

delivery was unlikely. No schedule could guarantee that the United States would overtake Germany in the race for the bomb, but by the beginning of 1943 the Manhattan Project had the complete support of President Roosevelt and the military leadership, the services of some of the nation's most distinguished scientists, and a sense of urgency driven by fear. Much had been achieved in the year between Pearl Harbor and the end of 1942.

No single decision created the American atomic bomb project. Roosevelt's December 28 decision was inevitable in light of numerous earlier ones that, in incremental fashion, committed the United States to pursuing atomic weapons. In fact, the essential pieces were in place when Roosevelt approved

Bush's November 9, 1941, report on January 19, 1942. At that time, there was a science organization at the highest level of the federal government and a Top Policy Group with direct access to the President. Funds were authorized, and the participation of the Corps of Engineers had been approved in principle. In addition, the country was at war and its scientific leadership—as well as its President—had the belief, born of the MAUD report, that the project could result in a significant contribution to the war effort. Roosevelt's approval of \$500 million in late December 1942 was a step that followed directly from the commitments made in January of that year and stemmed logically from the President's earliest tentative decisions in late 1939.