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Rabi, students disagree at first seminar session
By Alan Baumgardner

"The Decision to Drop the Bomb," was the topic of a lively discussion held Friday at the first segment of a continuing seminar entitled "The Sciences and Mankind." Room 6-120 was packed beyond capacity as both professors and the people responsible for the bomb heard Dr. I. I. Rabi, visiting Compton Professor of Physics, describe and attempt to justify his reasons for opposing the decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima.

Professor Rabi started the discus- sion by stating that he realized many of the people in the audience had not known when the bomb was dropped; he then proceeded to outline the background of the situation at Los Alamos. Fusion had existed for a few years, and "it took no great insight to see its destructive powers," he said. At first the project was a race against the "German," but after VE day, scientists at Los Alamos were too caught up in their work to accurately realize, or to stop the momentous decisions that were being made.

Los Alamos aware
At that point, Dr. Jerrold R. Zacharias, Institute Professor of Physics, interrupted to say that the people at Los Alamos were well aware of the bomb's destructive power. The fact that they were so close to their goal seemed to block the other ideas that prevailed today about the situation. Professor Rabi concurred by saying, "I felt that Japan was finished. We could just keep up the blockade and they'd soon be in their surrender." However, he mainta- ined that the U.S. was faced with the problem of getting out of the war as quickly as possible. The plans for a November invasion of Japan would cost the lives of both the Americans and the Japanese. "I was one of those who felt the bomb should be dropped," he said.

Professor Rabi then asked for com- ment from some of the members of the audience who had been associated with Los Alamos project. Dr. Bernard Feld, Professor of Physics, remarked, "I had a sort of ambivalence at the time—we hoped it wouldn't work, although we worked extraordinarily hard. Looking back on it, it seems to me that there are a number of things that are relevant to thought that students have today show the ways things worked." Dr. Bruno Rover, Institute Professor of Physics, opened a new line of discussion for the seminar with his comment that he would have liked if there had been a demonstration drop for the Japansese. At this point, the question was put pointblank to Dr. Rabi. Rabi said he had no question, but that he believed that the secrecy involved would have made it hard to arrange. Further, more, he said that the delay would not favor the Japanese and American cause. Finally, he mentioned his belief that the bomb might not have had the possibility that the bomb might not have had the result he had in mind.

Questions from the audience came more direct and according, the student, who suggested that the bomb be dropped on Mount Fuji, was told by Mrs. Alice Smith, wife of Dr. G. Smith, Institute Professor of Physics, that there were distinct dangers that American prisoners of war might be brought to view the test close up, however, that the argument the scientists did not realize before the test was the ghastly sound that is heard by the explosion produced, and she felt that they could have been more convincing.

Student unrest
The students in the audience seemed to take control of the discussion at times. One student thought the scientists should have volunteered nuclear weapons by refusing to develop them. He cited how the government dictated this with biological war- fare. Mr. Rabi objected strenuously to this, maintaining that the only reason the government did not use it was the fact that they were not technically feasible at the time.

A humorous note was injected into the discussion when Professor Rabi was asked if any scientists left Los Alamos because of their convictions. Dr. Zacha- rias mentioned Dr. "Edward Teller—he stopped his work on the A-bomb so he could work on the H-bomb." "In seminars will continue every Friday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Rifle squad beats BC twice
By Don Ackin

The Tech rifle team met BC twice over the weekend for two different leagues and went both times.

The first meet was held Friday evening for the Greater Boston League in which the engineers are moving forwar- ds. The score was 1302-1267. The top shooter for MIT was Bill Holden '71 with a 268.

The Saturday morning match was for the New England league in which competition is quite a bit tougher. According, Tech's margin of victory shrank to 1283-1261, Dick Pears '70 and Bill Swidlik '71 tied for top shooter honors, both scoring 264.

The team now has an 8 and 0 record which they are expected to improve upon this Friday when they meet He- noret for a home meet. The following day they will play host again in a sev- en match against Northeastern. The Tech will then take a smooth long break before their next match, against Northeastern.

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