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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Washington, D. C.

February 23, 1945.

Personal and Confidential

Hon. Henry L. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing you with reference to the so-called "Manhattan Project." According to the testimony before the War Department Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, of which as you know I am a member, this project was started some time in 1942 with funds which our committee gave the War Department in a lump sum to expedite production. I believe some engineers' service funds were also used.

At the time when these funds were made available the subcommittee, of course, had no knowledge that they were going to be used for such a tremendous project. It was not until considerable time later that members of our committee knew that there was such a project. During the hearings on the War Department bill last year, Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson, testified the total spent on this project up to that time was approximately \$400,000,000. My information was that the total sum spent up to that time was \$800,000,000. I asked Mr. Patterson about this other \$400,000,000 and after some consultation he came back the next day I believe it was and admitted that the War Department had spent an additional \$400,000,000, making a total of \$800,000,000 that had been allocated up to this time to this project. He asked for and received authority to use another \$600,000,000 bringing the total amount allocated to this project up to \$1,400,000,000.

Mr. Patterson further testified that there were two plants or locations and when I called his attention to the name of the third, he admitted that there were three. It was apparent to me that he knew very little, if anything, about the entire project.

When the subcommittee met I made the statement that I was not going along with this matter any longer unless these sums were justified. I expected, of course, General Grove or some other officer who had charge, to come before our committee and give us detailed information. Instead, however, General Marshall appeared the next morning, testified at some length but gave us no information which would justify the expenditure of the money. He was apparently peeved at me because I dared to ask for justification. When I pointed out the fact that Mr. Patterson had testi-

fied that the War Department had allocated to this project up to that time \$400,000,000, when actually \$900,000,000 had been allocated; that he testified there were two projects when there were actually three, General Marshall replied, "He is not supposed to know anything about it. The Secretary of War and I went to the Speaker of the House, the Majority and Minority Leaders and took the matter up with them." I replied that the responsibility for the expenditure of these funds was neither that of the Speaker nor of the Majority or Minority Leaders, it was the responsibility of the members of our subcommittee as well as the responsibility of every Member of the House. Despite the fact that I received no information upon which I could base any justification for the money, I went along with the appropriation.

I am now informed that the War Department came to the Deficiency Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee the other day, by-passing the regular subcommittee of which I am a member, and asked for a deficiency of some \$400,000,000. If this sum is granted it will mean that a total of \$1,800,000,000 has been allocated to this project.

I was informed that the War Department gave no information to the Deficiency Subcommittee, that they used the same answers - "prospects look good," "Germany is working on the same thing, if they get there first, we will lose the war," etc. When General Marshall made these statements, I questioned him as to just how he knew what Germany was doing and he admitted he had no definite information, he just thought so. He said the airplanes brought back reports of some plants in Germany that might manufacture the same kind of material.

It is difficult in my judgment to justify the expenditure of this tremendous sum of money for any purpose. It certainly is not good judgment for our committee to pass upon this sort of appropriation with no justifications. I have a great deal of information from outside sources regarding the matter. My information is that Dr. Conant of Harvard and other scientists sold the idea to the President and that it involved the job of "breaking down the atom." I was informed that "a barrel of it would destroy Berlin and keep it burning for a year" and other similar statements equally fantastic. General Marshall told us that the President, the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of War were the only ones who had information on the matter.

When I visited the powder, shell-loading and bag-loading plants in 1944, I asked permission to visit the three plants making up this project. While Mr. Patterson did not absolutely refuse, he was very insistent that I should not do so. I told him that it seemed rather strange to me that while he permitted 60,000 workers, male and female, blacks, yellow and white, Mexicans, Chinamen and Negroes, men of every race, creed and color to go to these plants daily, I a Member of Congress and a member of the subcommittee which had the responsibility of handling these tremendous funds was not permitted to even see what is going on. Despite the fact that I felt there was no justification for my not visiting the plants, I did not at that time insist upon doing so.

I have a great many reports of extravagance and waste of both material and manpower, some of these stories coming from people who claim to have worked there. I do not know, of course, whether these stories are true or not.

Mr. Secretary, the constitution places the responsibility for originating appropriation bills upon the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives has placed that responsibility upon the Appropriations Committee and as far as the War Department is concerned upon my subcommittee. There was a reason for doing this as you well know. I have a responsibility in the matter that I can no longer ignore.

I am respectfully requesting you and the War Department to justify in detail before our subcommittee the expenditures that have been made in the past on this project and those you propose to make in the future. I shall ask permission to visit this project, to go through the various plants and make a thorough survey. Unless this justification is made and unless I am given that permission, I shall introduce a resolution in the House asking for a thorough investigation of the whole matter. If I am compelled to do so, the responsibility will be that of yourself and the War Department in not furnishing the constitutional body charged with the responsibility of making appropriations, information upon which these expenditures are based.

I am also considering offering an amendment on the floor of the House striking from the Deficiency Bill the amendments pertaining to this project. During the debate I shall not, of course, use any information that I obtained in the committee or from the War Department which was given confidentially. I shall use only such information as I have obtained from outside War Department circles.

I am writing this letter in the kindest of spirit, but with a sense of duty which my conscience will not permit me to ignore any longer.

Sincerely yours,

/sgd/ ALBERT J. ENGEL

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