Soviets Report Blast While Counseling West Not to Become Alarmed

Bulletin

By the United Press

Chairman Lewis L. Strauss of the Atomic Energy Commission announced early today that Russia conducted an atomic test on the morning of August 12.

He said information received by the United States "indicates that this test involved both fission and thermonuclear reaction."

The thermonuclear reaction is the reaction of the hydrogen super-bomb. The fission reaction is the reaction of the atomic bomb used as a heat trigger for the H-bomb.

"The Soviet Union conducted an atomic test on the morning of August 12," Strauss said. "Certain information to this effect came into our hands that night. Subsequent information on the subject indicates that this test involved both fission and thermonuclear reaction.

"It will be recalled that more than three years ago the United States decided to accelerate work on all forms of atomic weapons. Both the 1951 and the 1952 Eniwetok test series included tests involving similar reaction."

MOSCOW (Thursday), Aug. 20 (UP).—Russia announced today it has exploded a hydrogen bomb.

A Soviet government communique said the bomb was exploded "a few days ago" for "experimental purposes."

The announcement came less than two weeks after Soviet Premier Georgi Malenkov said in a speech that the United States had "no monopoly" on the H-bomb.

"A few days ago in the Soviet Union one of the types of the hydrogen bomb was exploded for experimental purposes," the official communique said.

"As a result of the explosion a thermonuclear reaction of great force was set off," it added.

"The experiment showed the power of the hydrogen bomb is many times stronger than the power of atom bombs."

"It is well known that for several years the Soviet Union has possessed atomic weapons and carried out corresponding tests of these weapons," the announcement added.

It said that as follows from Malenkov's address before the Supreme Soviet last August 8, "the Soviet Union also possesses the secret of the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb."

The communique said Malenkov's announcement had "evoked numerous comments" abroad, and added:

"Certain foreign circles who based their policies on the former monopoly of the United States of the atom bomb, and also of the hydrogen bomb, are trying to frighten the people with the facts that the Soviet Union possesses the secret of the manufacture of the hydrogen bomb and in this connection have caused alarm using the fact for the purpose of intensifying the armaments race.

"The Soviet government considers it necessary to declare now as before there is no foundation whatever for such alarm."

The announcement said the Soviet Government repeatedly has proposed to other governments a substantial reduction of armaments, including a ban on the use of atomic weapons, with strict international control to enforce the ban within the framework of the United Nations.

These proposals, it said, were made in connection "with the unchanging policy of the Soviet Union directed toward strengthening the peace and security of many peoples."

"The Soviet Government firmly continues to hold this

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position at the present time," the announcement added.

The communique was published in the government newspapers Pravda and Izvestia.

The two newspapers ran the announcement in the upper right hand corner of the second page under a two-column headline saying merely:

"A governmental communique on testing of hydrogen bomb in the Soviet Union."

There was no other comment on the explosion announcement anywhere else in the papers.

It was almost 6 a. m. as the papers hit the streets with the big news.

Many early risers en route to their jobs queued up at newspaper stands in Moscow to buy the papers.

Moscow Radio was to begin broadcasting the news on its internal service at 8 a. m. Moscow time.

The United States was able to detect three previous atomic explosions in Russia with delicate instruments that pick up the radioactive particles spewed into the atmosphere by an atomic burst. American scientists have great confidence in the ability of these instruments to record an atomic blast anywhere on the globe. They also claim that it is possible to tell whether an A-bomb or an H-bomb was set off.

Detection is effected by earth-shock from the explosion, by noise and by radioactivity. The last effect defines the explosion as unmistakably of atomic origin. Intensely radioactive particles fill the bomb cloud and can be scooped out of the air as it moves on the prevailing westerly winds across Russia and Siberia to the Aleutians and Alaska.

A hydrogen explosion, as distinct from an A-bomb blast, can be determined by its special and quite different radioactivity. Tritium, the special form of "explosive" hydrogen, would be present in the cloud, not all of it being fused or burned in the detonation. It could be readily identified.

The magnitude of a hydrogen bomb burst would also help to differentiate it from an A-bomb blast.

Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told a news conference last Wednesday that the United States had not, at that time, received any evidence that the Russians had set off an H-bomb.

Thus it appeared that if Russia has tested an H-bomb, it must have been within the past week.