

OFFICE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
 OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
 1530 P STREET NW.
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

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VANNEVAR BUSH
 Director

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February 25, 1943

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

Dr. J. H. Oppenheimer
 University of California
 Berkeley, California

Per DOC

Dear Dr. Oppenheimer:

By D. C. Bradley

JAN 1 1943

We are addressing this letter to you as the Scientific Director of the special laboratory in New Mexico in order to confirm our many conversations on the matters of organization and responsibility. You are at liberty to show this letter to those with whom you are discussing the desirability of their joining the project with you; they of course realizing their responsibility as to secrecy, including the details of organization and personnel.

I. The laboratory will be concerned with the development and final manufacture of an instrument of war, which we may designate as Projectile S-1-T. To this end, the laboratory will be concerned with:

- A. Certain experimental studies in science, engineering and ordnance; and
- B. At a later date large-scale experiments involving difficult ordnance procedures and the handling of highly dangerous material.

The work of the laboratory will be divided into two periods in time: one, corresponding to the work mentioned in section A; the other, that mentioned in section B. During the first period, the laboratory will be on a strictly civilian basis, the personnel, procurement and other arrangements being carried on under a contract arranged between the War Department and the University of California. The conditions of this contract will be essentially similar to that of the usual OSRD contract. In such matters as draft deferment, the policy of the War Department and OSRD in regard to the personnel working under this contract will be practically identical. When the second division of the work is entered upon (mentioned in B), which will not be earlier than January 1, 1944, the scientific and engineering staff will be composed of commissioned officers. This is necessary because of the dangerous nature of the

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work and the need for special conditions of security. It is expected that many of those employed as civilians during the first period (A) will be offered commissions and become members of the commissioned staff during the second period (B), but there is no obligation on the part of anyone employed during period A to accept a commission at the end of that time.

II. The laboratory is part of a larger project which has been placed in a special category and assigned the highest priority by the President of the United States. By his order, the Secretary of War and certain other high officials have arranged that the control of this project shall be in the hands of a Military Policy Committee, composed of Dr. Vannevar Bush, Director of OSRD, as Chairman, Major General W. D. Styer, Chief of Staff, SOS, Rear Admiral W. R. Furnell, Assistant Chief of Staff to Admiral King; Dr. James B. Conant serves as Dr. Bush's deputy and alternate on this Committee, but attends all meetings and enters into all discussions. Brigadier General L. R. Groves of the Corps of Engineers has been given over-all executive responsibility for this project, working under the direction of the Military Policy Committee. He works in close cooperation with Dr. Conant, who is Chairman of the group of scientists who were in charge of the earlier phases of some aspects of the investigation.

III. Responsibilities of the Scientific Director.

1. He will be responsible for:

a. The conduct of the scientific work so that the desired goals as outlined by the Military Policy Committee are achieved at the earliest possible dates.

b. The maintenance of secrecy by the civilian personnel under his control as well as their families.

2. He will of course be guided in his determination of policies and courses of action by the advice of his scientific staff.

3. He will keep Dr. James B. Conant and General Groves informed to such extent as is necessary for them to carry on the work which falls in their respective spheres. Dr. Conant will be available at any time for consultation on general scientific problems as well as to assist in the determination of definite scientific policies and research programs. Through Dr. Conant complete access to the scientific world is guaranteed.

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Dr. J. R. Oppenheimer

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IV. Responsibilities of the Commanding Officer.

1. The Commanding Officer will report directly to General Groves.
2. He will be responsible for:
 - a. The work and conduct of all military personnel.
 - b. The maintenance of suitable living conditions for civilian personnel.
 - c. The prevention of trespassing on the site.
 - d. The performance of duty by such guards as may be established within the reservation for the purpose of maintaining the secrecy precautions deemed necessary by the Scientific Director.

V. Cooperation.

The closest cooperation is of course necessary between the Commanding Officer and the Scientific Director if each is to perform his function to the maximum benefit of the work. Such a cooperative attitude now exists on the part of Dr. Conant and General Groves and has so existed since General Groves first entered the project.

Very sincerely yours,

James B. Conant
Leslie R. Groves

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