peat to a depth of 2 m. These fires could easily have produced 100×10^{12} g of smoke (the "threshold" calculated for nuclear winter). The temperature did drop 2 degrees below freezing one night at the end of August, not an unusual occurrence in Siberia, and the harvest was delayed by 10 to 15 days (Seitz, Nature 323:116-117, 1986). However, no global effects were noted. Turco (the first author on the "nuclear winter" paper, Science 222:1283, 1983) is said to have responded to this inconvenient observation by burying 1 million sq km of real estate between the review copy and the published text of the report of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE). He simply reduced the area burned by a factor of 10, although the initial estimate had been made by the USSR Academy of Sciences on the basis of contemporary sources (Seitz, The National Interest, Fall, 1986).

Soviet scientist V. Aleksandrov, who had conceded the tentative nature of the nuclear winter conclusions, disappeared from public view in March, 1985. A year later, his wife started to receive a widow's pension. Harsh comments by American scientists met the spike, never even reaching the newspaper morgue. To give just one example, George Rathjens of MIT, president of the Council for a Livable World, said: "Nuclear Winter is the worst example of the misrepresentation of science to the public in my memory."

Myths are hard to dispel, since most readers of Parade don't consult the scientific journals. Neither, apparently, do some prestigious physicians. As late as Oct. 2, 1986, Alexander Leaf wrote in the New England Journal of Medicine: "we have been hearing debates, not about whether a 'nuclear winter' would occur, but about how many tens of degrees the temperature would fall and for how long." Marching in Las Vegas to the tune piped by media manipulator Carl Sagan, several members of the Tucson chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility were arrested. Among them was Pima County Public Health Director Patricia Nolan, who believes, correctly, that the nuclear issue is a public health issue, striking as it does at the foundations of crisis management. Dr. Nolan lectures to our medical students about her deliberate decision not to update the Tucson evacuation plan. In effect, she risks the burial of preventable casualties, because of an apocalyptic myth.

ARE YOU sitting ON THE SIDELINES, WHILE THE MARCHERS FRAME THE ISSUES? If you believe in substituting media hype for science, DON'T apply for membership in DDP. Otherwise, write DDP, PO Box 1057, Starke, FL 32091. Membership includes a subscription to the Journal of Civil Defense and the quarterly newsletter Triage. Membership is \$100 (sponsoring), \$40 (doctoral), \$30 (associate), \$15 (student).

Name _____ Degree _____
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WORLD SURVIVAL ASSURED; FREEDOM IN JEOPARDY

"There is no question about the end of the world, or the end of life, or the end of mankind," said Edward Teller, at the annual meeting of DDP and TACDA (The American Civil Defense Association) in Dallas, October 17-21. Teller is confident of world survival, but queries whether we stand at the threshold of a new dark age.

Teller is hopeful that there will be no nuclear war. "However, there is a concrete possibility that the Kremlin will rule the world and that possibility may have become inevitable by the year 2000," he said. The Strategic Defense Initiative, which he prefers to call the Strategic Defense Response (because of the Soviet lead in deploying defenses), will be crucial to the outcome.

Two other former citizens of Soviet bloc countries commented on the Soviet threat: Dr. Petr Beckmann, native of Czechoslovakia, and Dr. Yuri Tuvim, a Soviet emigre.

Beckmann stated that it was not possible to negotiate with the Soviet Union. "Unlike the Mafia, they cannot be counted upon to act consistently in their own self interest."

Yuri Tuvim felt that it was quite possible to negotiate with the Soviets, but that all agreements needed to be linked with human rights (an issue deliberately avoided by groups such as International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War). Tuvim holds that a change in the oppressive nature of the Soviet Union is a necessary prerequisite for lasting peace. He agreed that "linkage" might lead to instability. "That is why we must build SDI," he said.

Beckmann commented on the tremendous power of the news media in influencing policy. "Marxist ideology teaches that he who owns the means of production holds power in society," he said. "And yet the Marxists know that this is not true. . . Communist inspired revolutions first control the radio stations and the newspapers."

The **PEARL HARBOR DAY** meeting of Tucson DDP, December 7, will feature a videotape of Dr. Beckmann's DDP banquet address on **NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND TERRORISM**. (See insert.)

Videotapes and audio cassettes of the DDP/TACDA program can be ordered from Satellite Broadcasting, PO Box 5364, Rockville, MD 20851, or borrowed from Dr. Orient, 325-2689.

NEST TEAM FIGHTS NUCLEAR TERROR

The Nuclear Emergency Search Team (NEST), headquartered in Nevada, was created in 1974 after an extortionist threatened to detonate a nuclear bomb in Boston. More than 70 nuclear terrorist threats have been investigated by the FBI to date. All were hoaxes, except one that involved the theft of 150 pounds of enriched uranium. In another emergency, NEST was deployed to search for the debris of a Soviet nuclear powered satellite, which fell to earth in Canada (Washington Times, Aug. 26, 1986). The possibly insurmountable difficulties in locating a terrorist bomb are detailed in a chilling novel The Fifth Horseman by Larry Collins and Dominique LaPierre, Avon Books, 1981.

BRAZIL NUTS ONLY 6600 TIMES AS RADIOACTIVE AS BEANS

Carsten Haaland of Oak Ridge National Laboratories pointed out an error in the September issue: Brazil nuts are not 20,000 times as radioactive as baked beans. In 46 measurements of Brazil nuts, the range of activity was from 32 - 660 Becquerels/kg. Dried beans, either from San Francisco or New York, had 0.1 - 0.6 bc/kg. At most, Brazil nuts are only 6600 times as radioactive as beans, and one would have to ingest more than 1.5 kg of the nuts to receive a dose of 1000 bc (ORNL-5963). Apricots; bananas; South African beets, cabbage, and beans; and Hungarian lettuce and mushrooms (1975) are among the many crops whose radioactivity (up to 4000 bc/kg) exceeds that of Brazil nuts, and equals that of some Bavarian vegetables after Chernobyl.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND TERRORISM

A Videotape

Dr. Petr Beckmann

**Formerly of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences
Professor Emeritus, Electrical Engineering, Univ. of Colorado
Publisher, Access to Energy**

5 p.m., Sunday, December 7, 1986

**3615 E. Fifth St., Tucson (North side of street, between
Dodge and Richey)**

A buffet will be served.

Call 325-2689 for further information.