

Why We Are Jittery

Atomic Energy

GEN. CARL SPAATZ, supreme chief of all Army Air Forces, has no professional interest in reports about "flying discs."

At Medford, Ore., he said he had been "out of touch" with things for some days. He was leaving for an extended fishing trip and "might" look into the matter when he returned—purely as a matter of curiosity.

Other commandants, on their own, have flitted about and found nothing. Europe and Great Britain are laughing at us. "The American summer season of silliness is on," is their explanation.

Yes, it's all good fun, but it has its serious side. Better than any poll of public opinion possibly could, these rumors of mysterious discs reveal how fully aware our people are of possible trouble with Russia.

Seldom discussed because so few can speak authoritatively on the subject, the atomic bomb is the most vital problem in the hearts and minds of the American people today.

"Where," they ask, "are we at?"

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BACK in August, 1945, when we dropped our atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the United States was far out in front in the science of nuclear fission.

Just how much our lead has been shortened nobody really knows. The best you can get on it is an educated guess that it has been shortened.

At least 20 nations are prying into the secrets of atomic energy as either a power in peace or a weapon in war.

But we think of little but the Soviet. Who else talks of war? Like everything else from behind the Iron Curtain, news on Russian atomic research is subject to a good deal of doubt. They can be a lot further ahead than we think, or much further behind.

A group of men who know the subject as well as anyone can, recently released a statement through Prof. Albert Einstein in which they said Russia would have a start on an atomic bomb stockpile by 1955.

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