

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

JUL 23 1957

Dr. Leo Szilard
University of Chicago
The Enrico Fermi Institute for
Nuclear Studies
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Szilard:

As you requested, we have had under consideration the declassification of the petition to the President of the United States, which you prepared at the Metallurgical Laboratory in Chicago in July of 1945. I am happy to be able to report to you that this petition has been declassified.

Please accept my thanks for your understanding and cooperation during the past several months. I have enjoyed meeting with you, and I hope that I may look forward to seeing you again in the not too distant future.

Sincerely yours,

C. L. Marshall, Director
Division of Classification

Encl.

16 Pages of Petition dated 7/15/45

29

Copy furnished:--(letter only)

Mrs. Alice Kimball Smith, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

July 3
July 16
July 17

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July 3, 1945

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Discoveries of which the people of the United States are not aware may affect the welfare of this nation in the near future. The liberation of atomic power which has been achieved places atomic bombs in the hands of the Army. It places in your hands, as Commander-in-Chief, the fateful decision whether or not to sanction the use of such bombs in the present phase of the war against Japan.

We, the undersigned scientists, have been working in the field of atomic power for a number of years. Until recently we have had to reckon with the possibility that the United States might be attacked by atomic bombs during this war and that her only defense might lie in a counterattack by the same means. Today with this danger averted we feel impelled to say what follows:

The war has to be brought speedily to a successful conclusion and the destruction of Japanese cities by means of atomic bombs may very well be an effective method of warfare. We feel, however, that such an attack on Japan could not be justified in the present circumstances. We believe that the United States ought not to resort to the use of atomic bombs in the present phase of the war, at least not unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan after the war are publicly announced and subsequently Japan is given an opportunity to surrender.

If such public announcement gave assurance to the Japanese that they could look forward to a life devoted to peaceful pursuits in their homeland and if Japan still refused to surrender, our nation would then be faced with a situation which might require a re-examination of her position with respect to the use of atomic bombs in the war.

Atomic bombs are primarily a means for the ruthless annihilation of cities. Once they were introduced as an instrument of war it would be difficult to resist for long the temptation of putting them to such use.

The last few years show a marked tendency toward increasing ruthlessness. At present our Air Forces, striking at the Japanese cities, are using the same methods of warfare which were condemned by American public opinion only a few years ago when applied by the Germans to the cities of England. Our use of atomic bombs in this war would carry the world a long way further on this path of ruthlessness.

Atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction and there is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the course of this development. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief to rule that the United States shall not, in the present phase of the war, resort to the use of atomic bombs.

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Joseph D. Teresi
William P. Norris
David S. Anthony
Jasper B. Jeffers
Marguerite N. Swift

Miriam Finkel
George A. Sacher
Chas W. Hagen, Jr.
Samp trials
Margaret H. Rand.
MARSHALL MOORE

Robert G. Moon
Walter J. Gundersen
C. Ladd Prosser
Austin W. Bruce
K S Cole
Eric L. Simmons

Ray S. Sunder
Elizabeth E. Peritts
Richard Abrams
Raymond D. Finkle
Raymond E. Zinke
Herman Lisco

Alexander Langsdorf Jr.
Herbert E. Kubitschek
Alfred Hanstield
Mary Burke
Norman Madine

Ethelene Hartge Costelyon
Witfrid Kall
Costelyon

Katharine Way
Ernest Watkins Jr
William Karush
Mildred Ginsburg

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Katharine Way
Ernest Watkins Jr
William Karush
Mildred Ginsburg

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36

✓ David L. Hill
✓ David B. Haeg
Stanley A. Jashemski
Albert Cahne, Jr.
Solomon H. Turkel
B. Powell Russell

Robert L. Furberick
Reuben E. Fields
Norman Goldstein
A. Wattenberg
Robert Warner
L. Friedman

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486

✓ Susan C. Johnson
✓ W. Mulliken
✓ George M. ...
✓ H. ...
✓ W. ...
✓ Walter Bentley
✓ James G. Nickson
✓ M. H. Zachariasen
✓ Leo Biland

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George R. Carlson
Thomas Wark
Glenn Barbarus

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July 16, 1945

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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The war has to be brought speedily to a successful conclusion and the destruction of Japanese cities by means of atomic bombs may very well be an effective method of warfare. We feel, however, that such an attack on Japan could not be justified on moral grounds, at least not unless the terms which will be imposed after the war on Japan were made public in detail and Japan were given an opportunity to surrender.

If such public announcement gave assurance to the Japanese that they could look forward to a life devoted to peaceful pursuits in their homeland and if Japan still refused to surrender our nation might then, in certain circumstances, find itself forced to resort to the use of atomic bombs. Such a step, however, ought not to be made at any time without seriously considering the moral responsibility which is involved.

The development of atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction and there is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the course of this development. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.

If after this war a situation is allowed to develop which permits rival powers to be in uncontrolled possession of these new means of destruction, the cities of the United States and other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation. All the resources of the United States, moral and material, may have to be mobilized to prevent this contingency. Its prevention is at present the solemn responsibility of the United States--singled out by virtue of her lead in the field of atomic power.

The added material strength which this lead gives to the United States brings with it the obligation of restraint and if we were to violate this obligation our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosened forces of destruction under control.

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief, to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan knowing these terms has refused to surrender; second, that in such an event the use of atomic bombs against Japan be reconsidered by you in the light of our moral responsibilities.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission

C. R. Marshall, Secretary P. 16

July 17, 1945

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Discoveries of which the people of the United States are not aware may affect the welfare of this nation in the near future. The liberation of atomic power which has been achieved places atomic bombs in the hands of the Army. It places in your hands, as Commander-in-Chief, the fateful decision whether or not to sanction the use of such bombs in the present phase of the war against Japan.

We, the undersigned scientists, have been working in the field of atomic power. Until recently we have had to fear that the United States might be attacked by atomic bombs during this war and that her only defense might lie in a counterattack by the same means. Today, with the defeat of Germany, this danger is averted and we feel impelled to say what follows:

The war has to be brought speedily to a successful conclusion and attacks by atomic bombs may very well be an effective method of warfare. We feel, however, that such attacks on Japan could not be justified, at least not unless the terms which will be imposed after the war on Japan were made public in detail and Japan were given an opportunity to surrender.

If such public announcement gave assurance to the Japanese that they could look forward to a life devoted to peaceful pursuits in their homeland and if Japan still refused to surrender our nation might then, in certain circumstances, find itself forced to resort to the use of atomic bombs. Such a step, however, ought not to be made at any time without seriously considering the moral responsibilities which are involved.

The development of atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction, and there is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the course of their future development. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.

If after this war a situation is allowed to develop in the world which permits rival powers to be in uncontrolled possession of these new means of destruction, the cities of the United States as well as the cities of other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation. All the resources of the United States, moral and material, may have to be mobilized to prevent the advent of such a world situation. Its prevention is at present the solemn responsibility of the United States--singled out by virtue of her lead in the field of atomic power.

The added material strength which this lead gives to the United States brings with it the obligation of restraint and if we were to violate this obligation our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosened forces of destruction under control.

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief, to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan knowing these terms has refused to surrender; second, that in such an event the question whether or not to use atomic bombs be decided by you in the light of the consideration presented in this petition as well as all the other moral responsibilities which are

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

Date JUL 23 1957

J. P. Kohman

F. T. Atomic Energy Commission

be decided by you in the light of the consideration presented in this petition as well as all the other moral responsibilities which are

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Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McLester
Director, Division of Classification

Irman P. Kolman

Stewart

Larned B. Asprey

Lawrence B. Magnusson

Paul R. O'Connor

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OR CHANGED TO
BY AUTHORITY OF
BY DATE 7/23/57

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CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date 7/23/57
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McLester
Director, Division of Classification

George A. Smith
William P. Norris

Chas. W. Hagen, Jr.

George A. Sacher
Madista C. Moore

R. Schapp
R. Mulliken
E. P. Wigner
George S. Monk
Lex Hilford

G. G. Wilson
H. H. Zachariasen
Francis R. Thonka
John A. Simpson, Jr.
Walter Bartley
John P. Howe

Frankly Foot W

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
JUL 23 1957
Date
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McLester
Director, Division of Classification

Kenneth S. Cole
Austin M. Brues
Eric L. Simmons
Margaret H. Rand

Jasper B. Jeffries

Robert J. Moon
Marguerite N. Swift

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McLester
Director, Division of Classification

E 398

second, that in such an event the Government should be held responsible for the moral responsibilities which are involved.

Walter J. Grundhauser
A. Ladd Prosser
Marion P. Finkal
Joseph D. Teresi
David S. Anthony

Owen France
Mary M. Siley

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McKnight
Director, Division of Classification

E 393

William Karush
Ethelene Hortelou
Alfred Flansburg
Katharine Way
Norman Madive
Mary Burke
Mildred Ginsburg

Robert L. Platzman
Sherman Reed
Hoylande D. Young
L. A. Olinger
J. Ernest Wilkin Jr.
Witfrid Roll

George R. Carlson
CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/McKnight
Director, Division of Classification

E 393

William Robinson
Walt Fred
John O. Crayford
Evert S. Steinberg
Sheffield Hanson
Melvin Freedman

Edgar L. Westrum Jr.
Earl H. Hyde
Ralph E. Telford

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
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C. L. Marshall/McKnight
Director, Division of Classification

E 393-9

David L. Hill
Robert J. Maurer
Francis Lu Creswell
Albert Wattenberg
David B. Hall
Albert Cohen Jr.

Herbert E. Kubitschek
Alexander Langsdorf Jr.
Robert L. Purbrick
Norman Goldstein
B. Powell Russell

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
OR CHANGED
BY AUTHORITY OF C. L. Marshall
BY McKnight DATE 7/23/57

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*James
Young M. Bailey*

Director, Division of Classification
C. E. Marchessault
For The Atomic Energy Commission
Date JUL 23 1957
CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

*Robert L. G. ...
C. ...
Thomas P. ...
Joseph B. ...
Frank A. ...*

James R. ...

Director, Division of Classification
C. E. Marchessault
For The Atomic Energy Commission
Date JUL 23 1957
CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

*Robert L. G. ...
James ...
Thomas P. ...
Joseph B. ...
Frank A. ...*

*William ...
Blaine ...
Robert ...
Katherine ...
Thomas ...
Mary ...
William ...*

*Clayton ...
Carl ...
Ralph ...*

Director, Division of Classification
C. E. Marchessault
For The Atomic Energy Commission
Date JUL 23 1957
CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

*William ...
Frank ...
John ...
Robert ...
William ...*

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*Robert L. ...
Thomas ...
Joseph B. ...
Frank A. ...*

*Robert ...
Thomas ...
Joseph B. ...
Frank A. ...*

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"History"
S. Subl. files

Argonne National Laboratory

OPERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
9700 SOUTH CASS AVENUE
ARGONNE, ILLINOIS

TELEGRAM WUX LB ARGONNE, ILL.

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January 31, 1961

Dr. Leo Szilard
c/o Enrico Fermi Institute for
Nuclear Studies
5630 Ellis Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Szilard:

Enclosed herewith are six (6) Manhattan Project letters and memoranda, listed below, which are now declassified:

1. Letter dated 7-4-45, Szilard to Cohn
2. Undated Petition by scientific personnel of Clinton Laboratories
3. Letter dated 7-19-45, Szilard to Compton
4. Memo dated 7-24-45, Compton to Nichols
5. Letter dated 8-27-45, Murray to Szilard
6. Letter dated 8-28-45, Murray to Szilard

In addition to the above, there are also enclosed four (4) other Manhattan Project documents which a review has indicated were previously declassified and in some cases published in whole or part. These are:

7. A petition to the President of the United States dated 7-3-45. This was declassified in 1957.
8. A petition dated 7-13-45 (Appeared, in substance, in the publication "Atomic Quest, 1956").
9. Memo dated 7-13-45, Daniels to Compton (The substance of this document was published in the February 1948 issue of the "Bulletin of Atomic Scientists").
10. Undated "Petition to the Administration of Clinton Laboratories" (This document was mentioned and the 2nd and 4th paragraphs were quoted verbatim in the publication Atomic Quest).

These documents were transmitted to the AEC for declassification review some time ago. They have just recently been received from Harry S. Traynor, Assistant General Manager, AEC.

Leo Szilard

-2-

January 31, 1961

Please note carefully the following paragraph which Mr. Traynor included in his letter of transmittal:

"It is suggested that if any of these documents are publicized, that the names of the individuals therein be deleted or their permission be secured to use their names."

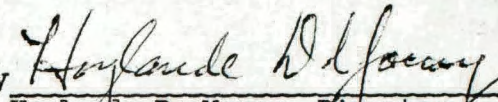
I am pleased that these documents have finally come through and I am sure that you will be.

With my very best personal regards.

Very truly yours,

ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

By


Hoyland D. Young, Director
Technical Information Division

HDY:dh

no covering letter

F 12

July 3, 1945

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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If such public announcement gave assurance to the Japanese that they could look forward to a life devoted to peaceful pursuits in their homeland and if Japan still refused to surrender, our nation would then be faced with a situation which might require a re-examination of her position with respect to the use of atomic bombs in the war.

Atomic bombs are primarily a means for the ruthless annihilation of cities. Once they were introduced as an instrument of war it would be difficult to resist for long the temptation of putting them to such use.

The last few years show a marked tendency toward increasing ruthlessness. At present our Air Forces, striking at the Japanese cities, are using the same methods of warfare which were condemned by American public opinion only a few years ago when applied by the Germans to the cities of England. Our use of atomic bombs in this war would carry the world a long way further on this path of ruthlessness.

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Serge Trillo
Margaret H. Raud
Martha Moore

Robert G. Moon
Walter J. Anderson

Ray S. Anderson
Elizabeth E. Parvitz
Richard Abrams

C. Ladd Prosser
Austin W. Bruce
K S Cole
Eric L. Simmons

Raymond D. Finkle
Raymond E. Zirkle
Kenneth Fisco

24 ✓

Alexander Langsdorf Jr.
Herbert E. Kubitschek
Alfred Pfanzhild
May Burke
Norman Madine

Ethelene Hartge Costelyon
Wilfrid Rall

Costelyon

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Katharine Way
Ernest Watkins Jr.
William Karush
Mildred Ginsburg

36

David L. Hill
David B. Haeg
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Albert Cahn, Jr.
Solomon H. Turkel
B. Howell Russell

Robert L. Furberick
Reuben E. Fields
Norman Goldstein
A. Wattenberg
Robert Chavon
St. Frischer

48 ✓

Walter C. Johnson

W. Mulliken ✓
George Stone ✓
Karey Darrow ✓
Leo Biland ✓

Walter Bentley ✓
James G. Nickson ✓
W. H. Zachary ✓

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July 3, 1945

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✓ K S Cole
10 Eric L. Simmons

Raymond L. Finkle
Raymond E. Zinke ✓
Kenneth Fisco. ✓

24 ✓

✓ Alexander Langsdorf Jr. Ethaline Hartge Costelton
Hubert E. Kubitschek Wilfrid Rall

Alfred ~~Hanstich~~ Sheumantfried
Mary Bunke
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Robert L. Furbrick
Reuben E. Fields
Norman Goldstein
A. Wattenberg ✓
Robert Chavon ✓
L. Freshman

48 ✓

✓ Owen C. Johnson O Mulliken ✓ Walter Burtley ✓
George Mone James J. Nickson ✓
Kare Tarrow ✓ M. H. Zacharisen ✓
Leo Bilord ✓

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Vault

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Handwritten notes in the bottom left section, including the word "original" and "Vault".

Handwritten notes in the bottom right section, including the word "original" and "Vault".

July 16, 1945

F-12

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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The added material strength which this lead gives to the United States brings with it the obligation of restraint and if we were to violate this obligation our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosened forces of destruction under control.

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CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/Me Righter
Director, Division of Classification

E3939

Orig. in file S vault, F-12
Sec. Dept. in La Salle

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Disclosures of which the people of the United States are not aware may affect the welfare of this nation in the near future. The liberation of atomic power which has been achieved places atomic bombs in the hands of the enemy. It is in your hands, as Commander-in-Chief, the fateful decision whether or not to send **JUL 23 1957** of such bombs in the present war against Japan.

Dr. Leo Szilard
University of Chicago

The Enrico Fermi Institute for Nuclear Studies have been working in the field of atomic power. Chicago 37, Illinois fear that the United States might be attacked by atomic bombs during her only defense might lie in a counterattack by the same means. We feel impelled to say that follows:

Dear Dr. Szilard:

brought speedily to a successful conclusion and the destruction of Japanese cities by means of atomic bombs. As you requested, we have had under consideration the declassification of the petition to the President of the United States, which you prepared at the Metallurgical Laboratory in Chicago in July of 1945. I am happy to be able to report to you that this petition has been declassified.

and we gave assurance to the Japanese that they would look forward to our peaceful pursuits in their country and if Japan still refused to surrender our nation might then, in certain circumstances, be forced to resort to atomic bombs. Please accept my thanks for your understanding and cooperation during the past several months. I have enjoyed meeting with you, and I hope that I may look forward to seeing you again in the not too distant future.

atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction and there is almost no limit to the destruction which will become available in the course of this development. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.

C. L. Marshall, Director
Division of Classification

If after this war a situation is allowed to be in uncontrolled possession of these new means of the United States and other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation. All the resources of the United States, moral and material, may have to be mobilized to prevent this calamity. Its prevention is the solemn responsibility of the United States. **Encl. 16 Pages of Petition dated 7/15/45**

Copy furnished:--(letter only)

Mrs. Alice Kimball Smith, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

with the release of atomic power to the United States brings our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosed forces of destruction under control.

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief, to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan knowing these terms has refused to surrender; second, that in such an event the use of atomic bombs against Japan be reconsidered by you in the light of our moral responsibilities.

70

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
JUN 28 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall/MS Righter
Director, Division of Classification

E 393 9

List of declassified material attached to this letter,
now in GWS vault, Security Pacific Bank, La Jolla:

(GWS has xerox copies in "safe deposit box" folder, her
office file)

original and carbon copy of July 16 petition-unsigned

7 signed pages of carbon copy of July 3 petition (exactly
like the pages stapled together, dated July 3, of which
xerox copy is in this folder)

8 signed carbon copies of July 17 petition

11 unsigned carbon copies of July 17 petition

(dup, book folder) "History" S. Institute files

Argonne National Laboratory

OPERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
9700 SOUTH CASS AVENUE
ARGONNE, ILLINOIS

TELEGRAM WUX LB ARGONNE, ILL.

CLEARWATER 7-7711

TELETYPE TWX ARGONNE, ILL. 1710

January 31, 1961

Dr. Leo Szilard
c/o Enrico Fermi Institute for
Nuclear Studies
5630 Ellis Avenue
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Szilard:

Enclosed herewith are six (6) Manhattan Project letters and memoranda, listed below, which are now declassified:

1. Letter dated 7-4-45, Szilard to Cohn
2. Undated Petition by scientific personnel of Clinton Laboratories
3. Letter dated 7-19-45, Szilard to Compton
4. Memo dated 7-24-45, Compton to Nichols
5. Letter dated 8-27-45, Murray to Szilard
6. Letter dated 8-28-45, Murray to Szilard

In addition to the above, there are also enclosed four (4) other Manhattan Project documents which a review has indicated were previously declassified and in some cases published in whole or part. These are:

7. A petition to the President of the United States dated 7-3-45. This was declassified in 1957.
8. A petition dated 7-13-45 (Appeared, in substance, in the publication "Atomic Quest, 1956").
9. Memo dated 7-13-45, Daniels to Compton (The substance of this document was published in the February 1948 issue of the "Bulletin of Atomic Scientists").
10. Undated "Petition to the Administration of Clinton Laboratories" (This document was mentioned and the 2nd and 4th paragraphs were quoted verbatim in the publication Atomic Quest).

These documents were transmitted to the AEC for declassification review some time ago. They have just recently been received from Harry S. Traynor, Assistant General Manager, AEC.

Leo Szilard

-2-

January 31, 1961

Please note carefully the following paragraph which Mr. Traynor included in his letter of transmittal:

"It is suggested that if any of these documents are publicized, that the names of the individuals therein be deleted or their permission be secured to use their names."

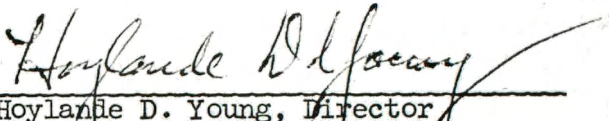
I am pleased that these documents have finally come through and I am sure that you will be.

With my very best personal regards.

Very truly yours,

ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

By


Hoyland D. Young, Director
Technical Information Division

HDY:dh

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, U. S. C. 50, 31 and 32. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

July 4, 1945

~~SECRET~~

Handwritten: 5/13/60
NDN-55437

Dear *Walden Calver*

Inclosed is the text of a petition which will be submitted to the President of the United States. As you will see, this petition is based on purely moral considerations.

It may very well be that the decision of the President whether or not to use atomic bombs in the war against Japan will largely be based on considerations of expediency. On the basis of expediency, many arguments could be put forward both for and against our use of atomic bombs against Japan. Such arguments could be considered only within the framework of a thorough analysis of the situation which will face the United States after this war and it was felt that no useful purpose would be served by considering arguments of expediency in a short petition.

However small the chance might be that our petition may influence the course of events, I personally feel that it would be a matter of importance if a large number of scientists who have worked in this field went clearly and unmistakably on record as to their opposition on moral grounds to the use of these bombs in the present phase of the war.

Many of us are inclined to say that individual Germans share the guilt for the acts which Germany committed during this war because they did not raise their voices in protest against those acts. Their defense that their protest would have been of no avail hardly seems acceptable even though these Germans could not have protested without running risks to life and liberty. We are in a position to raise our voices without incurring any such risks even though we might incur the displeasure of some of those who are at present in charge of controlling the work on "atomic power".

The fact that the people of the United States are unaware of the choice which faces us increases our responsibility in this matter since those who have worked on "atomic power" represent a sample of the population and they alone are in a position to form an opinion and declare their stand.

Anyone who might wish to go on record by signing the petition ought to have an opportunity to do so and, therefore, it would be appreciated if you could give every member of your group an opportunity for signing.

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, U. S. C. 50, 31 and 32. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

Handwritten: See below

Handwritten: Whenever signs are let to sign both copies attached to this letter.

①

H4662

H 115

~~SECRET~~

NDN-55432
~~SECRET~~
5/13/60

To the President of the United States:

We, the undersigned scientific personnel of the Clinton Laboratories, believe that the world-wide social and political consequences of the power of the weapon being developed on this Project impose a special moral obligation on the government and people of the United States in introducing the weapon in warfare.

It is further believed that the power of this weapon should be made known by demonstration to the peoples of the world, irrespective of the course of the present conflict, for in this way the body of world opinion may be made the determining factor in the absolute preservation of peace.

Therefore we recommend that before this weapon be used without restriction in the present conflict, its powers should be adequately described and demonstrated, and the Japanese nation should be given the opportunity to consider the consequences of further refusal to surrender. We feel that this course of action will heighten the effectiveness of the weapon in this war and will be of tremendous effect in the prevention of future wars.

Signed:

Charles D. Coryell
Jack Siegel
Norman Elliott
Nathan E. Ballou
Waldo E. Cohn
S. G. English
Harrison S. Brown
Edward Shapiro
L. E. Glendenin
Melvin G. Bowman
Bernard J. Finkle
R. K. Maney
James G. Barrick
R. F. Leininger
John R. Dam
Elton H. Turk
Robert A. Penneman
A. W. Adamson
B. H. Ketelle
J. O. Blomeke
Robert L. Butenhoff
Jim Kroner
John B. Otto

~~Melvin~~ Cecil M. Nelson
Ralph Livingston
Joseph Khym
Clinton R. Vanneman
John P. McBride
Donald S. Schover
Dwight C. Lincoln
Edward G. Gohlmann
Jack K. East
John F. Hunt
Walton A. Rodger
D. E. Koshland, Jr.
Joseph Halperin
Robert B. Scott
Louis B. Wenner
Russell R. Williams, Jr.
Glenn H. Jenke
William G. Leslie
Charles W. Stanby
L. H. Govantman
J. E. Satteszaher
Stanley Rasmussen

Paul C. Tompkins
R. W. Stoughton
Leionel S. Golding
Theodore B. Novey
Earl R. Purchase
Edward L. Brady
Howard Gest
A. J. Miller
William J. Knox
F. Boldridge
W. H. Burgess
M. Creek
Alan S. Jarrett
Kurt D. Kraus
Elwin H. Covey
Raymond R. Edwards
L. T. McClinton
A. R. Brosi
John A. Ghormley
C. J. Barkowski
Gordon Johnson
D. N. Hume

~~SECRET~~ ~~SECRET~~ (2)
H4662
~~H4115~~

Metallurgical Laboratory

P.O. BOX 5207
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

July 19, 1945

BUTTERFIELD 4300

NDN-35430

9
~~SECRET~~

Dr. A. H. Compton
Metallurgical Laboratory
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Compton:

Enclosed is a petition to the President of the United States signed by 67 scientists residing in Chicago. You were good enough to say that you would forward this petition to the President via the War Department. Since those who have signed this petition are exercising a privilege under the Constitution, I believe that we are not free to disclose their names to anyone but to those who are authorized to open the mail of the President. May I, therefore, suggest that the petition be placed in an envelope addressed to the President and that the envelope be sealed before it leaves your office.

Enclosed are six unsigned copies of the petition which you may wish to communicate to others who ought in your opinion to be informed of the text of the petition.

It would be appreciated if in transmitting these copies you would draw attention in your covering letter to the fact that the text of the petition deals with the moral aspect of the issue only. Some of those who signed the petition undoubtedly fear that the use of atomic bombs at this time would precipitate an armament race with Russia and believe that atomic bombs ought not be demonstrated until the government had more time to reach a final decision as to which course it intends to follow in the years following the first demonstration of atomic bombs. Others are more inclined to think that if we withhold such a demonstration we will cause distrust on the part of other nations and are, therefore, in favor of an early demonstration. The text of the petition does not touch upon these and other important issues involved but deals with the moral issue only.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

Leo Szilard

jjp
encls.

~~SECRET~~

July 13/60

H4115 (3)
H4662

~~SECRET~~

THIS DOCUMENT CONSISTS OF 1 PAGES
COPIES 3 OF 4 COPIES

July 24, 1945

DC VA - 55443

A

To: Colonel K. D. Nichols (2)

From: Arthur H. Compton

In re: Transmittal of Petitions addressed to the President

I have been requested to transmit the enclosed petition to the President of the United States. At the suggestion of General Groves, I am herewith handing it to you for disposition. Since the matter presented in the petition is of immediate concern, the petitioners desire the transmittal to occur as promptly as possible. It will be appreciated if you will inform me with regard to its disposition.

You will note that the signed draft of the petition is enclosed within a sealed envelope. I have personally verified that this envelope contains only signed copies of a petition, identical in text with the carbon copy attached, together with receipt forms for classified material. Mr. Szilard, in his covering letter, has requested that this envelope be opened only by those authorized to read the President's mail.

You have requested me to evaluate this petition and likewise those submitted to you by Mr. Whitaker on behalf of certain members of Clinton Laboratories.

The question of use of atomic weapons has been considered by the Scientific Panel of the Secretary of War's Interim Advisory Committee. The opinion which they expressed was that military use of such weapons should be made in the Japanese War. There was not sufficient agreement among the members of the panel to unite upon a statement as to how or under what conditions such use was to be made.

A small group of petitioners initially canvassed certain groups of scientists within the project seeking signatures requesting no use of the new weapons in this war. The response was such as to call forth several counter petitions, of which those submitted through Mr. Whitaker are typical, and to cause the formulator of the original petition to rephrase it so as to approve use of the weapons after giving suitable warning and opportunity for surrender under known conditions.

In order to obtain a fair expression of the opinion of a typical group of scientists, an opinion poll was conducted on a group of 150. The results are described in the enclosed memo to me from Dr. Daniels. You will note that the strongly favored procedure is to "give a military demonstration in Japan, to be followed by a renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed." This coincides with my own preference, and is, as nearly as I can judge, the procedure that has found most favor in all informed groups where the subject has been discussed.

~~SECRET~~

H4115

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This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Sec. 793 and 794, and the transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, U. S. C. 50; 31 and 32. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~SECRET~~

Metallurgical Laboratory

P.O. BOX 5207
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

MUC-FD-L 15

This document consists of 1 pages and 0 figures
No. 1 of 5 copies, Series A

BUTTERFIELD 4300

July 13, 1945

DCV#-55042

To: A. H. Compton
From: Farrington Daniels
Re: Poll on the use of weapon

Following the suggestions of your letter, AC-2757. I took copies of excerpts of your letter individually to the eight different section chiefs and asked them to show the questions individually to some of the members of their group. These extracts which went to the section chiefs were marked "Secret", delivered in person, and all copies returned and destroyed.

Each person polled read the questions and placed in an envelope the number which most closely represented his choice. All the balloting was done on Thursday afternoon, July 12. The ballots were returned to me, and the counts are as follows:

<u>Suggestion No.:</u>	<u>No. of Votes:</u>	<u>% of Total Vote:</u>
(1)	23	15
(2)	69	46
(3)	39	26
(4)	16	11
(5)	3	2
	<u>150</u>	<u>100</u>

The Argonne Laboratory and the Patent Division were not polled. Approximately 2/3 of the remaining academic personnel voted.

The suggested procedures were as follows:

(1) Use the weapons in the manner that is from the military point of view most effective in bringing about prompt Japanese surrender at minimum human cost to our armed forces.

(2) Give a military demonstration in Japan, to be followed by a renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed.

(3) Give an experimental demonstration in this country, with representatives of Japan present; followed by a new opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed.

(4) Withhold military use of the weapons, but make public experimental demonstration of their effectiveness.

(5) Maintain as secret as possible all developments of our new weapons, and refrain from using them in this war.

~~SECRET~~

Farrington Daniels

H4662

H4415

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~~SECRET~~

This document consists of 3 pages
No. 1 of 6 copies, series A.

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
MANHATTAN ENGINEER DISTRICT
INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY DIVISION

CHICAGO BRANCH OFFICE
P. O. Box 6770-A
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

/js
27 August 1945

IN REPLY
REFER TO

REGISTERED MAIL

EIDM CIC

Dear Dr. Szilard:

Pursuant to our telephone conversation on 25 August 1945, I am submitting this letter to you to set forth, in writing, the reasons for my oral request that you reclassify the petition to the President of the United States dated 17 July 1945, of which you are the author.

Primarily, for purposes of review, I want to outline briefly certain discussions which have occurred between the Military Intelligence Division and yourself in connection with the petition and its military classification:

a. It is understood that when this petition was originally drawn you did not assign a military classification to it.

b. Sometime subsequent to the date of your petition you were informed by Major C. C. Pierce of the Washington Liaison Office of the Manhattan District that the petition should bear a military classification of "Secret". You agreed as to the justification for such a classification and it was so classified.

c. On 11 August 1945, you directed a letter to Captain J. H. McKinley stating that the petition "will no longer be treated as a classified document." You informed me on 16 August 1945 of this letter to Captain McKinley and I told you that the petition could now be declassified. My authority to so advise you was based on permission which I had received from my superiors in this division.

d. Subsequently, on 25 August, I was telephonically advised by my superiors that the question of a military classification for your petition had been reviewed by Major General L. R. Groves and that he, in the light of certain statements in the petition, as well as the very nature of the petition itself when coupled with certain world developments having military significance, had determined in the exercise of his best judgment to request that the petition be again classified secret by you with its attendant limitations. You were given this information telephonically on 25 August. You then requested a written statement officially placing request for reclassification before you.

definition, the military classification of "Secret" includes:

"Information, or features contained therein, the disclosure of which might endanger national security, cause serious injury to the interest or prestige of the nation or any governmental activity, or would be of great advantage to a foreign nation...."
Army Regulations 380-5, dated 15 May 1944; see also, Intelligence

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H3210

H4058

~~SECRET~~

This material contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

Date 5/13/60
For The Atomic Energy Commission

[Signature]
Director, Division of Classification

~~SECRET~~

Bulletin Number Five, Manhattan Engineer District, revised
1 Sept. 1944.

The authority to place a military classification of secret on documents is rather severely limited by the War Department. Civilians, normally, do not possess this authority. However, in the Manhattan District, such authority has upon occasion been delegated by the military authorities to the heads of organizations working for the Manhattan District and to certain other civilians designated by these heads. It is assumed that you have been one of those designated by Dr. Compton.

The authority to classify implies the authority to refrain from classifying, that is, to decide whether or not a certain document should bear any classification. Granted that you have the authority to classify or not to classify certain documents, any such authority which you possess is a delegated authority stemming from General Groves himself, through Dr. A. H. Compton, to you. It is, like all delegated authority in our government, subject to review by the delegator. General Groves has so reviewed your petition and your decision to declassify it and has determined, in the light of what must be conceded is a wider knowledge of the scope and present ramifications of the atomic bomb program, that the petition should be classified secret and hence its dissemination must be appropriately limited.

The knowledge which you have acquired by virtue of your position as an employee of the Metallurgical Project of the University of Chicago which, in turn, is supervised by the Manhattan District, has been, it must be assumed, the basis upon which you wrote your petition. The petition predicates a knowledge of the scope, objectives and potentialities of the Manhattan District Project, information concerning which you acquired by virtue of your official position with the Project.

You will recall that on 25 February 1942 you solemnly swore to "not by any means divulge or disclose any secret or confidential information" that you might obtain or acquire by reason of your connection with the N.D.R.C. unless authorized to do so. Since that N.D.R.C. work meshed into the O.S.R.D. and it, in turn, into the Manhattan District, I believe that any lawyer would advise you that secret and confidential information you acquired from your connection with the Manhattan District would come within the purview of this promise by you.

You have, from time to time, signed certain other secrecy agreements, Espionage Act declarations, and patent agreements with the United States as well as commitments in your present contract of employment and its supplement, all of which preclude the disclosure by you of any information considered secret by the head of the Manhattan District, Major General L. R. Groves.

It appears unnecessary to point out to you that any information considered "secret" by the highest authority which you divulge to persons unauthorized to receive it will be in violation of the above agreements and of the Espionage Act (Title I, Sec. 1, 40 Stat. 217 as amended by Pub. Act No. 443, Laws of 1940) and for which you may be held strictly accountable.

~~SECRET~~

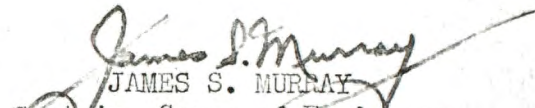
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Every effort is being made by General Groves and those above him to authorize the release of all information concerning the project which can be released without jeopardizing the safety or welfare of the people of the United States. It was the considered opinion of General Groves and those above him that your petition did not fall within the purview of such information which could be released without jeopardy.

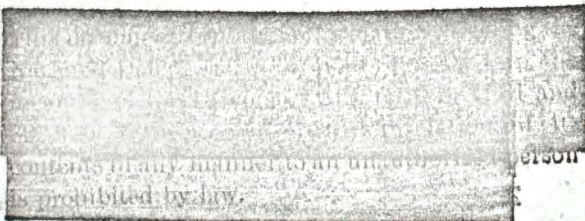
You asked me to point out certain passages in your petition which might be considered as justification for General Groves belief that it should be classified secret. The opinions which I give you are my own and the ones I would use in determining whether or not the petition should be classified. In my opinion, then, every paragraph of the petition either contains some information or implies "inside" information, i.e.—information gained through employment, which, when linked with the purpose of the petition, implies that internal dissent and fundamental differences in point of view disrupted the development and fruition of the District's work—an implication which you as well as I know is not founded on sober fact and which, if released at this time, might well cause "injury to the interest or prestige of the nation or governmental activity." Therefore, it follows that, in my opinion, the entire petition should be classified secret with no exception for any one paragraph.

As you already know, the War Department has set up a proper channel through which information can be released to the press or classified information can be brought to the attention of those government officials charged with determining the future of the Project. The first channel is through Lt. Col. W. A. Consodine, P. O. Box 2610, Washington, 25, D. C., and the second, in your case, is through Dr. A. H. Compton.

Sincerely,


JAMES S. MURRAY
Captain, Corps of Engineers
Intelligence Officer

cc: Lt. Col. W. B. Parsons, P. O. Box "E", Oak Ridge, Tenn.
Major Claude C. Pierce, Jr. P. O. Box 2610, Washington, D. C.
Capt. J. H. McKinley, P. O. Box 6140-A, Chicago 80, Ill.



~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

This document consists of 1 page
No. 1 of 6 copies, series A.

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
MANHATTAN ENGINEER DISTRICT
INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY DIVISION

CHICAGO BRANCH OFFICE

P. O. Box 6770-A

CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

IN REPLY
REFER TO

EIDM CIC

/js
28 August 1945

REGISTERED MAIL

Dear Dr. Szilard:

Since writing to you yesterday my attention has been called to the contract of employment between the Metallurgical Laboratory, The University of Chicago, and yourself. It is my understanding that you signed this contract on 28 June 1944 and that since that time it has been twice extended, the first extension covering the period 1 July 1944 to 30 June 1945, and the second extension covering the period 1 July 1945 to 30 June 1946.

Your attention is directed to Paragraph 7 of this contract which reads as follows:

"7. It is further understood that you will be bound by and observe all laws, rules and regulations of the United States Government applicable to contracts with respect to the work being carried on and to the disclosure of information with respect thereto. It is also understood that the Laboratory reserves the right and privilege to terminate this contract of employment immediately, for good and sufficient cause, including but not limited to incompetency, neglect of duty, violation of the applicable rules and regulations of the Laboratory or of the United States Government, or conduct inimical to the interests of the United States Government."

In my opinion the portion of the contract quoted above not only outlines certain contractual relations between you and the University, but specifically puts you on knowledge of the necessity for compliance with the regulations of the United States Government concerning disclosures of classified military information. May I repeat what I wrote you in my letter of 27 August, that such commitments as the above preclude the disclosure by you of any information considered secret by the head of the Manhattan District, Major General L. R. Groves.

~~This document contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 U.S.C., 81 and 32. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.~~

Sincerely,

James S. Murray
JAMES S. MURRAY
Captain, Corps of Engineers
Intelligence Officer

cc: Lt. Col. W. B. Parsons
Major Claude C. Pierce, Jr.
Capt. J. H. McKinley

E 393 9

~~SECRET~~

5/13/60

(6)

~~SECRET~~

5/17/60
July 13, 1945.

NDW-55433

We, the undersigned, agree in essence with the attached petition, but feel that our attitude is more clearly expressed if its last paragraph is replaced by the following:

We respectfully petition that the use of atomic bombs, particularly against cities, be sanctioned by you as Chief Executive only under the following conditions:

1. Opportunity has been given to the Japanese to surrender on terms assuring them the possibility of peaceful development in their homeland.
2. Convincing warnings have been given that a refusal to surrender will be followed by the use of a new weapon.
3. Responsibility for use of atomic bombs is shared with our allies.

L. W. Wohlstein
Alvin M. Weinberg
Louis A. Purdue
Lowell
Frank C. Hoop
Harry Goodale
Forrest H. Murray
Edmund D. Caswell
Arthur H. Sull
Richard Scoletta
Lyonel D. Norris, Jr.

David Lapan
Edwin P. Meiners, Jr.
Garland M. Bronck
J. H. Rush
Frederic Schuler
Raymond B. Sawyer
Harold Schweinler

~~SECRET~~

H4662

H4115

(8)

~~SECRET~~

5/13/64 DW-55435

A PETITION TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF CLINTON LABORATORIES

This paper has been drawn up in view of a recent petition addressed to Pres. Truman by L. Szilard, a noted physicist working on the Metallurgical Project. This petition requested the President to forego the use of a new powerful weapon in the war on Japan because of the moral issue involved. It went on to state that morally it was wrong to use such a powerful force but if practical necessities demand its use, then the moral issue should be bypassed. It should be used if the nation's life were endangered, the petition went on to say.

Are not the men of the fighting forces a part of that nation? Are not they, who are risking their lives for the nation, entitled to the weapons which have been designed? In short, are we to go on shedding American blood when we have available a means to a speedy victory? No! If we can save even a handful of American lives, then let us use this weapon -- now!

Furthermore, we fail to see the use of a moral argument when we are considering such an immoral situation as war. Any new weapon is regarded with some fear as to its inevitable consequences, but, with further developments, new weapons become everyday implements of war. Future generations will come to regard this latest device with less and less regard.

These sentiments, we feel, represent more truly those of the majority of Americans and particularly those who have sons and daughters in the foxholes and warships in the Pacific.

In initiating this counter-petition we feel that the greatest good it can serve is to vividly point to the jeopardy to which the original Szilard petition has exposed the Security of the DSM project. Certainly, if one such petition, with the information and dangerous implications it has, can pass through (or around as it may have) plant and project administration, we feel that every individual may assume open season and compete to be sure that his own acquiescence or dissension is equally well broadcast, all costs notwithstanding.

George W. Parker
D. S. Ballantine

H4662

H4115

~~SECRET~~

10

THE QUADRANGLE CLUB

CHICAGO

1155 East 57th St.

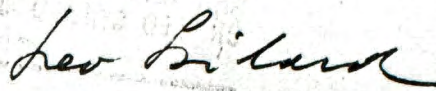
May 25, 1945

The Honorable Harry S. Truman
The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit to you a letter of introduction written by Professor Albert Einstein to the late President of the United States to whom--on account of his early death--I was unable to present it. The document to which Mr. Einstein's letter refers is attached as a second inclosure and is respectfully submitted for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Leo Szilard

~~SECRET~~

5/17/60
July 13, 1945.

NDW-55433

We, the undersigned, agree in essence with the attached petition, but feel that our attitude is more clearly expressed if its last paragraph is replaced by the following:

We respectfully petition that the use of atomic bombs, particularly against cities, be sanctioned by you as Chief Executive only under the following conditions:

1. Opportunity has been given to the Japanese to surrender on terms assuring them the possibility of peaceful development in their homeland.
2. Convincing warnings have been given that a refusal to surrender will be followed by the use of a new weapon.
3. Responsibility for use of atomic bombs is shared with our allies.

L. W. Washburn
 Alvin M. Weinberg
 Lewis A. Purdie
 Cowdell
 Frank C. Hoop
 Harry Goodale
 Forest H. Murray.
 Edmund D. Caswell
 Arthur H. Sull.
 Richard Scalletter
 Lionel D. Norris, Jr.

David Lapan
 Edwin P. Meiners, Jr.
 Gerald M. Branch, Jr.
 J. H. Rush
 Frederic Schuler
 Raymond B. Sawyer
 Harold Schweimler

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, U. S. C. 50, 31 and 32. Its transmission or revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~SECRET~~

H4662
 H4115
 (8)

RECORDS OF MEMORANDUMS
 DATE 3 OF 4 PAGES

July 24, 1945

DC V# - 55443

To: Colonel K. D. Nichols (2)

From: Arthur H. Compton

In re: Transmittal of Petitions addressed to the President

I have been requested to transmit the enclosed petition to the President of the United States. At the suggestion of General Groves, I am herewith handing it to you for disposition. Since the matter presented in the petition is of immediate concern, the petitioners desire the transmittal to occur as promptly as possible. It will be appreciated if you will inform me with regard to its disposition.

You will note that the signed draft of the petition is enclosed within a sealed envelope. I have personally verified that this envelope contains only signed copies of a petition, identical in text with the carbon copy attached, together with receipt forms for classified material. Mr. Szilard, in his covering letter, has requested that this envelope be opened only by those authorized to read the President's mail.

You have requested me to evaluate this petition and likewise those submitted to you by Mr. Whitaker on behalf of certain members of Clinton Laboratories.

The question of use of atomic weapons has been considered by the Scientific Panel of the Secretary of War's Interim Advisory Committee. The opinion which they expressed was that military use of such weapons should be made in the Japanese war. There was not sufficient agreement among the members of the panel to unite upon a statement as to how or under what conditions such use was to be made.

A small group of petitioners initially canvassed certain groups of scientists within the project seeking signatures requesting no use of the new weapons in this war. The response was such as to call forth several counter petitions, of which those submitted through Mr. Whitaker are typical, and to cause the formulator of the original petition to rephrase it so as to approve use of the weapons after giving suitable warning and opportunity for surrender under known conditions.

In order to obtain a fair expression of the opinion of a typical group of scientists, an opinion poll was conducted on a group of 150. The results are described in the enclosed memo to me from Dr. Daniels. You will note that the strongly favored procedure is to "give a military demonstration in Japan, to be followed by a renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed." This coincides with my own preference, and is, as nearly as I can judge, the procedure that has found most favor in all informed groups where the subject has been discussed.

~~SECRET~~

H4115

36.s.1

Annals *D*

Metallurgical Laboratory

August 11, 1945

METALLURGICAL LABORATORY
P. O. Box 5207, Chicago 80, Ill.
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

AUG 18 1945

Capt. J. H. McKinley
Area Engineer's Office
Metallurgical Laboratory
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

A.M. P.M.
7|8|9|10|11|12|1|2|3|4|5|6

Dear Capt. McKinley:

I am writing to inform you that the petition dated July 17, 1945 will no longer be treated as a classified document. If you see anything in the text of the petition that represents a military secret, I should be pleased to be so notified by you in writing prior to August 13, 5:30 p.m. so that your opinion might be given consideration before the text of the petition is communicated to persons not connected with our project.

Inasmuch as I have requested to be notified of any objections which might stand in the way of the release of the text of the petition on Monday, August 6, and have received no written notification on this subject, I shall consider myself free after 5:30 p.m., August 13, to use my own judgement (based on the judgement of my colleagues with whom I consult on this matter) to release at any time the text of the petition together with the statement that 67 scientists engaged in war work at the University of Chicago have sent such a petition to the President in July of this year. I shall not consider myself free to release the names of those who signed the petition.

If you or your superior should be of the opinion that as a matter of courtesy the White House ought to be notified before the text of the petition is released to the press, I shall be pleased to clear the matter with the White House myself.

The present letter does not necessarily mean that the text of the petition will, in fact, be released but it does mean that I wish to have a free hand to release if and when such a release appears to be advisable any time after 5:30 p.m., August 13.

Very truly yours,

Leo Szilard

Leo Szilard

LS:SW

Copy to Director of Metallurgical Laboratory

Copy
Metallurgical Laboratory

P.O. BOX 5207
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

BUTTERFIELD 4300

August 17, 1945

Mr. Matthew J. Connelly
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Connelly:

When Mr. Bartky and I called on you on May 25, you were kind enough to arrange ~~an~~ interview with Mr. Byrnes. H. C. Urey of Columbia University, Walter Bartky of the University of Chicago, and I saw Byrnes on May 28 and submitted to him a memorandum dated Spring, 1945 which was originally prepared for Mr. Roosevelt and which you have read. We are very grateful to you for the opportunity to present our views to Mr. Byrnes.

The enclosed envelope contains Mr. Einstein's letter, returned by Mr. Byrnes for transmittal to your office, and a copy of the memorandum which we left with Mr. Byrnes. You had previously seen both of these documents and they are merely transmitted for your files.

Enclosed also is the text of a petition which was signed by 67 scientists working in this Laboratory. It may not have crossed your desk since it had been transmitted in July via the War Department. Some of those who signed this petition have asked me that its text be now made public; and I wondered whether you would be good enough to let me know by August 24 if you considered its publication undesirable.

Very sincerely yours,



Leo Szilard

Metallurgical Laboratory

P.O. BOX 5207
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

July 19, 1945

BUTTERFIELD 4300

NDN-35430

9
~~SECRET~~

Dr. A. H. Compton
Metallurgical Laboratory
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Compton:

Enclosed is a petition to the President of the United States signed by 67 scientists residing in Chicago. You were good enough to say that you would forward this petition to the President via the War Department. Since those who have signed this petition are exercising a privilege under the Constitution, I believe that we are not free to disclose their names to anyone but to those who are authorized to open the mail of the President. May I, therefore, suggest that the petition be placed in an envelope addressed to the President and that the envelope be sealed before it leaves your office.

Enclosed are six unsigned copies of the petition which you may wish to communicate to others who ought in your opinion to be informed of the text of the petition.

It would be appreciated if in transmitting these copies you would draw attention in your covering letter to the fact that the text of the petition deals with the moral aspect of the issue only. Some of those who signed the petition undoubtedly fear that the use of atomic bombs at this time would precipitate an armament race with Russia and believe that atomic bombs ought not be demonstrated until the government had more time to reach a final decision as to which course it intends to follow in the years following the first demonstration of atomic bombs. Others are more inclined to think that if we withhold such a demonstration we will cause distrust on the part of other nations and are, therefore, in favor of an early demonstration. The text of the petition does not touch upon these and other important issues involved but deals with the moral issue only.

Very sincerely yours,



Leo Szilard

jjp
encls.

~~SECRET~~

July
5/13/60

H4115

H4662

3

"History" Salk Inst. Files

Metallurgical Laboratory

U.S. GOVERNMENT
CHICAGO 90, ILLINOIS

JULY 12, 1953

W D H - 22430

~~SECRET~~

Dr. A. H. Cowson
Metallurgical Laboratory
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Cowson:

Enclosed is a petition to the President of the United States signed by 67 scientists residing in Chicago. You were good enough to say that you would forward this petition to the President via the War Department. Since those who have signed this petition are exercising a privilege under the Constitution, I believe that we are not free to disclose their names to anyone but to those who are authorized to open the mail of the President. My I, therefore, suggest that the petition be placed in an envelope addressed to the President and that the envelope be sealed before it leaves your office.

Enclosed are six unsigned copies of the petition which you may wish to communicate to others who ought in your opinion to be informed of the text of the petition.

If you would be so good as to sign these copies you would draw attention to your covering letter to the fact that the text of the petition deals with the moral aspect of the issue only. Some of those who signed the petition undoubtedly feel that the use of atomic bombs at this time would precipitate an armament race with Russia and believe that atomic bombs ought not be demonstrated until the government had more time to reason a final decision as to which course it intends to follow in the years following the first demonstration of atomic bombs. Others are more inclined to think that if we withhold such a demonstration we will cause delay in the development of other atomic and are, therefore, in favor of an early demonstration. I believe that the text of the petition does not touch upon these and other important issues involved but deals with the moral issue only.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

Leo Szilard

UP
encl.

~~SECRET~~

W D H
7/12/53

(3)

W D H

W D H

NDN-55432
~~SECRET~~
5/13/60

To the President of the United States:

We, the undersigned scientific personnel of the Clinton Laboratories, believe that the world-wide social and political consequences of the power of the weapon being developed on this Project impose a special moral obligation on the government and people of the United States in introducing the weapon in warfare.

It is further believed that the power of this weapon should be made known by demonstration to the peoples of the world, irrespective of the course of the present conflict, for in this way the body of world opinion may be made the determining factor in the absolute preservation of peace.

Therefore we recommend that before this weapon be used without restriction in the present conflict, its powers should be adequately described and demonstrated, and the Japanese nation should be given the opportunity to consider the consequences of further refusal to surrender. We feel that this course of action will heighten the effectiveness of the weapon in this war and will be of tremendous effect in the prevention of future wars.

Signed:

Charles D. Coryell
Jack Siegel
Norman Elliott
Nathan E. Ballou
Waldo E. Cohn
S. G. English
Harrison S. Brown
Edward Shapiro
L. E. Glendenin
Melvin G. Bowman
Bernard J. Finkle
R. K. Maney
James G. Barrick
R. F. Leininger
John R. Dam
Elton H. Turk
Robert A. Penneman
A. W. Adamson
B. H. Ketelle
J. O. Blomeke
Robert L. Butenhoff
Jim Kroner
John B. Otto

~~Makin~~ Cecil M. Nelson
Ralph Livingston
Joseph Khym
Clinton R. Vanneman
John F. McBride
Donald S. Schover
Dwight C. Lincoln
Edward G. Gohlmann
Jack K. East
John F. Hunt
Walton A. Rodger
D. E. Koshland, Jr.
Joseph Halperin
Robert B. Scott
Louis B. Wenner
Russell R. Williams, Jr.
Glenn H. Jenks
William G. Leslie
Charles W. Stanby
L. H. Gevantman
J. E. Sattetzaher
Stanley Rasmussen

Paul C. Tompkins
R. W. Stoughton
Leionel S. Golding
Theodore B. Novey
Earl R. Purchase
Edward L. Brady
Howard Gest
A. J. Miller
William J. Knox
F. Boldridge
W. H. Burgus
M. Creek
Alan S. Jarrett
Kurt D. Kraus
Elwin H. Covey
Raymond R. Edwards
L. T. McClinton
A. R. Brosi
John A. Ghormley
C. J. Barkowski
Gordon Johnson
D. N. Hume

~~SECRET~~

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July 4, 1945

~~SECRET~~

NDN-55437

12
5/13/60

Dear

Inclosed is the text of a petition which will be submitted to the President of the United States. As you will see, this petition is based on purely moral considerations.

It may very well be that the decision of the President whether or not to use atomic bombs in the war against Japan will largely be based on considerations of expediency. On the basis of expediency, many arguments could be put forward both for and against our use of atomic bombs against Japan. Such arguments could be considered only within the framework of a thorough analysis of the situation which will face the United States after this war and it was felt that no useful purpose would be served by considering arguments of expediency in a short petition.

However small the chance might be that our petition may influence the course of events, I personally feel that it would be a matter of importance if a large number of scientists who have worked in this field went clearly and unmistakably on record as to their opposition on moral grounds to the use of these bombs in the present phase of the war.

Many of us are inclined to say that individual Germans share the guilt for the acts which Germany committed during this war because they did not raise their voices in protest against those acts. Their defense that their protest would have been of no avail hardly seems acceptable even though these Germans could not have protested without running risks to life and liberty. We are in a position to raise our voices without incurring any such risks even though we might incur the displeasure of some of those who are at present in charge of controlling the work on "atomic power".

The fact that the people of the United States are unaware of the choice which faces us increases our responsibility in this matter since those who have worked on "atomic power" represent a sample of the population and they alone are in a position to form an opinion and declare their stand.

Anyone who might wish to go on record by signing the petition ought to have an opportunity to do so and, therefore, it would be appreciated if you could give every member of your group an opportunity for signing.

This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, U. S. C. 50, 31 and 32. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

See below

Whenever signs are left to sign both copies attached to this letter. ---

115

~~SECRET~~

11662

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July 4, 1945

Apies
5/13/60

~~SECRET~~

NDN-55437

Dear *Walter Cohen*

Inclosed is the text of a petition which will be submitted to the President of the United States. As you will see, this petition is based on purely moral considerations.

It may very well be that the decision of the President whether or not to use atomic bombs in the war against Japan will largely be based on considerations of expediency. On the basis of expediency, many arguments could be put forward both for and against our use of atomic bombs against Japan. Such arguments could be considered only within the framework of a thorough analysis of the situation which will face the United States after this war and it was felt that no useful purpose would be served by considering arguments of expediency in a short petition.

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Anyone who might wish to go on record by signing the petition ought to have an opportunity to do so and, therefore, it would be appreciated if you could give every member of your group an opportunity for signing.

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See below

Whenever signs are let to sign both copies attached to this letter.

①

H4662

H 115

~~SECRET~~

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July 4, 1945

~~SECRET~~

NDN-55437

5/13/60

Dear ~~Walter Cohen~~

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However small the chance might be that our petition may influence the course of events, I personally feel that it would be a matter of importance if a large number of scientists who have worked in this field went clearly and unmistakably on record as to their opposition on moral grounds to the use of these bombs in the present phase of the war.

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See below

Whoever signs anything to sign both copies attached to this letter.

①

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~~SECRET~~

(Hist-C)

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SECRET

Metallurgical Laboratory

P.O. BOX 5207
CHICAGO 80, ILLINOIS

MUC- FD-L 15

This document consists of 1 pages and 0 figures
No. 1 of 5 copies, Series A

BUTTERFIELD 4300

July 13, 1945

DCV # - 55042

To: A. H. Compton
From: Farrington Daniels
Re: Poll on the use of weapon

Following the suggestions of your letter, AC-2757. I took copies of excerpts of your letter individually to the eight different section chiefs and asked them to show the questions individually to some of the members of their group. These extracts which went to the section chiefs were marked "Secret", delivered in person, and all copies returned and destroyed.

Each person polled read the questions and placed in an envelope the number which most closely represented his choice. All the balloting was done on Thursday afternoon, July 12. The ballots were returned to me, and the counts are as follows:

<u>Suggestion No.:</u>	<u>No. of Votes:</u>	<u>% of Total Vote:</u>
(1)	23	15
(2)	69	46
(3)	39	26
(4)	16	11
(5)	3	2
	<u>150</u>	<u>100</u>

The Argonne Laboratory and the Patent Division were not polled. Approximately 2/3 of the remaining academic personnel voted.

The suggested procedures were as follows:

(1) Use the weapons in the manner that is from the military point of view most effective in bringing about prompt Japanese surrender at minimum human cost to our armed forces.

(2) Give a military demonstration in Japan, to be followed by a renewed opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed.

(3) Give an experimental demonstration in this country, with representatives of Japan present; followed by a new opportunity for surrender before full use of the weapons is employed.

(4) Withhold military use of the weapons, but make public experimental demonstration of their effectiveness.

(5) Maintain as secret as possible all developments of our new weapons, and refrain from using them in this war.

H4662

H4115

SECRET

Farrington Daniels

9

July 17, 1945

A PETITION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Discoveries of which the people of the United States are not aware may affect the welfare of this nation in the near future. The liberation of atomic power which has been achieved places atomic bombs in the hands of the Army. It places in your hands, as Commander-in-Chief, the fateful decision whether or not to sanction the use of such bombs in the present phase of the war against Japan.

We, the undersigned scientists, have been working in the field of atomic power. Until recently we have had to fear that the United States might be attacked by atomic bombs during this war and that her only defense might lie in a counterattack by the same means. Today, with the defeat of Germany, this danger is averted and we feel impelled to say what follows:

The war has to be brought speedily to a successful conclusion and attacks by atomic bombs may very well be an effective method of warfare. We feel, however, that such attacks on Japan could not be justified, at least not unless the terms which will be imposed after the war on Japan were made public in detail and Japan were given an opportunity to surrender.

If such public announcement gave assurance to the Japanese that they could look forward to a life devoted to peaceful pursuits in their homeland and if Japan still refused to surrender our nation might then, in certain circumstances, find itself forced to resort to the use of atomic bombs. Such a step, however, ought not to be made at any time without seriously considering the moral responsibilities which are involved.

The development of atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction, and there is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the course of their future development. Thus a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.

If after this war a situation is allowed to develop in the world which permits rival powers to be in uncontrolled possession of these new means of destruction, the cities of the United States as well as the cities of other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation. All the resources of the United States, moral and material, may have to be mobilized to prevent the advent of such a world situation. Its prevention is at present the solemn responsibility of the United States--singled out by virtue of her lead in the field of atomic power.

The added material strength which this lead gives to the United States brings with it the obligation of restraint and if we were to violate this obligation our moral position would be weakened in the eyes of the world and in our own eyes. It would then be more difficult for us to live up to our responsibility of bringing the unloosened forces of destruction under control.

In view of the foregoing, we, the undersigned, respectfully petition: first, that you exercise your power as Commander-in-Chief, to rule that the United States shall not resort to the use of atomic bombs in this war unless the terms which will be imposed upon Japan have been made public in detail and Japan knowing these terms has refused to surrender; second, that in such an event the question whether or not to use atomic bombs be decided by you in the light of the consideration presented in this petition as well as all the other moral responsibilities which are

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
Date JUL 23 1957
For The Atomic Energy Commission
C. L. Marshall Mc Lighter
Director, Division of Classification

70 signatures
on original

40000