

Both Candidates for Presidency Advised By Science Leaders

Washington (Science Service) - Both presidential candidates are independently seeking and getting expert advice from leading scientists on nuclear testing, defense, space, and health and medical care.

Sen. John F. Kennedy has chosen Dr. Jerome B. Wiesner, a member of President Eisenhower's Science Advisory committee, as his top adviser on nuclear disarmament and test suspension. Dr. Wiesner, currently director of Research Laboratory Electronics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has worked extensively in radiation research.

A spokesman for Sen. Kennedy told Science Service that the senator did not consider his selection of Dr. Wiesner unusual.

No Legitimate Role

"The senator believes," said Pierre Salinger, Kennedy's press officer, "that politics or political considerations have no legitimate role in considering problems as universal as those of scientific scope."

Vice President Richard M. Nixon consults with Dr. George B. Kistiakowsky, chairman of the president's Science Advisory committee and head of the department of chemistry at Harvard university. The physical chemist is one of the many science experts both in and out of administration circles with whom the vice president consults.

Herbert Klein, Nixon's

press officer, said, "The political leanings of these men certainly play no part in his choice. What he wants is the necessary background essential to intelligent decision."

In the area of space and on matters of international exchange, Nixon has consulted Dr. Joseph Kaplan, former U.S. chairman for the International Geophysical Year and head of the department of physics at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Nixon finds Dr. Kaplan a man with an "extremely practical viewpoint," according to Mr. Klein.

Cosmic Ray Authority

Sen. Kennedy's expert on space is Dr. Bruno Rossi, an authority on cosmic rays and a world-famous physicist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dr. David Frisch, a nuclear physicist also at M.I.T., is the authority for Sen. Kennedy on defense and disarmament.

Vice President Nixon benefits from information on space from Dr. Keith Glennan, National Aeronautics and Space administrator.

Teller Offers Advice

On scientific questions of defense and disarmament, the Republican presidential hopeful listens to Dr. Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb and associate director of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory at Berkeley, Calif. He has also discussed these problems with Thomas E. Murray, former member of the Atomic Energy commission, appointed by the Democrats.

On matters of health and medical welfare, the vice president is continuously advised by Arthur S. Fleming, the secretary of health, education and welfare, and his staff.

Sen. Kennedy takes his medical advice in politics from Dr. Dean Alexander Clark, head of Massachusetts General hospital in Boston and professor of preventive medicine at Harvard Medical school.

Calcium Reduces Strontium Uptake From Many Soils

Washington - (Science Service) - The rate of uptake by soils of radioactive strontium-90 varies according to their composition and may be reduced by chemical treatment, new studies have shown.

Strontium-90 is a long-lived element of fallout from nuclear testing and in large doses is known to be a cause of leukemia and bone cancer in man. It acts like calcium; and well-developed calcium formations in both plants and animals tend to form a natural barrier to strontium-90.

This was found to be true of high calcium soils as well, according to experiments by R. L. Uhler and F. P. Hungate of the Hanford Laboratories of General Electric Company, Richland, Wash., reported in Nature.

Strontium-90 studies were made on crops grown on uncalcareous but watered acidic, calcareous and alkaline soils. Less Uptake Noted.

The uptake from the calcareous soil was one-half to one-third the uptake from acidic soil. The investigators attributed this to the larger quantities of available calcium naturally present in calcareous soil.

The GE scientists found that it was possible to reduce uptake of radioactive strontium-90 by as much as 80 per cent by adding calcium-high lime or gypsum to acidic soils.

Basic calcareous and alkaline soils treated with massive doses of phosphate showed a 50 per cent reduction in uptake of strontium-90. Except for the phosphate treatment, however, none of the other procedures appreciably lowered strontium-90 uptake from calcareous soil.

Further Studies Needed

The lack of cultivation while thoroughly wetting the soil and allowing it to dry established to some extent the potential reduction of radioactive contamination through precipitation reactions. Further studies are needed to determine whether an appreciable part of this potential can be realized.

The availability of strontium-90 from soil to plants to man is an important factor in evaluating the health hazard presented by this radioactive element.

Does Council Post Lead to 'Profit'?

Middletown, R. I. - Karl E. Falkenhelm, president of the town council, acknowledged a slip of the tongue as he introduced a new member of the council to an organization meeting.

"We hope your term on the town council brings you both pleasure and profit . . ." he began.

He was interrupted by laughter.

"Better strike that," he added quickly.

EXPORT MARKET

The U.S. buys about 60 per cent of Canada's exports.

Radiation Guides May Be Exceeded By U.S. Agencies

Washington (Science Service) - Radiation health and safety standards or "guides," recommended by the Federal Radiation Council, may be exceeded by any federal agency engaged in atomic development according to its own judgement or discretion.

This authority was granted by the president on May 13, 1960, under power given him by congressional legislative action Sept. 23, 1959.

Under Public Law 373, the Federal Radiation Council, initially set up by the president, was given legislative sanction with broad powers given to the president to act upon and endorse recommendations of the council toward setting up standards for radiation protection. The legislation expressed the hope of the Congress "that the Federal Radiation Council will assist in attaining uniformity of basic standards among the agencies as well as programs of cooperation with the states."

Could Confuse Issue

It plainly was not intended to allow the agencies to decide at their own discretion whether they should keep to the council's "broad guides." Such diversity of standards as may result could only further confuse the issue of safety.

This discretionary power the agencies now have was denied to the Defense Department by Congress last fall when it deleted an amendment to the Atomic Energy Act. Proposed by the Atomic Energy Commission, it was intended to permit the Department of Defense to establish its own safety standards in handling nuclear materials if the president "deems it necessary in the national interest." This provision was incorporated in S. 2565 and H. R. 8754.

In deleting this provision, the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy said that "more consideration" is needed by the AEC and the Defense Department on this subject of respective responsibility for safety.

The Federal Radiation Council was the administration's answer to criticism that in regulating health and safety by regulating primarily and concerned with the development of atomic energy, the AEC was faced with a conflict of interest.



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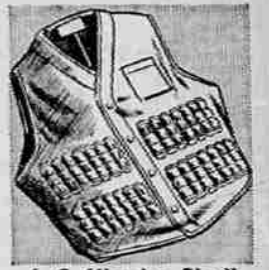
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