

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. VANNEVAR BUSH:

I am greatly interested in your report of March ninth and I am returning it herewith for your confidential file. I think the whole thing should be *pushed* not only in regard to development, but also with due regard to time. This is very much of the essence. I have no objection to turning over future progress to the War Department on condition that you yourself are certain that the War Department has made all adequate provision for absolute secrecy.

F.D.R.



~~SECRET~~

UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON D. C. 20545
HISTORICAL DOCUMENT NUMBER 30

OFFICE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

1530 P STREET NW.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

VANNEVAR BUSH
Director

March 9, 1942.

The President,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

Johnston *H. J. Carroll*
(10-22-64)

Dear Mr. President:

On October 9, 1941, Mr. Wallace and I presented to you the status of research in this country and Great Britain on a possible powerful explosive.

In accordance with your instructions, I have since expedited this work in every way possible. I now attach a brief summary report of the status of the matter.

Considerations of general policy and of international relations have been limited for the present to a group consisting of Mr. Wallace, Secretary Stimson, General Marshall, Dr. Conant, and myself. Mr. Wallace called a conference of this group, to which he invited also Mr. Harold D. Smith as the matter of funds was there considered.

The technical aspects are in the hands of a group of notable physicists, chemists, and engineers, as noted in the report. The corresponding British organization is also indicated. The work is under way at full speed.

Recent developments indicate, briefly, that the subject is more important than I believed when I last spoke to you about it. The stuff will apparently be more powerful than we then thought, the amount necessary appears to be less, the possibilities of actual production appear more certain. The way to full accomplishment is still exceedingly difficult, and the time schedule on this remains unchanged. We may be engaged in a race toward realization; but, if so, I have no indication of the status of the enemy program, and have taken no definite steps toward finding out.

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-2-

The subject is rapidly approaching the pilot plant stage. I believe that, by next summer, the most promising methods can be selected, and production plants started. At that time I believe the whole matter should be turned over to the War Department.

You returned to me the previous reports, in order that I might hold them subject to your call. I shall be glad to guard this report also if you wish.

Respectfully yours,



V. Bush,
Director.

