

Henry Stimson to Harry S. Truman, with attached draft press release, July 31, 1945. President's Secretary's File, Truman Papers.

WAR DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

July 31, 1945.

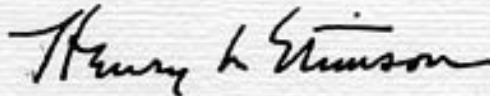
Dear Mr. President:

Attached are two copies of the ^{revised} statement which has been prepared for release by you as soon as the new weapon is used. This is the statement about which I cabled you last night.

The reason for the haste is that I was informed only yesterday that, weather permitting, it is likely that the weapon will be used as early as August 1st, Pacific Ocean Time, which as you know is a good many hours ahead of Washington time.

This message and inclosure are being brought to you by Lt. R. G. Arneson, whom Secretary Byrnes will recognize as the Secretary of the Interim Committee, appointed with your approval, to study various features of the development and use of the atomic bomb.

Faithfully yours,



Secretary of War.

The Honorable

The President.

DECLASSIFIED
... and 5(D) or (E)

_____ hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb
on _____ and destroyed its usefulness to the enemy.

That bomb has more power than 20,000 tons of T.N.T. It has more
than two thousand times the blast power of the British "Grand Slam"
which is the largest bomb ever yet used in the history of warfare.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor.
They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With
this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in
destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces.
In their present form these bombs are now in production and even
more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic
power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its
power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far
East.

Before 1939, it was the accepted belief of scientists
that it was theoretically possible to release atomic energy.
But no one knew any practical method of doing it. By 1942,
however, we knew that the Germans were working feverishly to
find a way to add atomic energy to the other engines of war with
which they hoped to enslave the world. But they failed. We
may be grateful to Providence that the Germans got the V-1's

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

~~TOP SECRET~~

and the V-2's late and in limited quantities and even more grateful that they did not get the atomic bomb at all.

The battle of the laboratories held fateful risks for us as well as the battles of the air, land and sea, and we have now won the battle of the laboratories as we have won the other battles.

Beginning in 1940, before Pearl Harbor, scientific knowledge useful in war was pooled between the United States and Great Britain, and many priceless helps to our victories have come from that arrangement. Under that general policy the research on the atomic bomb was begun. With American and British scientists working together we entered the race of discovery against the Germans.

The United States had available the large number of scientists of distinction in the many needed areas of knowledge. It had the tremendous industrial and financial resources necessary for the project and they could be devoted to it without undue impairment of other vital war work. In the United States the laboratory work and the production plants, on which a substantial start had already been made, would be out of reach of enemy bombing, while at that time Britain was exposed to constant air attack and was still threatened with the possibility of invasion. For these reasons Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt agreed that it was wise to carry on the project here. We now

have two great plants and many lesser works devoted to the production of atomic power. Employment during peak construction numbered 125,000 and over 65,000 individuals are even now engaged in operating the plants. Many have worked there for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in and they see nothing coming out of these plants, for the physical size of the explosive charge is exceedingly small. We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history -- and won.

But the greatest marvel is not the size of the enterprise, its secrecy, nor its cost, but the achievement of scientific brains in putting together infinitely complex pieces of knowledge held by many men in different fields of science into a workable plan. And hardly less marvellous has been the capacity of industry to design, and of labor to operate, the machines and methods to do things never done before so that the brain child of many minds came forth in physical shape and performed as it was supposed to do. Both science and industry worked under the direction of the United States Army, which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time. It is doubtful if such another combination could be got together in the world. What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history. It was done under high pressure and without failure.

~~TOP SECRET~~

R File

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth. Behind this air attack will follow sea and land forces in such numbers and power as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of which they are already well aware.

The Secretary of War, who has kept in personal touch with all phases of the project, will immediately make public a statement giving further details.

His statement will give facts concerning the sites at Oak Ridge near Knoxville, Tennessee, and at Richland near Pasco, Washington, and an installation near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Although the workers at the sites have been making materials to be used in producing the greatest destructive force in history they have not themselves been in danger beyond that of many other occupations, for the utmost care has been taken of their safety. A scientific report of the project will be made public tomorrow.

The fact that we can release atomic energy ushers in a new era in man's understanding of nature's forces. Atomic energy may in the future supplement the power that now comes from coal, oil, and falling water, but at present it cannot be produced on a basis to compete with them commercially. Before that comes there must be a long period of intensive research.

It has never been the habit of the scientists of this country or the policy of this Government to withhold from the world scientific knowledge. Normally, therefore, everything about the work with atomic energy would be made public.

But under present circumstances it is not intended to divulge the technical processes of production or all the military applications, pending further examination of possible methods of protecting us and the rest of the world from the danger of sudden destruction.

I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.

Not draft seen by
the Secretary of State.
with changes
pencilled in.

BRITISH SUGGESTIONS

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

1. Page 3, line 2, suggest adding "whereas at that time Britain was exposed to constant air attack and was still threatened with the possibility of invasion."

2. Page 6, line 6, for the words "unless or until some method of control can be devised that will protect us" suggest "pending further examination of possible methods of protecting us".



DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 502 and 503 or (D)
Dept. of State letter, Aug. 10, 1972
By SP-5/AM/MS Date 2-29-75

~~This document contains information national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 18 U.S.C. 793 and 794, the transmission or the disclosure of any of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

B B I I

CLASSIFIED
132, Sec. 302 and 303 of EO
13526, Dec. 31, 2000
A State Secret. Approved 10-19-99
BY: [Signature] DATE: 12-19-99

TOP SECRET
BMC 5-8.000

Copy - 01 - 1 copies each
of - 6 - pages series - B -

29 June 1945.

Two hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on the Nagasaki Naval Base and destroyed its usefulness to the enemy. [That bomb was many times as destructive as any bomb ever before dropped by any air force. It was the equivalent in blast power to the total aggregate blast power of all the bombs of a full scale B-29 raid.]

charged

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor.

They have been repaid a ^{many} thousandfold. And the end is not yet. ^{with this bomb we have now added a} We are now just beginning to add ^{new} a new and revolutionary

increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In ^{their} ^{thus} ^{new} its present form ^{the} ^{booms} are in ^{pro-}duction and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is ^{a harnessing of the basic} ~~the basic~~ power of the universe. ^{The force from which the sun draws its power} ~~The present power of the atomic bomb is enormous~~ ^{has been harnessed} ~~against those who brought war to the Far East.~~ when compared, pound for pound, with a regular explosive such as TNT.

~~Improvements are now in progress which will increase its present effectiveness. Furthermore, I am told by the scientists that over a period of many years atomic bombs may well be developed which may be a great deal more powerful than even the atomic bombs now in use.~~



¹⁹³⁹ Before ^{this} war began, it was the accepted belief of

scientists that it was theoretically possible to release atomic

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

TOP SECRET

B B FILE

~~TOP SECRET~~
BMC 5-9, DOC
- 2 -

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(c) and 5(D) or (E)
Dept. of State Letter, Aug. 10, 1972
By ALC/HLC/NAD Date 8-29-75

energy. But no one knew any practical method of doing it. By 1942, however, we knew that the Germans were working feverishly to find a way to add atomic energy to the other engines of war with which they hoped to enslave the world. But they failed. We may be grateful to Providence that the Germans got the V-1's and the V-2's late and in limited quantities and even more grateful that they did not get the atomic bomb at all.



The battle of the laboratories held fateful risks for us as well as the battles of the air, land and sea, and we ^{have} ~~have~~ won the battle of the laboratories as we ^{have} won the other battles.

Beginning in 1940, before Pearl Harbor, scientific knowledge useful in war was pooled between the United States and Great Britain, and many priceless helps to our victories have come from that arrangement. Under that general policy the research on the atomic bomb was begun. With American and British scientists working together we entered the race of discovery against the Germans.

The United States had available the large number of scientists of distinction in the many needed areas of knowledge. It had the tremendous industrial and financial resources necessary for the project and they could be devoted to it without undue impairment of other vital war work. In the United States the laboratory work and the production

7434 232 43188-8
BMC 5-10.DOC
- 3 -

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 2(D) and 5(D) or (E)
Dept. of State letter, Aug. 10, 1972
BMC 5-10.DOC

plants, on which a substantial start had already been made, would be out of reach of enemy bombing. For these reasons the Prime Minister of Great Britain and President Roosevelt agreed that it was wise to carry on the project here. We now have two great plants and many lesser works devoted to the production of atomic power. Employment during peak construction numbered 125,000 and over 65,000 individuals are even now engaged in operating the plants. Many have worked there for two and a half years. Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in and they see nothing coming out of these plants, for the physical size of the explosive charge is exceedingly small. We have spent two billion dollars on the greatest scientific gamble in history -- and won. But the greatest marvel is not the size of the enterprise, its secrecy, nor its cost, but the achievement of scientific brains in putting together infinitely complex pieces of knowledge held by many men in different fields of science into a workable plan. And hardly less marvellous has been the capacity of industry to design, and of labor to operate, the machines and methods to do things never done before so that the brain child of many minds came forth in physical shape and performed as it was supposed to do. Both groups worked under the direction of the United States Army, which achieved a unique success in managing so diverse

Insert
see
cover
note # 1



a problem in the advancement of knowledge in an amazingly short time. It is doubtful if such another combination could be got together in the world. What has been done is the greatest achievement of organized science in history. It was done under high pressure and without failure.

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We can destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. *Let there be no mistake: we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.*
~~troops follow the air forces, the Japanese armies will be crippled for material help to an extent far exceeding the Germans. There is but one way for the Japanese people to escape an even worse fate than overcame Germany. Surrender now will save for them their cities except for the destruction already wrought. It will save for them countless lives of their people. It is for them to choose between surrender and destruction. Those in command will see what is left where Nagasaki stood a few hours ago and decide.~~



*It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. ~~Japan that a continuation of the war would destroy the industrial civilization that it has taken three centuries to build. Their rulers paid no heed. If they pay no heed now~~ *do not now accept another* they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which*

destruction

Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum.

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

~~TOP SECRET~~

B B F I I I

Behind this air attack will

follow

has never been seen on this earth, ~~followed by the sea and~~
~~land forces of the United States~~ in such numbers and power
as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of
which they are already well aware.

The Secretary of War, who has kept in personal touch
with all phases of the project, will immediately make public
a statement giving further details.

His statement will give facts concerning the ^{sites} ~~great~~
~~plants~~ at Oak Ridge near Knoxville, Tennessee, and at Richland
near Pasco, Washington, and an installation near Santa Fe, New
Mexico. Although the workers at the ^{sites} ~~plants~~ have been making
materials to be used in producing the greatest destructive
force in history they have not themselves been in danger
beyond that of many other occupations, for the utmost care
has been taken of their safety. A scientific report of the
project will be made public tomorrow.

The fact that we can release atomic energy ushers in a
new era in man's understanding of nature's forces. Atomic
energy may in the future supplement the power that now comes
from coal, oil, and falling water, but at present it cannot
be produced on a basis to compete with them commercially.
Before that comes there must be a long period of intensive
research.

It has never been the habit of the scientists of this

This document contains information of
national defense of the United States
within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 18 U.S.C.
or within the meaning of the
Atomic Energy Act of 1954 or the re-
visions thereof, and its transmission or disclosure
is prohibited by law.

~~TOP SECRET~~

ARY
ary's Files

~~TOP SECRET~~

BMC 5-13, 00

- 6 -

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(D) and 5(D) or (E)
Dept. of State letter, Aug. 12, 1977
By ~~66245~~ NARS Date ~~2/24/78~~

country or the policy of ^{this} ~~the~~ Government to withhold from the world scientific knowledge. Normally, therefore, everything about the work with atomic energy would be made public.

But under present circumstances it is not intended to divulge the technical processes of production or all the military applications, ^{pending further examination of possible} ~~unless a suitable method of control~~ ^{methods of protecting} ~~can be devised that will protect us and the rest of the world from the danger of sudden destruction.~~

I shall recommend that the Congress of the United States consider promptly the establishment of an appropriate commission to control the production and use of atomic power within the United States. I shall give further consideration and make further recommendations to the Congress as to how atomic power can become a powerful and forceful influence towards the maintenance of world peace.

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