

Tolman

OK

16 February 1946

Major General L. R. Groves
Post Office Box 2610
Washington, D. C.

My dear General Groves:

There is inclosed a carbon copy of a memorandum addressed to you dated 20 January 1946, subject: "Second Report of Committee on Declassification". This report which is signed by Colonel Ruhoff and myself as Secretary and Chairman may be properly regarded as representing the opinion of the Committee. A preliminary draft of the memorandum received unqualified approval from six members of the Committee; the other two members each made one suggestion and attention has been called to these in footnotes.

The original copy of the memorandum is being sent around to the members of the Committee for signature. I shall forward it to you as soon as it has been signed.

Very truly yours,

Richard C. Tolman

RICHARD C. TOLMAN
Chairman,
Committee on Declassification

1 Incl.

Cpy Memo to Gen. Groves dtd 20 Jan 46.

- cc: Dr. R. F. Bacher
- Dr. A. H. Compton
- Dr. E. O. Lawrence
- Dr. J. R. Oppenheimer
- Dr. F. H. Spedding
- Dr. H. C. Urey

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
DATE AUG 30 1972
For The U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
R. T. Jackson
Division of Classification



20 January 1946

MEMORANDUM TO MAJOR GENERAL L. R. GROVES:

SUBJECT: Second Report of Committee on Declassification.

I. Meetings.

The Committee on Declassification held meetings in Wilmington, Delaware on 27 December, and in New York City on 28 and 29 December. The Committee conferred with representatives of the following organizations:

du Pont Company
Harshaw Chemical Company
Hooker Electrochemical Company
Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation
General Electric Company
Westinghouse Electric Corporation
Tennessee Eastman Corporation
Kellex Corporation
Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company
Chrysler Corporation
Crane Company
Union Carbide & Carbon Corporation

II. Attendance.

Dr. R. C. Tolman, Chairman, Dr. F. H. Spedding, Dr. H. C. Urey, and Lt. Col. J. R. Ruhoff attended the meetings of the Committee. Dr. R. F. Bacher, Dr. A. H. Compton, Dr. E. O. Lawrence and Dr. J. R. Oppenheimer were unable to attend.

III. Recommendations.

The Committee wishes to make the following recommendations at this time as a supplement to those in our memorandum of 17 November. If approved they could be implemented by action of the District Declassification Office.

1. Item 1 of Section IX C, Class I (Page 9 of the memorandum of 17 November) should be changed from: "Basic theoretical work on cascade design and kinetic chemistry, although specific applications to the project cascade and to conditioning respectively should not be declassified." to:

"1 a. Basic theoretical work on reflux separation processes, without reference to diffusion cascades. ¹(See footnote Page 2)

- 1 b. Theoretical work on chemical kinetics such as was developed in connection with corrosion problems, but without reference to the conditioning of barriers.¹
2. It is believed that in a few carefully selected cases certain specific fields and certain specific contracts can be declassified as entities. Recommendations for the declassification of a field or of a contract should originate with the Director of the organization concerned, and should be given special consideration both by a Responsible Reviewer and by the Declassification Office before such declassification of a whole field or contract is carried out. In notifying the contractor concerned the limitations as to just what has been declassified must be carefully spelled out and, in particular, clear statements must be made as to the necessity for concealing the connection and interest of the Manhattan District in the work in those cases where that policy is found necessary.
3. Recommendations for the declassification of routine business correspondence and other non-technical documents should originate with the Director of the organization concerned, and should be acted upon by a Commissioned Officer such as the Area Engineer, Contracting Officer, or an officer from the Declassification Office, with the assistance of technically trained enlisted men or technically trained civilians, omitting approval by a Responsible Reviewer. It is believed that this procedure will avoid placing an unnecessary and unbearable burden on Responsible Reviewers whose actual function is to consider the declassification of scientific and technical material.
4. The Committee contemplates that the declassification organization will proceed promptly with the declassification of material which is being prepared for publication or which is being declassified for application in industrial operations. It is possible, however, that the declassification organization will find from time to time that there are more requests for declassification than can be handled expeditiously. Under such circumstances the declassification organization must give first priority to documents which are being prepared for

¹This wording for item 1 of Section IX C, Class I, has the concurrence of all of the members of the Committee except one who has suggested that the wording of this topic should be studied further. This is being done.

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publication or which contain information which is to be put to use promptly in industry. The declassification of old technical reports, drawings, notebooks, and the like, which are in the files must not be allowed to delay declassification of material which is to be generally released or made of industrial use.

5. The sections of the District Security Manual dealing with the classification of new documents and with the procedures for declassification should be revised from time to time as is found necessary so that their provisions are consistent with current District declassification policy. Recommendations to this end should be made by the Declassification Office to the District Engineer; contractors should be kept informed as to what the current District rules for classification and declassification are.
6. Care must be taken to determine whether the association or connection of the Manhattan District with a given document or field can properly be revealed. Consideration should be given to this matter in each instance in which declassification is contemplated. If the Director of the organization originating the request for declassification and the Responsible Reviewer agree on a given recommendation in any instance, the Declassification Office should concur, while if the Director of the organization and the Responsible Reviewer disagree, the Declassification Office should not permit association or connection of the information with the Manhattan District to be revealed.
7. The District Declassification Office should take an active and positive position in requiring organization Directors to submit material for declassification, if it is properly declassifiable and is of value and interest to science and industry.
8. Great care should be taken to see that the Manhattan District declassification policy is uniformly applied throughout the entire Project.
9. Declassification must be carried out in a consistent manner; e.g., secrecy orders in the patent office should be lifted when the subject matter is declassified by the Manhattan District. It is presumed that this will require collaboration of the District Declassification Office with the Office of the Patent Advisor.

10. There is some question as to the best treatment of information on the details of manufacturing processes. It has been suggested by some of the companies consulted that this might be handled by retaining classification and making the information available only to a few selected companies other than those that already have it. This would presumably permit the manufacture of the items in question and result in their being made available to the country without general disclosure of the methods of manufacture. This suggestion is transmitted to you by us without recommendation.²

IV. Comments.

The Committee wishes to make the following comments at this time although in many instances they fall outside the specific directive of the Committee.

1. Once information has been declassified it should be made accessible to everyone either through publication or by deposition in a central library—for instance in Washington or in Oak Ridge.
2. It is essential that a definite publication policy should be established within the District and that all organizations should be required to conform to it. This is particularly important in connection with the timing of publications.
3. There is considerable concern among industrial organizations as to how the government will handle the patents over which it has acquired control as a result of the work of the Manhattan District. A statement of the policy which the Government will follow ought to be made as soon as conditions permit.
4. One industrial organization expressed doubt as to what course they should follow when they receive orders from foreign countries for equipment which they believe can be used for work similar to that undertaken by the Manhattan District. They asked that the matter should be studied further and an appropriate mechanism established, if necessary, for handling instances of this sort. It was pointed out by the Chairman of the Committee that the company should consult with their local Area Engineer or the District Engineer on matters of this sort.

²The last sentence of paragraph 10 was added as a result of the suggestion of one of the members of the Committee.

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V. Conclusion:

The Committee is pleased to learn that you have already initiated the organization of the District Declassification Office proposed in our previous memorandum. Concurrently with the preparation of the present memorandum the Committee is giving consideration to the drafting of a communication to the members of the Senate Atomic Energy Committee expressing our ideas as to an appropriate declassification policy. It is hoped that this may be of assistance in supporting the constructive and forward looking declassification policy which you are undertaking.

F. H. SPEDDING

A. H. COMPTON

R. F. BACHER

H. C. UREY

E. O. LAWRENCE

J. R. OPPENHEIMER

Richard C. Tolman

RICHARD C. TOLMAN

Chairman,

Committee on Declassification

J. R. Ruhoff

J. R. RUHOFF

Secretary to the Committee
on Declassification