Russia's Second Atom Bomb

The White House announcement that Russia has exploded "another atomic bomb" should not come as any surprise. It should come, however, as a grim warning against any dragging of feet in our rearmament effort.

The wording of the announcement confirms what had been generally assumed, but never specifically stated—that Russia's "atomic explosion" of September, 1949, was actually an explosion of an atom bomb, and not a laboratory accident. It also confirms that the Russians, despite their professions of peaceful activity, are striving to overtake us—assuming that they really are behind—in the production of atomic weapons.

No layman can appraise the full significance of this latest atomic explosion. That must be left to the experts with full access to the facts. There are some significant aspects, however, that can be seen by any one.

The White House statement refers to the explosion of "another" atomic bomb. That suggests that this is the second bomb to be exploded, although it does not quite say so. There may have been others. If this is only the second Russian test, however, it still indicates that they are making progress, for this latest test probably was with a new weapon—not the same one that was exploded two years ago.

And the fact that they are making progress is of tremendous significance.

Our own rearmament program, and the companion program for rearming Western Europe, are geared to the assumption that it will be two or possibly three years before the Russians are ready for war. By that time it is assumed that the Soviets will have enough atomic weapons at least to destroy the cities of Western Europe. That it is reasoned, would lead to a kind of atomic stalemate—a situation in which we would hesitate to use our own atomic weapons for fear that the Russians would strike back in kind against the cities of our Allies and perhaps against our own cities.

This is why there is so much urgency in the drive to rebuild European conventional defenses—to build enough strength on ground, sea and air so that the Russians would hesitate to strike even though they might feel that they had achieved a balance of the atomic scales sufficient to safeguard their own cities against atomic attack.

This is why General Eisenhower and every American military man associated with him wring their hands at the thought that our rearmament program is not moving fast enough.
My friends, the announcement by President Truman that Russia had exploded another atomic bomb should not have been unexpected. In fact, a good many scientists, including some of those connected with our own Atomic Energy Commission, have been puzzled by Russia's delay in having another further experimental explosion. Of course, a great many people in the United States have doubted that Russia had the Atomic bomb even though assurances have been given by the proper authorities in our government that the Russians had successfully accomplished an atomic explosion some two years ago. There has been no doubt in the minds of people in position to know.

There were two theories expanded as to why Russia was waiting so long for a second test. One theory was that her first test proved successful and that she was directing all efforts toward building up a stock pile of atom bombs before attempting any further test explosions. I believe this was the view most widely held by atomic scientists in this country. The other theory was that Russia's production of fissionable material was very low, and slow, and that her research into improved methods was very slow. That, consequently, a further test of an improved weapon had not become feasible. At any rate, this speculation is now aside. The second bomb has been exploded.

Instead of being surprised and shocked we should treat this second explosion as a grim warning against any dragging of our feet in atomic development or in any other phase of our rearmament program.

The United States monopoly on atomic bombs ended with the first atomic explosion in Russia. Though the atomic armament race had already started, because we knew that Russia was desperately trying to perfect an atom bomb. This actual explosion served as a starting gun for the atomic armament race. You will recall that the United States is now in the midst of a vast atomic energy expansion program, with giant atomic plants under construction at Paducah, Kentucky and Savannah, South Carolina. The Atomic Energy Commission, the Congressional Committee, and perhaps the President, now has under consideration another
Some months ago I made the statement on this program that the real

to Atomic bomb production was supply of uranium ore. That was true then, it is true, but there have been significant changes. For one thing, new uranium supplies have been uncovered in Canada. Greater supplies than expected are now foreseen from Africa, particularly from the old gold mine tailings in South Africa, where men have labored for many years digging ore from deep beneath the surface of the earth and piling it in huge dump piles after extracting the small amount of gold therein, little knowing that by far its most precious and valuable content, uranium, was being left untouched.

In our own country, too, a new uranium supply has been found in the Rocky Mountains. In addition, there is a real indication that a considerable amount of fissionable material suitable for atomic bombs may be developed from thorium, which is in comparatively abundant supply on the earth's surface. This great supply of ore is the principal reason why a new expansion program is under construction. At the time we embarked upon the present huge expansion program, the production plants to be constructed were designed to approximate the ore supply. It cannot accurately be said that there can be foreseen a considerably larger supply than can be processed by the atomic plants in existence or under construction. Whether we should build more atom bomb plants will inevitably be the decision as to whether we should build more atom bomb building plants will inevitably be affected by the estimate of our government of the ability and the rate of production of atom bombs by the Soviet Union. How much our government knows about Russia's atomic program and how she knows it are among the top secrets of the government. Suffice it to say, that what we know is far from consoling.

It would be a great mistake to under-rate Russia's capacity or her industrial know-how. The high quality of her new jet air planes indicate a high technology. The fact that she
has accomplished an atomic explosion, even though her spies obtained great help from the United States through the filching of information on our secret processes, testifies to her industrial know-how. Once she has made an atomic bomb the pattern of making others is reasonably clear. The feeling here is that her uranium supply is limited. It seems to me, though, that it is unreasonable to think that she will not have additional ore supply within the vast geographical land mass under her control. A land mass far greater than ours, reaching from Berlin to Vlad—stock, Kaesong and Shanghai. There is no room for complacencies then, what public officials know would dispel complacencies. She has exploded two atom bombs. **[X]**

Even though her stock pile is no more than 20 or 30 atom bombs, as some scientists have estimated, one must only contemplate what one atom bomb would do to one of our cities in order to bear any feeling of consolation in what we **[X]** regard as our superiority in atomic weapons. **[X]** It is generally conceded **[X]** among authorities here that the United States **[X]** does have **[X]** a quantitative and qualitative superiority over Russia but with atomic bombs an equalizer. The atomic armament race **[X]** is only in its beginning. This armament race is a major political and military factor in our time. More and more the people of the United States, you and I, must understand that life tomorrow can never be the same as it was yesterday. Today we have living frontiers, frontiers vulnerable to assault by sea and air. In fact, our principal cities would be frontiers in an atomic war. Henceforth we live in danger, we live with danger every day. It makes the search for peace, the search for means by which mankind **[X]**, though of different political and religious belief can live together. I started to say live together in peace, but decided to say just live together. I do not wish to be frightening in my remarks today. I only wish to be realistic. To live realistic, one must face the truth.

We may as well acknowledge that it is a question of time until Russia will have enough atom bombs to rain devastation upon every principal city and industrial center of our fair land.
Maybe the United States already has enough atomic bombs to rain
destruction upon every single Russian city simultaneously. I think we do
have that kind of stockpile right now. We have been depending upon this
atomic superiority; upon this power in the hands of the United States to
retaliate with devastation to prevent the outbreak of war. Many of the
world's great thinkers, including Winston Churchill, have said that the
deterrent influence of our atomic bomb stockpile is all that has saved
Western Europe from being overrun by Russia. Is that situation now altered?
Indeed, it is. Furthermore, the larger the Russian stockpile of atomic
bombs becomes, the less advantage we have.

I hear the presumption spoken here in Washington that within two
years Russia will have enough atomic bombs to destroy the cities of France,
England, Belgium and other countries of Western Europe and perhaps do also
very great damage to the cities of the United States. Would we use atomic
bombs under those circumstances?

I do not know the answer to this great imponderable. I am, however,
raising a question that all of us should think about. I raise this question
because I remember that in World War II both sides had poison gas. Germany
had it; Japan had it; Italy had it; we and our allies had poison gas. Yet,
this deadly weapon was never used in the most devastating war in history.
Is it possible or probable that this atomic armaments race will eventually
end in an atomic stalemate? — a situation in which we would hesitate to use
our own atomic weapons even in case of war, for fear that the Russians would
strike back at the cities of either our allies or our own country?

That question is

I do not know the answer to this question, but I do know that it is

being carefully examined here in Washington now.

It was neither gas nor bacteriological warfare that won World War II.

That victory was won by men using conventional weapons.
may be that the United States already has enough atom bombs to destroy all
Russian large cities, perhaps simultaneously. One is made to shudder by the outlook.

What do we do cringe in fright? Not at all! There is neither freedom nor safety today
in either cowardice or timidity. We must promptly arm ourselves with the ability to
retaliate with such overwhelming destruction that she will never dare loose an
attack upon the United States.