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April 6, 1945

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

Dr. J. R. Oppenheimer
P. O. Box 1663
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Per Les Redman 11-22-78
By Jerry G. Renna

Dear Oppenheimer:

Within the last two weeks General Groves, Dr. Conant, and I have discussed the preliminary version of my general account of the uranium project. In the light of this discussion I am now trying to revise it, and I hope that the revised version may be released for publication within the next six months.

In particular, the revision suggested for the chapter on the work at Y will very greatly reduce its scope. As I anticipated, the critical comment on the choice of the site will be deleted. I may say that I inserted this comment and similar comment in other chapters with the expectation that they would be removed before publication but with the feeling that it was desirable to record the existence of such opinions in the original draft. All discussion of ordnance work is also to be removed. There is no objection to including the general statement of the ordnance problem and all the other parts of the problem, but the approaches to solution that have been made will be omitted. On the other hand, the feeling is that there is no objection to including the nuclear physics. The General believes that the metallurgical work and a considerable amount of the chemistry work should be excluded on the ground that it would be extremely difficult for the average scientist to carry out any of this work without supplies and material which would not be available to him. I am not entirely clear how this criterion should be applied, but it probably means the elimination of the metallurgical work on plutonium and at least of some of the chemistry. I shall simply have to write a revised version and discuss it in detail with General Groves and Dr. Conant. One other general comment which they made is that more names should be included. While this comment applies more forcibly to some other chapters than to that on Y, it is a point to be borne in mind in criticizing what I have written.

Dr. Conant and the General also reported that you did not like the chapter as a whole but were unable to give any report of specific

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Dr. J. R. Oppenheimer

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criticism. Please do not hesitate to make them frankly and freely. I have not found the writing of this report an easy assignment. In the first place, it is difficult to assimilate and digest the material; in the second place, it is extremely difficult to write briefly and clearly for a vaguely semi-professional audience without oversimplification or inaccuracy. I have no illusions about the degree of success that I have achieved, and now is the time to make changes.

I still have pleasant recollections of my visit to Y, and wish that there were some occasion for my coming there again.

Sincerely yours,

HDS:mh

H. D. Smyth



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~~The~~ History & Organization. No ... because of
1st.

XII-12 get history of impl. right.

XII-14 Anderson Adv. Funding, Admin, Planning.

XII-23 Date of P_{240} start time?

XII-24 High energy ≈ 49 low?

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