

# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Dr. H. A. Fidler, Chief  
Declassification Branch

FROM : Arnold Kramish *AK*

SUBJECT: RUSSIAN SMYTH REPORT

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED	DATE: September 18, 1948
DATE <u>1/17/78</u>	
For the U. S. Energy Research and Development Administration	
I. L. CUCCHIARA <i>ILC</i>	
Division of Classification	

*Handwritten notes:*  
H to see

I have compared in detail the Russian translation of "Atomic Energy for Military Purposes" by H. D. Smyth with the various American editions. The particular copy examined was that translated from the English under the editorship of G. M. Ivanov and published by the State Railway Transportation Publishing House. The technical editor was J. B. Naybishev. The type was set November 10, 1945 and the edition published in Moscow, January 30, 1946.

The Russian Smyth Report corresponds sentence by sentence to the September 1, 1945 Princeton edition except for the few exceptions noted below. The format and illustrations are identical to that edition. All of the appendices of that edition are included. The indices are identical except, of course, for alphabetical rearrangements.

The editorship is excellent. There is every indication that the American text was screened in great detail by the technical editor of this volume. This is no simple verbatim translation from the American edition as one might suspect at first. For example, throughout the text there are included in the Russian edition many parenthetical expressions as to provide clearer explanations. In section 1.16 there is such a parenthetical expression. One will also note in the same paragraph that figure one is referred to. Figures are not referred to in any of the American editions. In the same paragraph the word "billion" has been changed to "million" as in several other places throughout the book. Wherever the American Smyth Report has the word "here" the Russian Smyth Report carefully substitutes "United States of America".

The Princeton edition gives a number of references in section 1.4. The Russian edition substitutes other books which apparently are available in Russian editions.

There are two striking facts about the Russian translation. First, note that every single paragraph in the Princeton edition bears a topic number, in other words, no section contains more than one paragraph. This is true, in general, in the Russian translation also. There are however a few sections in the Russian translation which contain two paragraphs. The division seems to be a point of emphasis, for example, in section 6.34, the second paragraph in the

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 Energy Research and Development  
 Administration I. L. Cucchiara  
 1/17/78

*de H has copy - in hold folder*

A. [unclear] established policy  
 B. Six Years [unclear] for future action  
 [unclear] and sensitivity  
 Subject of discussion  
 All others  
 John K  
 (initials)  
 1/17/78  
 (date of review)



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Russian edition begins at "By the end of 1942, something over 500 micrograms had been obtained in the form of pure plutonium salts. Although this amount is less than would be needed to make the head of a pin, for the micro-chemists it was sufficient to yield considerable information; for one microgram is considered sufficient to carry out weighing experiments, titrations, solubility studies, etc.". This indeed is one of the most significant paragraphs in the entire report. This same topic is again emphasized by setting it off as a separate paragraph in section 6.46 of the summary.

There is even a more interesting deviation from the September 1, 1945 Princeton edition. The original press edition of the Smyth Report contained in section 8.15 the concluding sentence "In spite of a great deal of preliminary study of fission products, an unforeseen poisoning effect of this kind very nearly prevents operation of the Hanford piles, as we shall see later". This sentence was deleted from all Princeton editions as far as I know and certainly does not appear in the September 1, 1945 edition. The Russian edition purports to be a translation of the September 1, 1945 edition. How then could this sentence creep in? There are two possibilities: (1) The discrepancy was noted by the technical editor who deliberately included it to make the Russian edition as complete as possible. (2) The translation was begun as soon as a press edition was received in Russia, but after the Princeton edition appeared it was decided to publish the text to correspond to the Princeton format.

In either event, it is unlikely that this discrepancy in the American editions did not go unnoticed. This is certainly the case if course (1) above were followed. If course (2) is the explanation, it is unlikely that the additional sentence was unnoticed for as I have pointed out above the editing was quite thorough.

As you know the edition later printed by the U. S. Government Printing Office also contained the questionable sentence in section 8.15. I do not however believe that the Russian text was translated from the Government edition, since, for example, in section 8.54, the Russian and Princeton editions coincided in that the two sentences on Columbia River fish life were contained in a footnote. In the Government edition this footnote has been incorporated in the text.

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You may wish to circulate the above report among the Senior Responsible Reviewers. I think it is significant in that here we have evidence that at least one Soviet technical man has screened the Smyth Report in great detail and it is very unlikely that some of the references which we have hoped "maybe they won't notice" have not been noticed. With particular regard to the statement that fission product poisoning very nearly prevents the operation of the Hanford piles, we must realize that that information most certainly has been compromised.

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