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"Was It Moral for a Scientist to Work on the Hydrogen Bomb?"  
12 November 1954.

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# The Temple Bulletin

OF  
Congregation Emanu-El B'ne  
Jeshurun  
Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin

Vol. 22, No. 4

November 3, 1954

Heshvan 7, 5715

## Sabbath Services

Friday Evening, November 5, at 8 o'clock

RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

will speak on:

"MAIMONIDES -- 750th YAHREZIT"

WHAT IS HIS MESSAGE FOR TODAY?

Friday Evening, November 12, at 8 o'clock

RABBI HERBERT A. FRIEDMAN

will speak on:

"WAS IT MORAL FOR A SCIENTIST TO  
WORK ON THE HYDROGEN BOMB?"

## Sabbath Morning Services

11:15 a.m.

Saturday Morning, November 13, 11:15 o'clock

ALLEN BLOOM

son of Mr. and Mrs. David Bloom

will be Bar Mitzvah

# THE TEMPLE BULLETIN

Published by

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# Kaddish List

(Taken from Memorial Tablets)

November 5  
Benjamin Painter

November 12  
Abel Berkoff  
Victor Elconin  
Joseph E. Heller  
Leopold Heller  
Rae Manasse  
Arthur Polachek  
Jacob H. Simonson  
Benedict Strnad  
Julia Strauss  
Daniel Whitehead  
Arthur Zitron

## SERMON NOTES

**MAIMONIDES — 750th YAHREZIT**  
**WHAT IS HIS MESSAGE FOR TODAY?**

November 5

Moses Maimonides, one of the greatest Jewish personalities of all times, died in Egypt in 1204. This year we take note of the 750th anniversary of his death by attempting to re-evaluate the meaning of his life. The external facts are well known. Forced to flee from his native Spain, he lived in Morocco for a time, and then fled again to Egypt, where he became the personal physician to the Sultan.

In his philosophy, he attempted the major task of reconciling the teachings of Judaism with those of Aristotle. Maimonides' major works have endured through the centuries. While there is much in his philosophy which may no longer appear relevant, still he offered remarkable insights into certain universal problems. There is much in what he said which can be most helpful to us today.

H.A.F.

**WAS IT MORAL FOR A SCIENTIST**  
**TO WORK ON THE HYDROGEN BOMB?**

November 12

It is only natural, one day after Armistice Day, to think of the evil of war, and how much more horrible future war might be with the new bombs.

Why did scientists agree to continue work on these devilish projects? It could be argued that the A-bomb was a war-time necessity. But what of the H-bomb? There are those who say that the physicists, engineers, research men and all others who participated are guilty of the highest immorality — for they fashioned weapons of unheard of power against their fellow men. Others protest that the scientists are not at fault, but the diplomats and politicians who fail to make peace at the council tables must be blamed if war breaks out.

Is there any moral question involved? Was Oppenheimer's conscience a factor in his opposition? Was he right?

H.A.F.

## RESERVE THE DATE!

Saturday Evening, November 20th

## SISTERHOOD - MEN'S CLUB DINNER DANCE

(preceded by cocktail parties)

## "Thanks"

We wish to thank those who participated in decorating the beautiful Succah which graced our pulpit this season:

Mr. and Mrs. Norman Abrahams, Alice, Jim and Jane Abrahams; Donald Ansfield; Ariel Bar Sela; Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Cohan, Debra, Jerry and David Cohan; Eva Ann Coifman; Julie Elliott; Dr. and Mrs. B. L. Feldman, Dorene and Armin Feldman; Mrs. Ben Galin, Susan and Richy Galin; Nancy and Louise Jung; Mrs. Robert Krauskopf; Frances and Kenneth Hurwitz; Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Levine and Dick Levine; Dr. and Mrs. Robert W. Mann, Kathy, Connie and Dick Mann; Norman and Bernard Marks; Fred Mayer; Judy Scheinfeld; Mr. and Mrs. Harold Watkins, Ruth, Rhona and Ramey Watkins; S. Harry Stern and Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Youngerman.

Thanks, also, to the following who served as ushers at the service on Monday evening, October 11:

Messrs.: Robert Gordon; Ernie Lane; Robert Mann; Phillip Schiff; S. Harry Stern; Gustave Wand and Burton Zucker.

### RECENTLY ELECTED OFFICERS

The following young people have been elected Officers of the Confirmation Class for the coming year:

Co-Presidents—Todd Lappin and Edward Pereles; Vice President—Micky Fisher; Secretary—Sandra Smith; Treasurer—Robert Berkoff and Social Chairmen—Barbara Kay and Tom Kohn.

On Saturday morning, October 30th, these boys and girls were installed as Officers of the Religious School:

President—Myron Weisfeldt, 9C; Vice President—Michael Forman, 8A; Secretary—Linda Goldman, 7C; and Treasurer—Terry Forman, 6A.

### FLOWERS FOR OUR ALTAR

The Sisterhood acknowledges with thanks the receipt of the following contributions to its Floral Fund:

IN HONOR OF: Mr. and Mrs. Ben Feld on their 60th wedding anniversary.

Mrs. Morris D. Callen's recovery.

IN MEMORY OF: Leo J. Kohn, Isaac and Ethel Kohn, Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Schwartz and Ishmael Bratt.

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ENDOWMENT FUND

The Temple Endowment Fund received gifts during the past several months:

*For Memorial Plates:* From Mr. and Mrs. Ben Feld in memory of Emil Feld. From Mrs. Leo Zucker in memory of Leo Zucker. From Miss Lillian Friedman in memory of Sarah Friedman and Sam Friedman. From Mrs. Louis A. Weisfeldt in memory of Dr. Louis A. Weisfeldt. From Mrs. Leo Werner in memory of Leo Werner.

*General Contributions:* From Mr. and Mrs. Emil Hersh in honor of Rabbi Joseph L. Baron. From Dr. and Mrs. Abe Melamed in memory of Dr. Maurice J. Ansfield and Dr. Louis A. Weisfeldt. From Dr. and Mrs. Francis Rosenbaum in memory of Dr. Maurice J. Ansfield. From Mrs. Joseph Lieberman in memory of Joseph Lieberman. From the Shadur Family in memory of Addie Karger.

### INTER FAITH ACTIVITY

On Saturday morning, October 9th, mothers of students of the sixth grade in our religious school and their children served as hosts to 43 youngsters of the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades of the religious school of the First Methodist Church, Delavan, Wisconsin.

The luncheon for the Delavan visitors was arranged by our Temple Sisterhood in co-operation with the Midwest Regional Office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and the Milwaukee Jewish Council.

Sisterhood members who participated in the arrangements were:

Mmes.: Norman Abrahams, Jack Abraham, Erwin Berk, Marvin Gordon, Maxwell Lerner, Harry Pittelman, Maurice Siegel, Raymond Strauss, and Alan Zien.

### NEEDED!

The Temple is in need of an upright piano for the Vestry room. If you have such a piano, which you are not presently using, we will be happy to receive it. Please call Miss Friedman, ED. 2-6960.

### TAX EXEMPTION NOW 30%

The attention of our members is called to the new tax law. The limit on charitable contributions for individuals has been increased from 20% to 30%, provided the extra 10% is donated to your Temple, a tax exempt hospital, or a tax exempt educational institution.

Dues and other contributions to Temple and its auxiliary organizations are income tax deductions.

*Don't Forget*

THE TEMPLE BOND DINNER

Sunday Evening, November 7, at 6:30 o'clock

*~~~~~*

*Honorable ABBA EBAN*

Ambassador of Israel to the United States

is speaking at the

Venetian Room of the Astor Hotel

in the interest of

Israel Government Bonds

AMERICAN JEWISH  
ARCHIVES  
*~~~~~★~~~~~*

Reservations, at \$4.00 per plate, should be accompanied by checks made payable to Lawrence S. Katz and sent to the Temple, 2419 E. Kenwood Blvd.

THE TEMPLE BULLETIN

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1.

I. Furore aroused by this book, "The Hydrogen Bomb: The Men, The Menace, The Mechanism." by James Shepley and Clay Blair, Jr.  
37 29

1. Strauss offered to buy the manuscript and lock it in a safe for 25 years until most of the individuals involved in the H-bomb controversy were dead.
2. Gordon Dean, preceding AEC chairman, wrote angry review of book for Bulletin of Atomic Scientists. He wrote "These two boys have done a serious disservice. Their book may very well do what the Communists would love to do - undermine the atomic energy program of this country."
3. Dr. Norris Bradbury, director of Los Alamos Laboratory, called his first press conference in eight years to refute some of the charges of the book, - i.e. that Los Alamos was "loaded with communists and former communists" and that the laboratory had dragged its heels for years on the H-bomb.

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II. What are charges of the book?

That Oppenheimer was against developing the H-bomb.

That he and his prestige prejudiced other scientist vs. it.  
e. g. Einstein.

That Los Alamos did not cooperate

That AEC under Lillienthal was against.

That Teller wanted to develop    )  
That Strauss wanted to develop    }  
That McMahon wanted to develop    }

III. Morality involved as factor in opposition.

A. Lilienthal generally regarded atomic weapons with a sense of revulsion. He was dedicated to the advancement of the benign uses of atomic energy.

Even after the Klaus Fuchs revelation, 27 Jan. '50 and when Truman's special sub-committee met, 31 Jan, Acheson and Johnson were for - Lilienthal against, morally, saying, that he had a "visceral feeling this is wrong."

B. Oppenheimer

"In some crude sense, which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose."

On one occasion, at the White House, Oppenheimer had wept in the presence of Truman because of "the blood on our hands."

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Many scientists had contributed their genius in a total effort against the total evil of Hitler. When Hitler was killed (and the bomb not yet used) a sense of having created an unnecessary evil overwhelmed the.

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C. The leaders in the anti-H-bomb lobby were the opinion leaders of U. S. science: Einstein, Rabi, Bacher, Conant, Szilard and others. The effect of their arguments on the younger scientists was massive. They stayed away from Los Alamos in droves.

Right after Truman's decision twelve of nation's leading physicists issued a statement that said:

"We believe that no nation has the right to use such a bomb, no matter how righteous its cause. This bomb is no longer a weapon of war but a means of extermination of whole populations. Its use would be a betrayal of all standards of morality and of Christian civilization itself. To create such an ever-present peril for all the nations of the world is against the vital interests of both Russia and the United States."

D. Einstein added his personal word against making the H-bomb:

"The idea of achieving military security through national armaments is a disastrous illusion. The armament race between the USA and the USSR assumes hysterical character. The H-bomb appears on the public horizon as a probably attainable goal. If successful, radioactive poisoning of the atmosphere and hence annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibilities. In the end there beckons more and more clearly general annihilation."

E. GAC voted against it, 29 Oct. '49 on five grounds:

1. It is immoral
2. It is too expensive
3. It might not prove feasible
4. It is excessively destructive
5. It has no peace-time use.

After that meeting Fermi and Rabi wrote:

"The fact that no limits exist to the destructiveness of this weapon make its very existence and the knowledge of its construction a danger to humanity as a whole. It is necessarily an evil thing, considered in any light. For these reasons we believe it important for the President of the U.S. to tell the American public and the world that we think it is wrong on fundamental ethical principles to initiate the development of such a weapon."

F. Sum up position of antis:

1. Morally wrong
2. Would put Russia further on the defensive (hence <sup>2</sup> ~~more~~ <sup>more</sup> easier to provoke)
3. Would retard peace by stimulating arms race
4. Equilibrium in A-bombs was sufficient
5. Russia "imitates" us. *If we don't make it, she won't.*

IV. What are major arguments for going ahead with it?

1. Russia will soon have it
2. Strength is a deterrent
3. Unilateral disarmament is a greater sin, for it encourages aggression (i.e. only when Russia knew she had the A-bomb - first explosion was in August '49 - did she feel free to unleash the Korean war - June 50)
4. It is not prohibitively expensive
5. It can be made to yield peace-time benefits.

V. What is present status of A-weapons?

Hanson Baldwin

"The atomic arms race is increasing in intensity".  
Russia has exploded ten nuclear weapons (including one H) in five years.

U.S. has exploded 49 in nine years.

Britain has exploded 3

"Stockpiles of operational, deliverable weapons are steadily increasing. These stockpiles probably are numbered in a very sizable 4 figures in the U.S., in a sizable three figures in the Soviet Union, and in two figures in Britain."

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"The means and methods of waging warfare are still increasing far more rapidly than man's ability to control these instruments of destruction."

One H-bomb now packs the power of all the bombs we used on Hitler, Mussolini and Japan combined.

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VI. What is present war-making potential?

"At any time in the year 1954, the U.S. Strategic Air Command had the capability, if the President of the United States issued such an order, to rain down complete urban annihilation on the Soviet Union. Literally within two hours after the first SAC bomber penetrated the Soviet early-warning system, the U.S. - if everything went according to plan-could put 1,000 atomic bombs of <sup>1/2 million tons TNT</sup> 500 kilotons' force on Soviet targets. The bombers would penetrate simultaneously from around a 17,000 - mile perimeter, into the 350 million cubic miles of air over the U.S.S.R. The possibility of the Red Air Force blunting this attack in any appreciable degree is remote.

Within another year after 1954 most of the bombs in such a raid would be not 500 kiloton bombs but thermonuclear bombs of at least 15 <sup>million tons TNT</sup> megatons' force. One thousand Soviet targets wiped from the face of the earth would leave little else to hit even in such a vast land.

None of these bizarre statistics should hold false assurances for Americans. Within only a few years or even less the Red Air Force, SUSAC, must be conceded the same capability against the U.S."

## VII. Conclusions

1. It is done and cannot be undone.
2. If leading scientists had moral qualms and compunctions about its manufacture- how much more so should our government be careful about its use.
3. There may be many more small wars - Korea and Indochina - in which the temptation to use nuclear weapons will be great. This must be resisted. Fight communism with
  1. Statecraft
  2. Small wars if necessary
  3. no big one.
4. Let us learn to live with this thing - not get trigger-happy or nervous - until the state of armed anxiety of the two atomic colossi eyeing each other malevolently across a divided world will yield to a state of co-existence and even eventually cooperation.



# Harper's MAGAZINE

October 1954

## We Accuse!

*Joseph and Stewart Alsop*

Many Americans—some of them private citizens, some in high office, and some whose official responsibility it was—have pronounced judgment on Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer's fitness to have access to the scientific secrets on which the national security so largely depends. Many accusations were leveled against Dr. Oppenheimer in the course of this debate, and the formal findings of the Atomic Energy Commission against him were lengthily published. Among those who did not accept these findings, however, were the widely read and respected journalists, Joseph and Stewart Alsop, who here in turn accuse the accusers. Their conclusions are presented, not merely to answer charge with countercharge, but to round out the record on the critically important issues which the Oppenheimer Case has raised but by no means resolved.

—The Editors

### *I. Rise and Fall*

THE title of this report is borrowed from Emile Zola, whose *J'Accuse* marked the turning point in the case of Captain Dreyfus. It is a proud title, for it is still the symbol of one of our era's rare triumphs of the liberal spirit over organized injustice. It is a title, indeed, that one must be presumptuous to borrow; and we only dare to do so because we too accuse.

We accuse the Atomic Energy Commission in particular, and the American government in general, of a shocking miscarriage of justice in the case of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer.

We accuse Oppenheimer's chief judge, the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, Admiral Lewis Strauss, and certain of Oppenheimer's accusers, of venting the bitterness of old disputes through the security system of this country.

And we accuse the security system itself, as being subject to this kind of ugliness, and as inherently repugnant in its present standards and procedures to every high tradition of the American past.

These are grave accusations, which must be factually supported. As to whether they are justified, the reader must decide. And so, without further ado, let us begin the re-trial by calling the defendant to the bar; for the first requirement for an understanding of the Oppenheimer case is an understanding of Oppenheimer himself.

J. Robert Oppenheimer was born in New York City in 1904, into a prosperous, cultivated, and liberal Jewish family. The father, an immigrant from Germany, was a successful businessman and a discriminating collector of modern pictures. The whole household was imbued with the rabbinical respect for the things of the mind, and with

the hope of progress made all the sweeter by the memory of dark things left behind, that so often distinguished Jews of their sort in that simpler and better time.

Characteristically, Oppenheimer's education began at the Ethical Culture School—where else would such a family send a promising son? It continued at Harvard, where Oppenheimer first showed promise as a physicist and graduated in 1925; and at Lord Rutherford's great laboratory in Cambridge and at Göttingen, where he took his doctorate in 1927. There were two more years of preparatory study, largely abroad. And then, in the spring of 1929, young Oppenheimer came back to America, to accept a double teaching assignment at the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena and the University of California at Berkeley.

It is curious, and in the light of subsequent events it is highly ironical, that this return of an utterly obscure twenty-five-year-old teacher should have proved a significant event in the American story. Yet such it was.

THE truth is that in a quite surprising degree, Oppenheimer was the bringer of a revelation. Long before his graduation from Harvard, he had descried from afar the revolution in thought that is the New Physics. But in this he was exceptional; even in 1929, when he came home for good, the American universities had only begun to grasp the cosmos-shaking advances of physical knowledge that had been achieved in Europe.

At Berkeley, Oppenheimer started with one graduate student; but around this slender, intense young man, all but hieratic in his dedication to his mystery, there rapidly grew up "the largest school in the country, of graduate and post-doctoral study in theoretical physics." He was the center, and each year, when his teaching term at Berkeley ended, many of his students followed him to Pasadena to be with him while he fulfilled his contract with Caltech. If the vast majority of American physicists today quite genuinely venerate Robert Oppenheimer, it is because he trained so many of them, and because the rest rightly regard him as the man who took the lead in naturalizing the New Physics in this country.

In those first years of great accomplishment, Oppenheimer was almost ludicrously—and

perhaps somewhat self-consciously—remote from the mundane realities of the American scene. He took no newspaper. He owned no radio. The tumultuous political events of the early 1930s simply escaped his notice. For distraction he learned Sanskrit, because he wanted to read the *Bhagavad-Gita* in the original. For the rest, he lived his life in the rarefied upper air of abstract physical speculation.

THUS he was dangerously innocent—he had no better standards of practical political judgment than a visiting Martian—when the world around him at last began to attract his attention.

Partly he came down from his mountaintop because of his long and unhappy engagement to Jean Tatlock, the daughter of a fellow professor. Partly his interest in politics was stimulated by Hitler's persecution of the Jews in Germany, where he still had relatives whom he helped later to escape. Partly, too, he was caught up in the wave of emotion about the Spanish Civil War which then engulfed so many intellectuals. The Communist party was brilliantly exploiting both the Falange and the Nazis, to attract great numbers of men like Oppenheimer. Jean Tatlock was one of the generous but troubled spirits who were always joining and leaving the Communist party in those deceptive years of the united front. Not very surprisingly therefore, Oppenheimer became an active fellow-traveler.

He joined front organizations. He attended meetings. Since he had a private fortune, he contributed fairly regularly to the party's Spanish war and Spanish relief funds; and, since this was the fashion for the larger fellow-traveling contributors, he made these contributions through party officials. In short, he freely indulged in the brand of political folly that was then a common highbrow reaction to the menace of Nazism and Fascism. One thing, however, Robert Oppenheimer never did. Despite his fashionable folly, despite the easy emotionalism that was his first response to politics, Oppenheimer never took the final step of joining the Communist party.

By 1939, his fellow-traveling enthusiasm had cooled off markedly, although he continued to contribute through party channels to Spanish relief. In wartime, he

eschewed politics altogether. Finally, at the end of the war, the true meaning of the Soviet-Communist system came home to him with great force, and rather earlier than to many other leading Americans—Dwight D. Eisenhower, for example, was still talking euphemistically about how easy it was to “get on with Zhukov” as late as 1947.

After his awakening, the follies of Oppenheimer's past were utterly left behind. Former President Conant of Harvard, General Frederick Osborn, and many others who worked with him closely have testified as to the “hard-headedness” and strongly “anti-Soviet” character of Oppenheimer's political attitude throughout the postwar years. As time passed, indeed, Oppenheimer became the only truly eminent American outside the armed services—so far as these reporters are aware—who was willing to discuss dispassionately the idea of preventive war to save the world from Communist tyranny. On this point, too, there is rather shocked testimony, from the present chairman of the General Advisory Committee of the Atomic Commission, Dr. I. I. Rabi.

As is indicated by the gradual transition from modish breast-beating to cool, hard independence of thought, Oppenheimer's early follies were simply a disastrous phase in the difficult process of learning his way about in the everyday world. In this same process, his marriage in 1940 was also a stage, and a much happier one.

The story of Katherine Puening Oppenheimer is sad, but with a good ending. She was a pretty, serious, very young girl from a solid, prosperous, conservative family, when she rather improbably encountered Joe Dallet in 1935. Dallet was a romantic, born for a crusade, who had the half-pathetic, half-ironical misfortune to enlist under the Communist banner. She fell violently in love with Dallet; she left her family and joined the party to marry him. A little later, she proved her greater wisdom by rebelling against the party's dreary discipline, and this broke up the marriage. Yet she did not cease to love Dallet, and she had just gone to Paris to meet him again when the news reached her that he had been killed in action on the Spanish front. After that desperate moment, she half blindly blundered into another marriage. Yet

she was still a very unhappy woman when she and Oppenheimer met in 1939.

Their feeling for one another was strong and irresistible. Yet he had to part with Jean Tatlock, who still loved him and made a tragic last request to see him before her death in 1943. She also had to part with her husband, and thus the Oppenheimers' marriage automatically stimulated much unkindness in the small Berkeley community. One of those who were not unkind was Haakon Chevalier, a clever, superficial teacher of romance languages, who also belonged to the West Coast group of Communist and fellow-traveling intellectuals. And this was to be important, because Oppenheimer, who is fiercely protective of his wife, was warmly grateful for Chevalier's kindness in a bad time.

SUCH are the main facts it is needful to know about Robert Oppenheimer, in the period before History chose him as the principal actor in a larger drama. He was not a member of the Einstein-Fermi-Szilard group of refugee physicists who first opened the eyes of the American government to the possibilities of the atom. But he joined the work soon after it began, and his value was recognized at once.

In the spring of 1942, only a few months after Pearl Harbor, Dr. Arthur Holly Compton asked Oppenheimer to recruit and lead a special scientific task force. Enrico Fermi had not yet achieved his great triumph, the famous first sustained nuclear chain reaction in the University of Chicago squash court. But Oppenheimer and his task force—which included Hans Bethe, Edward Teller, and others of like caliber—were nonetheless told to begin designing a workable atomic bomb.

Their astonishing progress led on, within a few months, to the decision to establish the great Los Alamos Laboratory. Oppenheimer had directed the work at Berkeley. He had even suggested the Los Alamos site to the new commander of the Manhattan District project, Lieutenant General Leslie R. Groves. But a question still remained, whether Oppenheimer should be chosen director of Los Alamos.

As soon as he joined the war effort, Robert Oppenheimer had filled out the usual personnel questionnaire, revealing the gen-

eral outlines of his political past. By now the memberships in front organizations, the fellow-traveling, the contributions, were all known to the appropriate authorities. So were his Communist personal associations, including the former party memberships of Katherine Oppenheimer and also of Frank and of his wife Jackie—for Frank Oppenheimer, an unhappy caricature of his brilliant elder brother, had joined the party in 1936. But General Groves had already come to know Oppenheimer rather well. He had no doubts whatever, and he still has none, about Oppenheimer's loyalty. He regarded Oppenheimer's appointment to head Los Alamos as a "calculated risk," which it was essential to take. Why this was essential has been simply explained by John J. McCloy, who represented Secretary of War Stimson in this decision. "Oppenheimer," McCloy has said, "was the only American physicist fully qualified for the job; there were plenty of refugees, of course, but everyone agreed Oppenheimer was the only American who was up to it in every way."

**T**O COMPLETE this facet of the story, it must also be noted that Oppenheimer was by no means taken on trust after his appointment at Los Alamos. Throughout 1943, Colonel John Lansdale—a successful, conservative Cleveland lawyer who served as Los Alamos security officer—repeatedly questioned Oppenheimer, at great length and in very great detail, about all his fellow-traveling activities and Communist connections. In addition, Oppenheimer was closely watched at all times; and he was also interviewed by Colonel Boris Pash, the Manhattan District security officer at Berkeley. Colonel Pash, who saw Oppenheimer only once, always remained suspicious of him. But the able and tough-minded Colonel Lansdale had the primary responsibility. He did almost all the work on Oppenheimer and got to know Oppenheimer very intimately. And Lansdale gradually came to have an abiding faith in Oppenheimer's loyalty and discretion.

It is somehow sordid that this essentially insignificant aspect of the epic of Los Alamos should now have to be recalled. How Oppenheimer tirelessly gathered a great new scientific team, while the new laboratory buildings were rising on the sun-drenched mesa; how

Los Alamos expanded until, at the end, Oppenheimer was the admired leader of 8,000 people, including 4,000 scientists and technicians; how the work proceeded relentlessly, past obstacle after obstacle, until the final blinding triumph that altered the whole shape of our world—these are the points it would be more fitting to dwell upon. The end came in the bareness of the desert at Alamogordo, when TRINITY—the first of the absolute weapons—was tested with brilliant and terrible success.

From that moment, to Hiroshima, to the Medal of Merit and a high position in the councils of the American government, Robert Oppenheimer's journey was rapid and ineluctable. The bomb whose glare illuminated a new world also gave the once-obscure brotherhood of physicists a strange new standing in America. They acquired something of the position in our society of the Mathematician-Astronomer-Priests of the ancient Mayas, who were at once feared and revered as the knowers of the mystery of the seasons and the helpers of the sun and stars in their life-giving courses. Oppenheimer, the maker of the bomb, became the unofficial high priest.

In the next years, his primary public position was the chairmanship of the General Advisory Committee of the AEC; and in 1947 he also found his private niche as director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. But with all his other duties, he was constantly called upon to serve in the more general capacity of chief scientist to the American government, working on many Presidential assignments, always asked to give counsel on the big political-military-scientific problems, often consulted, indeed, as though his pronouncements had an oracular value. And although he left the General Advisory Committee in 1952, his work for the government continued, and his standing before the country remained undiminished.

**S**UCH was Oppenheimer, such were his remarkable record and great position, when President Eisenhower named a new chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Lewis Lichtenstein Strauss—a promoter, investment banker, and civilian-in-war-time Admiral, who had previously served as one of Truman's first AEC commissioners—moved into the AEC chairmanship on July 3,

1953. Just four days later came the first warning signal. On July 7, as Strauss proudly announced in his first press release on the Oppenheimer case, the new chairman "initiated the steps" that were to end with a heavy-handed squad of AEC security officers descending on Princeton to remove the classified documents which Oppenheimer had always been allowed to store in a specially guarded facility in his office.

Not long thereafter, events began to move with unwonted swiftness. At the beginning of November, a former member of the staff of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, William Liscum Borden, wrote the FBI what can only be called a *lettre de cachet* attacking Oppenheimer's loyalty.

The letter was a mishmash of the stale facts and unsupported conclusions. According to Borden, Strauss was not privy to the writing of this letter. In any case, under the established procedures, the *lettre de cachet* set the whole ponderous security machinery in motion; and Strauss leaped into the driver's seat to make the wheels turn faster.

IT WAS Strauss who went to the President without consulting his colleagues, and came back with the dramatically phrased order putting a "blank wall" between Oppenheimer and all classified data. It was Strauss who directed the preparation of the harshest possible statement of charges; Strauss who called the still unsuspecting Oppenheimer to Washington to notify him that his AEC clearance was suspended; Strauss who hastened on the trial of the case. It was Strauss or his underling, AEC General Manager K. D. Nichols, who forbade the hearings to be held in New York, thus effectively preventing the distinguished but no longer young John W. Davis from appearing as Oppenheimer's counsel. And it was Strauss who decided that the AEC counsel should be Roger Robb, a man best known as the lawyer for Senator Joseph R. McCarthy's chief journalistic in-cense-swinger, Fulton Lewis, Jr.

In April of this year, the long hearings began before a special board composed of the Chancellor of North Carolina University and former Secretary of the Army, Gordon Gray; the former head of the Sperry Gyroscope Company, Thomas A. Morgan; and the

well-known chemist, Dr. Ward Evans, of Loyola University.

In late May came the Gray board findings. Gordon Gray and Thomas Morgan decided that Oppenheimer was a security risk; but almost in the same breath they pronounced him devotedly loyal, unusually discreet, and a public servant whose contribution could never be repaid. In his dissent, Dr. Ward Evans sternly remarked that the Gray-Morgan finding would be a "black mark on the escutcheon" of the country. The nation argued the issue, and the case then went to the AEC.

FINALLY, late in June, came the Atomic Energy Commission's majority opinion, again declaring Oppenheimer a security risk. It was written—in brutal language, contrasting sharply with the reflective, regretful tone of Gordon Gray—by Admiral Lewis Strauss. It represents a curious evolution. For the Gray Board had firmly dismissed the bulk of the AEC's original charges against Oppenheimer, which had to do with his prewar associations. Gray and Morgan had then found Oppenheimer guilty primarily on one issue, that his lack of enthusiasm delayed the hydrogen bomb project. But now Strauss, in his turn, firmly dismissed this Gray-Morgan finding, stating that Oppenheimer's views about the H-bomb had not even been considered by the AEC, because he had a right to take any view he chose. By this process of elimination, all the serious charges against Oppenheimer were successively refuted or dropped, until none remained except those contained in the final opinion by Lewis Strauss. Hence this Strauss opinion is the test—the sole test—of the Oppenheimer case.

What then was the purport of this historic opinion? Strauss conspicuously failed to challenge the favorable Gray-Morgan finding, that Oppenheimer was wholly loyal and wholly discreet. Strauss mentioned dangerous associations, but this was strictly subsidiary. In bitter words, Strauss took his stand squarely on the ground that Oppenheimer suffered from "substantial defects of character." Oppenheimer was guilty, said Strauss, of persistent "falsehood, evasion, and misrepresentation"; but as proof of these vices Strauss offered only six "examples."

And what were these six proofs, that were held sufficient to convict Oppenheimer of character defects so grave as to jeopardize national security? Three of the Strauss "examples" can be grouped together and discussed together, for they are all matters with a common background. They are as follows:

First, in the course of a long interrogation in 1943, Colonel Lansdale once asked Oppenheimer a single question: "Do you know Rudy Lambert?" Oppenheimer replied with a short counter-question: "Do you know what he looks like?" That was all; and, as will be seen, it is by no means sure there was even this much. But in the Gray board hearings, it developed that Oppenheimer had indeed known Lambert, a minor Communist official; had lunched with him once or twice; and thus knew what he looked like.

Second, again in 1943, Oppenheimer told Colonel Lansdale he had heard that Joseph Weinberg, a younger physicist at Berkeley whom he did not know well, was a member of the Communist party. Lansdale did not ask Oppenheimer about Weinberg. Oppenheimer volunteered the information. Then, seven years later, in 1950, an FBI agent questioned Oppenheimer about Weinberg. On this occasion Oppenheimer said that he thought he had first learned of Weinberg's Communist affiliations when they became public knowledge, which was after 1943.

**T**HIRD, again in 1943, Oppenheimer told Colonel Lansdale he had also heard that another Berkeley physicist, Giovanni Rossi Lomanitz, was a Communist. Shortly after this, Lomanitz was drafted in order to remove him from Berkeley. The head of the Berkeley laboratory, Dr. Ernest O. Lawrence, raised a great row about losing Lomanitz. Partly at Lawrence's request, Oppenheimer spoke to Lansdale about getting Lomanitz re-assigned to work at Berkeley, as one of those special risks the Manhattan District made it a policy to take in special cases. Later he wrote Lansdale, renewing the same suggestion, but adding that he "was not in a position to endorse this request in an absolute way," since he did not know the full facts about Lomanitz. Finally, after eleven years had passed, Oppenheimer was asked a surprise question at the Gray board hearing: Would he have recommended Lomanitz's re-assignment to Berkeley

if he had known Lomanitz was a Communist? And he answered this question in the negative.

**T**HE first thing to note about these matters, which are solemnly presented by Admiral Strauss as final proof of habitual untruth, is the simple immensity of their context. Three incorrect answers are torn, as it were, from a vast hodgepodge of innumerable questions put to Oppenheimer by many different people—Pash, Lansdale, Groves, several FBI agents, Congressional committees, the Gray Board—and innumerable questions put, moreover, in all sorts of different conditions and at different time intervals over a period of eleven years. Only a miracle witness could have avoided minor mistakes and contradictions in these circumstances; and Oppenheimer was far from being a miracle witness about small points.

And by any reasonable standard, the three mistakes about Lambert, Weinberg, and Lomanitz were all extremely minor. In the case of the Lomanitz letter, Oppenheimer was asked to recall the forgotten background of a letter written eleven years before, and asked in a way that invited a wrong reply. In the Weinberg case, he fell into what is surely the commonest of all human errors, which is confusing the time when you have learned a long-known fact in a past already remote. As for the Lambert case, there may be no case at all, for the transcript of the Lansdale-Oppenheimer interview in 1943 is badly garbled. And if the transcript is correct, it is surely not stretching things too far to suppose that just once in all these unending interrogations, Oppenheimer was tired or muddled or inattentive, and thus gave a misleading reply to just one short question, casually put and never asked again.

One might be unwilling to make this sympathetic stretch, of course, if the record showed that Oppenheimer had any important motive for being evasive about Lambert, or changing the date of his knowledge of Weinberg's Communism, or misrepresenting the background of his letter about Lomanitz. But the record shows no trace of an important motive, and no attempt to establish any motive. Lomanitz, Weinberg, and Lambert were all men who played no serious role in Oppenheimer's life. While Oppenheimer

made mistakes about these men who meant little to him, he was exceedingly accurate—and at sore cost to his own feelings—about other persons who meant a great deal to him. Surely an intelligent man does not tell the bleak, uncomfortable truth about what is important, and then, just for fun and games, tell lies about what is unimportant. With no showing of motive, in short, these things are trifles. Yet they are one-half of Admiral Strauss's proof of Oppenheimer's habitual untruth.

**T**HE fourth of the Admiral's examples, the so-called Peters letter, is really too silly to be worth discussing in detail. Before a Congressional committee, Oppenheimer testified somewhat intemperately about the political past of a German refugee physicist, Bernard Peters; and then, when the news leaked and Peters' job was endangered, he wrote a letter that went rather far in truing up. Admiral Strauss also went rather far to true up, in his recent Congressional testimony about his faithfulness in consulting all his commission colleagues. The motive of one was disinterested; of the other, interested. The conduct of both was human and natural under the circumstances.

Example five is also a letter; it is also silly; and it is only worth discussing in detail because of the light it throws on the climate and procedures of the Oppenheimer case.

Very briefly, there was one member absent from the historic meeting of the General Advisory Committee of the AEC, in October 1949, that unanimously recommended against an all-out program to produce the hydrogen bomb. The University of California physicist, Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, had gone to Sweden two weeks earlier. Before leaving, he wrote Oppenheimer a long, rambling, inconclusive letter that Dr. Seaborg himself described as "having more questions than answers." Yet it contained the sentence: "Although I deplore the prospect of our country putting a tremendous effort into [the H-bomb program], I must confess that I have been unable to come to the conclusion that we should not."

Dr. Seaborg added that he doubted his letter would be helpful, that he was ready to be shown he was wrong, but that the arguments would have to be convincing. He did not ask that his letter be shown to the other

members of the General Advisory Committee; and Oppenheimer probably did not interrupt the GAC's tense deliberations with Dr. Seaborg's triplication of negatives, although the GAC members are not clear on this point.

The October meeting was a long, solemn, and heart-searching discussion of one of the truly terrible scientific-strategic Rubicons of our time. In the end, James B. Conant; Enrico Fermi; Cyril Smith; President Eisenhower's personal scientific adviser, Dr. Lee DuBridge; the present chief scientific adviser to Admiral Strauss, Dr. Rabi; and the GAC's two businessmen members, Hartley Rowe and Oliver Buckley, all joined Oppenheimer in opposing a great, immediate effort to make the H-bomb, on both moral and technical grounds. Rabi and Fermi went further than the others, declaring the H-bomb "should never be made" in this country under any circumstances.

Some time after this meeting, Dr. Seaborg returned from Sweden, and was of course told what had happened. He then attended the next GAC meeting in December, long before President Truman's final decision on the H-bomb. At this meeting, when the great issue was again discussed at length, Dr. Seaborg raised no objection to the decision of his colleagues. He offered no criticism or argument. Presumably because he was still of two minds about it, he simply said that he would prefer not to express his views. A couple of months later, before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, Oppenheimer testified that "there was surprising unanimity" in the GAC on the H-bomb issue, but added that Dr. Seaborg "had not expressed his views."

**T**O UNDERSTAND how a mountain was made of this molehill, you must understand the most curious feature of the Gray board hearings. The Gray board permitted the AEC counsel to act, and Roger Robb enthusiastically acted, as an ambitious prosecutor with none of the inconvenient restraints that the courts impose on the prosecution. The Seaborg letter was scooped up by the AEC security officers when they took over Oppenheimer's classified files. Robb had the letter. Since Oppenheimer was deprived of the usual protections of a defendant in an adversary proceeding, Oppenheimer did not

have the letter, and had long ago forgotten all about it.

So Robb brought out the Oppenheimer testimony as to the GAC's surprising unanimity and Dr. Seaborg's failure to express his views. He induced Oppenheimer to point out that Seaborg was in Sweden during the October GAC meeting, and led him into saying there had been no communication with Seaborg. And then he produced Seaborg's forgotten triplication of negatives like a rabbit out of a hat. Had not Seaborg in fact expressed his views? Was this not a communication? Was there not concealment? So the questioning went.

Of course the letter was indecisive and, indeed, quite meaningless in view of the position that Seaborg took later on. Of course it was natural for Oppenheimer to forget such a letter in the intense and complex debate on the H-Bomb. Of course it was natural for Oppenheimer to remember only the key point, that Dr. Seaborg had in fact refrained from expressing his views when he had the best possible opportunity to do so. All the same, the Seaborg letter was paraded among Admiral Strauss's examples.

## II. The Oppenheimer Haters

**I**N THE Oppenheimer case layer after layer of false appearances, of chaff dressed up to look like corn, of petty matters artificially inflated into serious matters, must be painstakingly got rid of before what is really serious can be reached. And even what is really serious has usually, in one way or another, been given a false appearance. There is no better illustration of these rules than the sixth famous "example" which Admiral Lewis Strauss used to prove Robert Oppenheimer's "substantial defects of character."

Among the six, this is the only example that is worthy of serious consideration. Even so, the story can be briefly told.

Shortly before Oppenheimer's final move to Los Alamos to take over the great laboratory, he and his wife received a visit at their Berkeley house from the man who had been kind to Katherine Oppenheimer in the bad time, Haakon Chevalier. When he and Oppenheimer were alone together in the kitchen, Chevalier said that George Eltenton, a West coast Communist, had "spoken to

him about the possibility of transmitting technical information to the Soviet scientists." Oppenheimer replied sharply that "this sounded very wrong to him," and the matter ended there for the time being.

There were two reasons for this temporary ending. First, the modern concept of "security" was still very strange and unfamiliar in America that early in the war; and Oppenheimer at first convinced himself that he had fulfilled his obligations to "security" when he so firmly rejected Chevalier's feeler. Second, Oppenheimer did not wish to implicate his friend, since he felt indebted to him and since he believed Chevalier was acting as a mere unwitting tool for Eltenton.

Maybe Chevalier was an active Communist. Oppenheimer did not think so. In the atmosphere of those days, after all, it was rather easy to persuade a woolly-minded teacher of romance languages that it was not only right and moral to communicate technical data to the hard-pressed scientists of our gallant Soviet ally, but also that this was a fine way of frustrating the "anti-Soviet" reactionaries everyone was warming against. 1943 was the year, remember, when *Time Magazine* was criticizing the choice of Charles E. Bohlen to accompany Cordell Hull on his mission to Moscow, on the ground that Bohlen was full of stuffy prejudices against the noble Russians.

That summer at Los Alamos, however, Colonel Lansdale happened to tell Oppenheimer that the security people were worried about the activities at Berkeley of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians. Oppenheimer recalled that Eltenton was an officer of this left-wing union. He remembered the Chevalier incident. Under Colonel Lansdale's tutelage, he had learned a good deal about the need for security precautions. He thought the whole problem over, and when he went to Berkeley a little later, he warned the security officers there that Eltenton would bear watching. He knew, he said, that Eltenton had tried to obtain secret information.

**I**T is not clear whether Oppenheimer was taken unawares by the next move, or whether he had decided in advance to tell a lie to shield Chevalier. At any rate, when the chief security officer, Colonel

Boris Pash, immediately asked Oppenheimer for details, Oppenheimer answered with an idiotic "cock and bull story" about how three persons, all unnamed, had been approached by Eltenton, and about microfilm, the Soviet consulate, and God knows what else. There, once again, the matter ended for the time being; for when Oppenheimer was pressed for names, he refused to give them, merely saying that Eltenton's overtures had been rebuffed.

A couple of months later, General Groves at length told Oppenheimer that he would have to order him to name names; and at this point Oppenheimer told how the approach to him had been made by Chevalier. Neither Colonel Lansdale nor General Groves seems to have been particularly shocked by Oppenheimer's behavior in this matter, and both rather made light of it before the Gray board. They did not of course seek to excuse or palliate either the delay in giving the warning about Eltenton, or the subsequent cock and bull story to protect Chevalier. But Lansdale strongly emphasized that Oppenheimer had taken the initiative to give the warning about Eltenton, going to Pash of his own volition. This, he said, was the significant point.

Of the cock-and-bull story, Groves remarked that Oppenheimer merely showed the "typical American schoolboy attitude that there is something wicked about telling on a friend." He added that he "felt [he] had gotten what [he] needed out of" Oppenheimer's final confession. And he summed up pretty effectively: "I do know this: that [Oppenheimer] was doing what he thought was essential, which was to disclose to me the dangers of this particular attempt of a potential spy to enter the project."

**T**HIS is the whole of the famous Chevalier incident, together with the opinions on it of the two men who had the best reasons to be upset about it and were closest to it at the time.

It had a minor sequel, in that Oppenheimer did not absolutely break off relations with Chevalier. He still believes that Chevalier ignorantly let himself be used by Eltenton; and there was still the old sense of gratitude. Last year, when the Oppenheims were in Paris, the Chevaliers learned of their visit from Professor Niels Bohr. They wrote asking to see the Oppenheims. Chevalier

was then working for UNESCO, which had raised the question of his clearance. He did not know whether to resume his French citizenship to keep his job, or to brave the thing out as an American; and he wanted to talk to Oppenheimer about it. The two couples lunched together one day, and the next day paid a call together on Chevalier's friend, André Malraux, hardly a left-wing association.

The best comment on this encounter was made by George F. Kennan, when Gordon Gray sought an admission that it was improper for Oppenheimer to see a former friend with Chevalier's background. "I don't like to think," said Kennan, "that people in a senior capacity in government should not be permitted or conceded maturity of judgment to know when they can see such a person or when they can't. If they come to you, sometimes I think it is impossible for you to turn them away abruptly or in a cruel way, simply because you are afraid of association with them, so long as what they are asking of you is nothing that affects your governmental work. I myself say it is a personal view on the part of Christian charity to try to be at least as decent as you can to them."

**S**UCH are the facts. It remains to be explained how these rather simple facts have been blown up, before the American public, almost to the proportions of a nightmare. The explanation is that AEC counsel Robb used the old prosecutor's trick of forcing Oppenheimer to admit, over and over again, that he had lied in his original cock and bull story to Colonel Pash. What was really a single made-up story was worked, like a mine, to produce thirteen admissions of lying. Robb's trick evidently gave Admiral Strauss just what he wanted, as one can see from the account he gives of the Chevalier incident in his AEC opinion:

Dr. Oppenheimer has now admitted under oath that while in charge of the Los Alamos Laboratory and working on the most secret weapons development for the government, he told Colonel Pash a fabrication of lies. Colonel Pash . . . was charged with the duty of protecting the atomic-weapons project against spies. Dr. Oppenheimer told Colonel Pash in circumstantial detail of an attempt by a Soviet agent to

obtain from him information about the work on the atom bomb. This was the Haakon Chevalier incident. In the hearings recently concluded, Dr. Oppenheimer under oath swears that the story he told Colonel Pash was a "whole tissue and fabrication of lies."

There are several things to be said about that remarkable paragraph, of which the first is that it amounts to as big and ugly an untruth as Oppenheimer ever told Colonel Pash. "This" was emphatically not "the Haakon Chevalier incident." It was only a part of the Chevalier incident, and by no means the major part. The major part was Oppenheimer's voluntary decision to give the warning about Eltenton. That was the heart of the matter, according to both Lansdale and Groves. Strauss left out the heart of the matter. He omitted every other explanatory and extenuating fact. He rejected the testimony of the two real experts on this Chevalier incident, Groves and Lansdale. And so he achieved no mere caricature of the truth, but a gross and flagrant distortion.

THERE is an ancient rule of Roman law that *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, in combination, are tantamount to a conscious lie and may be so treated by the judge on the bench. There is no known rule that covers the judge himself indulging, wholesale, in the suppression of what is relevant and true, and the suggestion of what is irrelevant and false.

One would like to pause to analyze at some length the other instances of these practices, which are liberally studded throughout Admiral Strauss's opinion. His accounts of all the other five "examples" are also biased in language, and the central, explanatory facts—showing why Oppenheimer acted as he did and putting his actions in sensible proportion—are omitted without exception.

After giving his examples, furthermore, Admiral Strauss permitted himself a bold hint that the secret and unpublished part of the record contained many other facts damaging to Oppenheimer. "The catalog does not end with these six examples," he wrote. "The work of Military Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Atomic Energy Commission—all, at one time or another, have felt the effect of his falsehoods,

evasions, and misrepresentations." This statement is nailed as just not true, in the powerful dissenting opinion of AEC Commissioner Henry C. Smyth, who saw and studied every document that Strauss saw and studied.

Here, then, was an American citizen of great eminence and public usefulness, who had been lengthily tried and found to be unquestionably discreet and unquestionably loyal. And by such methods and on such evidence as we have shown, this man was publicly disgraced before his country and the world.

YET even the peculiarities of the evidence and the curiosities of its presentation do not bring us to the end of the strange story of this Strauss opinion that condemned Robert Oppenheimer as a security risk. One must also remember that Oppenheimer's security clearance had come before the AEC once before. And here we find what Admiral Strauss would probably call a "pattern," made up of three interrelated sets of facts, and pointing to a decidedly unappetizing conclusion.

First, there is the story of the clearance itself. When the FBI summary came to the AEC in the winter of 1947, preliminary clearance of Oppenheimer was voted promptly, but the commission was sufficiently concerned to defer final clearance. J. Edgar Hoover was consulted and raised a special warning flag about the Chevalier incident, saying that it was the "only thing he didn't like." Besides the summary, the FBI's full investigative file on Oppenheimer was also sent to the AEC and made available to the commissioners. This file not only gave the essential facts of the Chevalier incident; it also included an explicit admission by Oppenheimer—made to the FBI in 1946 and comparable in all but wording to the admission he made to the Gray board—that the first story he told Colonel Pash was pure fabrication. Yet in August 1947, after considering the matter four months, the AEC unanimously voted to give Oppenheimer full and final clearance.

Second, the fullness and finality of this 1947 clearance was hidden from Oppenheimer and his lawyers for a period of several months after the case against Oppenheimer was started. The AEC, which means Strauss, at first made available a strikingly incomplete record, making it seem that the 1947 clear-

ance was casually voted without any opportunity to consider the derogatory data. Oppenheimer's counsel before the Gray board, Lloyd Garrison, had to press very hard to get the whole story from the AEC. The full record was only produced toward the end of the hearings. On the face of the evidence, in short, there was at least a strong reluctance to reveal the truth about the 1947 AEC clearance, if not a positive effort to conceal it.

Third, this reluctance to reveal or this effort to conceal, whichever it may have been, assumes a most disturbing significance in view of the central fact about the subsequent opinion handed down by Lewis Strauss. In the Strauss opinion, the Chevalier story is everything. It provides the only proof cited by Strauss of Oppenheimer's "persistent and willful disregard of the obligations of security." It provides the only proof cited by Strauss of Oppenheimer's "continuing associations with Communists" in the postwar period. Above all, if it had not been for this Chevalier incident, in which Oppenheimer undoubtedly acted very wrongly, Strauss's other five "examples" would have been laughed out of court. The prosecutor's trick that provided the invaluable phrase—"a whole tissue and fabrication of lies"—alone gave a persuasive color of sinister importance to the other small stuff.

**N**ow one of the AEC Commissioners in 1947—and a most active commissioner, who was regarded, so the testimony shows, as the AEC's expert on security—was none other than Lewis L. Strauss. As we have seen, everything significant in the Chevalier story—except, of course, the sad little Paris luncheon last year—was included in the full FBI file that went to the AEC. In that file, there was even the same sort of flat admission of lying to Colonel Pash that Oppenheimer also made before the Gray board. Furthermore, Lewis Strauss studied that file in 1947; for at least one member of the AEC staff clearly remembers being called in by Strauss that spring, to discuss the file and its derogatory data. Hence there can be no doubt that in 1947 Strauss knew all the basic facts of the Chevalier incident, which was to become the be-all and end-all of his bitter 1954 opinion condemning Robert Oppenheimer as a se-

curity risk. But in August 1947, Lewis Strauss voted with the other Atomic-Energy Commissioners to grant Robert Oppenheimer full and final security clearance for the most confidential scientific post in the American government, the chairmanship of the AEC's General Advisory Committee. And in October 1947, in his capacity as a member of the Institute board, Strauss also nominated Oppenheimer to the directorship of the Institute for Advanced Study.

There is a glaring contrast here between the Strauss of 1947 and the Strauss of 1954, which is made all the more glaring by the apparent attempt to prevent the contrast from becoming too obvious. There is a puzzle in this contrast, and not a very pretty puzzle either. The solution must be sought—it can only be sought—in the character of Admiral Strauss himself.

**L**EWIS STRAUSS—he pronounces it "Straws"—is a short, natty, energetic, ambitious, and intelligent man. From rather poor beginnings, he has made a handsome fortune for himself as a Kuhn Loeb partner and as a financial adviser to the Rockefellers. But he is no mere money-getter. He genuinely cares about the public service. He usefully served the late James V. Forrestal in wartime. And again, in his first term at the AEC, he was sometimes petty and wrong-headed; but he was also a valuable official, right about the hydrogen bomb when many others were wrong, and right too in pressing for the adoption of the long-range detection system that warns us of Soviet atomic and thermonuclear explosions.

Yet there is in Strauss something which gives him a desperate need to condescend, to be always agreed with, to be endlessly approved and admired, to dominate and play the great man. With his chiefs, like Forrestal and Eisenhower, he is all pliability. But from equals and subordinates, he likes no argument. One of his fellow commissioners has said of him, "If you disagree with Lewis about anything, he assumes you're just a fool at first. But if you go on disagreeing with him, he concludes you must be a traitor."

With such a man as Strauss, Oppenheimer was fated from the first to get on badly. He is by no means a man without fault. He has impossibly high intellectual standards. He

insists on them, with more than a trace of intellectual snobbery and sometimes with cold scorn for those who fall short. He has a good deal of the arrogance of the brightest boy in class; he is not patient with obtuseness, and his tongue can be very cutting. All these faults of Oppenheimer's were bound to exaggerate and indeed to inflame the faults of Strauss. And the very sign and seal of their early good relations, Oppenheimer's election to the Princeton Institute directorship, was a natural source of friction. For Strauss thought he had placed Oppenheimer under an obligation. Oppenheimer thought he had been given a job because he was worthy of it. And thus there arose between the two men the difficulties between the sponsor and the sponsored that are sadly familiar in all academic communities, as well as in the larger world.

With fair certainty, one can identify the crystallizing incident in the trouble between Oppenheimer and Strauss. It was a disagreement over the export of radioactive isotopes to our allies. In his first term at the AEC, Strauss, who knows little of physics and has a mania for official secrecy, always opposed the export of isotopes except for medical purposes. The AEC voted Strauss down, but that did not stop him. And in 1949, Strauss charged before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy that American atomic secrets were being endangered by the export of certain isotopes to Norway.

IN THE ensuing ruckus, Oppenheimer was called by the Joint Committee to give his opinion, which he did with far too devastating brilliance. He made mincemeat of Strauss's scientifically uninformed thesis. He pointed out that anything—the knowledge that two and two makes four—may play a part in atomic weaponry. "You can use a shovel for atomic energy," he said, "—in fact, you do. You can use a beer bottle for atomic energy—in fact you do." Then, not content with making Strauss look an ignoramus, Oppenheimer went on to make him seem small-minded. "The positive arguments for making [isotopes] available," he said, "lie in fostering science; they lie in making cordial relations with the scientists and technical people of Western Europe . . . They lie in doing the decent thing."

The AEC Counsel of that period, Joseph

Volpe, recalls watching Strauss's face darken with fury during this testimony; and he remembers an exchange with Oppenheimer at the close. "Joe," said Oppenheimer, "how did I do?" Looking at Strauss still suffering from his humiliation, Volpe answered, "Robert, you did much too well for your own good." The memory of Volpe is confirmed by the behavior of Strauss, for whom the isotopes remain, to this day, a major King Charles's head. When he became AEC Chairman five years after the defeat in the hearing, Strauss solemnly exhumed this dead-as-mutton issue, and discoursed on it at great length and with tedious self-justification at no less than four commission meetings.

THERE were other, later disputes to deepen the trouble between Strauss and Oppenheimer—about the Hydrogen Bomb, about the closeness of our partnership with Britain and Canada, and about Senator Hickenlooper's famous and nonsensical charge of "incredible mismanagement" at the AEC, which Strauss had encouraged in his backstairs way. In the end, the trouble clearly became very deep and dark indeed.

As often happens, however, a good face was put upon this trouble for a long time. Not too long before the Oppenheimer case began, Strauss even put his name to a generally desired motion raising Oppenheimer's salary from the Princeton Institute. Quite possibly, the action against Oppenheimer that Strauss initiated as soon as he became AEC Chairman was not then really intended to lead to anything; for there was a delay of several months between the initiation and fruition. Very probably, the precipitating factor was a series of moves against Oppenheimer by Senator McCarthy, indicating an imminent investigation, which left Strauss the choice between forestalling McCarthy or appearing before the Grand Inquisitor as Oppenheimer's sponsor.

At any rate, what really matters is the central fact. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that this petty, tangled, tragic business of the old friction and disagreement between Strauss and Oppenheimer contains one of the essential clues to the Oppenheimer case.

It is not surprising, then, that Commissioner Henry Smyth's dissent grimly emphasized the role of "powerful personal

enemies" in the attack on Robert Oppenheimer. Yet it would be *simpliste*, and it would leave vital questions unanswered, to close our inquiry at this point. The part of Strauss has been shown, and his opinion has been analyzed. But how about the other AEC commissioners, all of whom except Smyth voted not to clear Oppenheimer? And how about Gordon Gray and Thomas Morgan, who also voted against clearance, although for reasons quite different from those given by Strauss?

It is not good enough to say that Dr. Ward Evans and Commissioner Smyth devastatingly answer the majority opinions of the Gray board and the AEC. It is not good enough to say, either, that Strauss and Robb staged a prosecution in the guise of a fact-finding proceeding, and that this device was remarkably successful. It is not even good enough to blame the result on the *Zeitgeist*, as was done by the great physicist Leo Szilard in the best of all comments on the Gray-Morgan finding. Szilard, who is no friend of Oppenheimer's, said simply: "Unfortunately for all of us, [Gray and Morgan] are as good men as they come, and if they are affected by the general insanity which is more and more creeping up on us, who can be counted on to be immune?"

**T**HE truth is that Strauss, Robb, and the *Zeitgeist* had important collaborators. No high, confidential official of his time was more careful than Robert Oppenheimer about discussing problems of policy outside the government councils; but in council, as his duty required, he freely spoke his mind and obstinately followed his conscience on many controversial matters over a long period of years. He spoke his mind, moreover, with no amiable willingness to suffer fools gladly. In several quarters, he thus built up a massive accumulation of enmity and suspicion, aroused institutional sensibilities and personal jealousy and dislike. The record of the Gray board hearings reeks like a compost heap with the emotions engendered by old policy disputes. And it shows, alas, that in modern America Lewis Strauss is by no means alone in equating disagreement with disloyalty.

In the somewhat bedragged parade of Oppenheimer-haters whom Prosecutor Robb led

to the stand, the former chief of the Air War College, Major General Roscoe C. Wilson, will serve to typify—for he almost *is*—an aroused institution. General Wilson was called because he once "felt compelled to go to the Director of Intelligence to express my concern over what I felt was a pattern of action . . . not helpful to national defense." He solemnly testified that he was first alerted by Oppenheimer's "interest in what I call the internationalizing of atomic energy"—an interest that was shared, to be sure, by all the leaders of the American government and a few others too, such as Bernard M. Baruch. Then there were other things in this pattern that worried General Wilson. There was, for instance, Oppenheimer's insistence that it was technically premature to try to build nuclear-powered aircraft. "I don't challenge his technical judgment," remarked the General plaintively, "but at the same time he felt less strongly opposed to nuclear-powered ships."

**T**HE Air Force General who saw a security risk in the suggestion that a ship can take a nuclear reactor more conveniently than an airplane has his perfect companion piece in the Air Force Chief Scientist, David Tressel Griggs, who decided Oppenheimer was either "confused or pro-Russian" because Oppenheimer actively urged a serious air defense of America's cities and industries against Soviet atomic attack.

The issues that Griggs and Oppenheimer quarreled over must be examined later. It is enough to say here that the Griggs testimony is a morass of the kind of inaccuracies that go with petty bureaucratic talebearing, and that Griggs unblushingly confessed the origin of his opinions. There had been "pretty strong controversies," he said, and he added complacently that "when you get involved in a hot controversy, it is awfully hard not to question the motives of the people who oppose you." This he appeared to consider as common Christian, or at least common bureaucratic, practice.

At the same time, Griggs seems to have some dim inkling that, just possibly, differences of view on highly arguable policy issues ought not always to lead to security proceedings. After repeatedly attacking Oppenheimer's loyalty because of past disagree-

ments, he finished with a grandiose flourish: "If it ever comes to the day when we can't disagree and disagree violently on public and on national policy, then of course I feel it will be a calamity for our democracy. I think perhaps I have said enough."

He had indeed, and so we may leave Griggs for the most interesting and complex, the most distinguished, and the most demanding of sympathetic understanding among all these Oppenheimer haters.

**D**R. EDWARD TELLER, author of the "brilliant invention" that made the hydrogen bomb possible, is one of the great scientists of our time. This strange genius (in himself the final argument for a security system that allows for the exceptional and the eccentric) is a man all light and dark, gentleness and anger, serene high thought and furious personal feeling. With Oppenheimer he has had a most curious relationship, official yet somehow intense and tragic, which can be traced through the pages of the Gray board record.

Its beginnings at Los Alamos are revealed in the testimony of the respected Dr. Hans Bethe. Bethe told the Gray board that "no enterprise quite as hard" as the job done at Los Alamos "had ever been attempted before"; and that the "success was due mostly to [Oppenheimer's] leadership." Oppenheimer, said Bethe, was the "man who really understood everything and was recognized [by the other scientists] as superior in judgment . . . and knowledge to us all." But as usually happens in any large community with an admired leader, there were a few, a very few, who sharply rejected Oppenheimer's leadership. One of these was Edward Teller, who served under Bethe in the important Los Alamos Theoretical Division.

Said Bethe: "I relied . . . I hoped to rely very heavily on [Teller] to help our work . . . . It turned out he did not want to co-operate. He did not want to work on . . . the line of research that everybody else had agreed to as the fruitful line. . . . So that in the end there was no choice but to relieve him of work in the general line of development of Los Alamos, and to permit him to pursue his own ideas entirely unrelated to World War II."

Teller's own testimony shows a great deal more. There is Teller in wartime, fixed in

his "own ideas" (which already concerned thermonuclear weapons) and objecting sharply to Oppenheimer's wartime policies. There is Teller, just postwar, bitterly disappointed because thermonuclear development was not already being pushed on the scale of another Manhattan District. There is Teller blaming Oppenheimer for this decision, which was made by many people and on the highest level of government. And there is Teller again blaming Oppenheimer for the postwar slump at Los Alamos, at a time when Oppenheimer was infuriating the rest of the scientific community by backing the May-Johnson bill, with its prolongation of military control, because he thought this was the only way to hold Los Alamos together.

Then there is Teller hurrying to Washington after JOE I, the code name for the first Soviet atomic test, to press for an immediate H-bomb program on the largest scale. And there is Teller infuriated by the adverse recommendation of the AEC General Advisory Committee, and once more blaming Oppenheimer alone for this unanimous action of one of the most high-powered boards ever assembled.

**F**INALLY, there is the last and the somehow conclusive episode, for which one must return to the testimony of Bethe. President Truman had announced his decision to build the H-bomb at all costs. As the leading expert and grand advocate of the ultimate weapon, Teller immediately became the key man in the project at Los Alamos. But Teller regarded the great laboratory as Enemy Ground, no doubt because he thought of it as Oppenheimer Territory. He complained to the Air Force authorities—and the ears of David Griggs were eagerly receptive—that his work was being hampered and sabotaged. He demanded a second laboratory, a duplicate of Los Alamos, in which to do his job. Bethe, who was by now working under Teller, had to go to Washington to explain that Teller was talking nonsense. And nonsense it proved to be; for Teller's "brilliant invention" only indicated the right approach, while the Los Alamos staff triumphantly did the immense job of designing and building the H-bomb.

Great power of intellect, an obsessive concentration on a single object, above all an

obsessive conviction that one man and one man only stood in the way of attaining that object—these are the qualities that stand out in the Teller story. Before the Gray board, Teller pictured Oppenheimer as a sort of mass-Svengali, somehow commanding the sheeplike obedience of scores of equally distinguished, extremely opinionated, and incorrigibly individualistic leaders of American science, and always swaying the majority of American physicists to oppose and obstruct Teller. Yet Teller also told the Gray board that he believed Oppenheimer was "loyal to the United States." And when Gordon Gray asked him whether "it would endanger the common defense and security to grant clearance to Dr. Oppenheimer," Teller replied with a fine display of intellectual precision.

"I believe," he said, "... that Dr. Oppenheimer's character is such that he would not knowingly and willingly do anything that is designed to endanger the safety of this country. To the extent, therefore, that your question is directed towards intent, I would say I do not see any reason to deny clearance. If it is a question of wisdom and judgment, as demonstrated by actions since 1945, then I would say it would be wiser not to grant clearance. I must say that I am myself a little bit confused on this issue, particularly as it refers to a person of Oppenheimer's prestige and influence."

### III. What Is Security?

EDWARD TELLER's final statement to the Gray board deserves to be closely analyzed. First, he said that Robert Oppenheimer would not "knowingly" take any action contrary to this country's interests. Second, however, he questioned Oppenheimer's "judgment," implying that Oppenheimer's advice on great issues of national policy had been injudicious and unhelpful. In other words, Dr. Teller said that Oppenheimer was not a security risk under any sane definition of the term. But Teller also told the Gray board that he would not grant security clearance to Oppenheimer, simply because Oppenheimer's judgment had differed from Teller's judgment.

Whether Oppenheimer was right, or Teller was right, in these matters on which they differed, does not affect the question that

Teller raised. It is a very simple question. When you do not like a man's advice on policy, do you simply strike him off your list of advisers, or do you drag him before a security board and hold him a security risk—which really means, if it any longer means anything at all, that his advice was evilly motivated?

This question is crucial, for Oppenheimer's loyalty and discretion were held proven and there was no hint of blackmailability, or anything of that sort. Instead, behind every accusation except that of the Berkeley intelligence officer, Colonel Pash, there was always the same background of what Griggs called "hot" controversy.

Speaking for the majority of the Atomic Energy Commission, Admiral Strauss formally declared that "Dr. Oppenheimer was, of course, entitled to his opinion." He thereby denied that Oppenheimer was being held a security risk because of the hot controversies of the past. But on the face of the record this Strauss declaration-denial was both misleading and hypocritical.

THE one important new item in the original AEC charges against Oppenheimer, drawn up under Strauss's own direction, related to Oppenheimer's opinions about the H-bomb. Oppenheimer was in fact tried for these and other policy opinions before the Gray board, at such length that at least half the record is an inquiry into his opinions. The Gray board, in its most important finding, held him guilty on his opinions. And it is abundantly clear that if it had not been for his opinions there would have been no Oppenheimer case. For Lewis Strauss, Roger Robb and the *Zeitgeist*, all working together, still needed the allies who had been recruited and the climate that had been engendered by Oppenheimer's forthrightness on great issues of national policy.

One is tempted to avoid looking into this matter of Oppenheimer's policy advice, since it has no relevance at all to the question of his loyalty or disloyalty, security or insecurity, unless a wrong motive can be shown. There was no such showing, as the Gray board acknowledged; yet the matter of Oppenheimer's policy advice cannot be avoided, because it is relevant to the Oppenheimer case as a demonstration of how

our American security system now works.

There were, then, three main pieces of advice that Oppenheimer gave his government, which ended by getting him into trouble. All three were subtly inter-related, since all three in part at least grew out of Oppenheimer's concept of the right American world strategy. And of these pieces of advice, the first was the one most people think was wrong, the advice about the hydrogen bomb.

THE stage for that advice, its backdrop as it were, was the Truman-Louis Johnson disarmament program of 1949-50. "Defense economy" had left the country with no serious defense except air-atomic striking power. The Strategic Air Command itself was in far from satisfactory shape at that time, and our world strategy squarely depended on the effects—to a quite large degree, on the psychological effects—of our atomic monopoly. And in September 1949 the Soviets broke that monopoly by successfully testing their first atomic bomb.

The news of JOE I caused natural and widespread consternation. Edward Teller, Dr. Ernest Lawrence, and Lawrence's sidekick, Dr. L. W. Alvarez, enplaned from the West coast to urge an immediate, all-out effort to top the Soviet A-bomb with an American H-bomb. Commissioner Strauss, the Air Force and the other services, the Joint Congressional Committee, were all rapidly mobilized. In this agitated climate, AEC Chairman David Lilienthal asked for the views of his General Advisory Committee. And toward the end of October the grandees of the GAC assembled, with Oppenheimer in the chair; and after the most prayerful discussion they recommended against the "crash" program Teller was urging.

It must have taken considerable moral courage to make that recommendation. And it was by no means so eccentric as most people suppose, for the objections to the H-bomb crash program were very strong indeed.

First, there were the moral objections. Anyone who thinks it was immoral to feel moral objections to the H-bomb must either know very little about the absolute weapons or be sadly in need of training as a human being. Beyond that, these need not be discussed.

Second, there were extremely important technical objections. At that period, our

atomic stockpile was not yet adequate. As then conceived by Teller and everyone else, the H-bomb would have consumed an enormous quantity of fissionable raw stuff, with much less return in total explosive power than could be got from an equivalent investment in more A-bombs. It was not at all clear whether many A-bombs should be sacrificed to get one H-bomb. It was not at all clear, either, whether the kind of H-bomb that was being discussed could ever be built at all; and in the end it never *was* built. In 1950, Dr. Teller's "brilliant invention" changed the whole picture, opening the way to the large, economy-sized H-bomb with a lithium-hydride core. And we have Teller's own testimony that when he first announced his "invention," Oppenheimer warmly congratulated him and declared that he would have felt quite differently in the 1949 H-bomb debate if this altogether different weapon had been the subject.

THIRD, there was also a strategic objection to the H-bomb, felt particularly strongly by Oppenheimer and Conant, and clearly expressed in the unhappy letter that Oppenheimer wrote Conant before the fateful GAC meeting. Here is the relevant passage:

What concerns me is really not the technical problem. I am not sure the miserable thing [i.e. the H-bomb] will work, nor that it can be gotten to a target except by oxcart. It seems likely to me even further to worsen the *unbalance of our present war plans*. What does worry me is that this thing appears to have caught the imagination, both of the Congressional and the military people, as the answer to the problem posed by [the Soviet atomic test]. It would be folly to oppose the exploration of this weapon. We have always known it had to be done; and it does have to be done, although it appears to be singularly proof against any form of experimental approach. *But that we become committed to it as the way to save the country and save the peace, appears to me full of dangers.*

Behind these passages we have italicized was Oppenheimer's conviction that an unthinking and unqualified dependence on a stock of absolute weapons, as a sole defense of this country, had now become infinitely perilous.

This magical theory of defense was already enthroned at the Pentagon, it must be remembered, in the obstreperous person of Secretary Johnson. The common reaction to JOE I—"Well, the Soviets have the A-bomb but we'll just get the H-bomb, and then everything will still be all right"—seemed so wrong to Oppenheimer that he perhaps overreacted against it. This over-reaction can also be observed in the testimony of Dr. Conant, who told the Gray board that he had feared an American H-bomb because he expected it to breed groundless complacency, and so to cause all the many needs of a balanced defense to be scamped or neglected.

EVENTS have proved the wisdom of Oppenheimer's and Conant's fear of the magical theory of defense by nothing but absolute weapons. Nonetheless, Oppenheimer now acknowledges that the GAC recommendation of 1949 was mistaken, both because the way to prevent groundless complacency is to fight it head on; and because the GAC did not answer the two simple questions asked by President Truman, when he was first told of the H-bomb debate by Admiral Sidney Souers. "Can the Russians make this thing?" Truman inquired. "And if so, how can we help making it?"

It should be noted, however, that in 1949-50 the anti-H-bomb recommendation of the General Advisory Committee caused hardly more than a temporary ripple. Conant, Fermi, Smith, DuBridge, Rabi, Rowe, Buckley, and Oppenheimer presented a solid front together. In those happier days, no one was foolish enough to suppose that the unanimous verdict of such a group could be unpatriotic in purpose. Except for Edward Teller, no one was foolish enough to suppose, either, that all the members of a group of this caliber could be swayed against their better judgments by the mesmeric influence of Svengali-Oppenheimer. President Truman rejected the General Advisory Committee recommendation. The H-bomb program was launched. And the position taken by the GAC was generally forgotten, until later and quite different advice given by Oppenheimer caused certain powerful persons to look for sticks to beat him with.

The next act of our drama of opinion occurred after an interval of two years, in

1951. This time the backdrop was the bloody ground fighting in Korea, the inadequacy of our tactical air effort over the Korean battlefields, and the vast convulsive Western struggle to rearm, centering around NATO, that Korea had set in motion. For all these reasons Project VISTA was started by the Pentagon. Under the leadership of Drs. DuBridge and Charles Lauritsen, VISTA was to study the tactical use of atomic bombs and related problems.

In the GAC, Oppenheimer had taken the lead in pressing tactical A-bomb development. When the VISTA scientists had assembled their data, he was called in as a consultant; and at the request of DuBridge and Lauritsen, he drafted the fifth chapter of the VISTA report, setting forth its conclusions and recommendations. In two important ways, this chapter Oppenheimer drafted was a significant turning point. It outlined what is now the approved American doctrine for tactical use of atomic weapons. And, while still in draft form, it was taken to Paris by Oppenheimer, to be shown to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who then welcomed the VISTA conclusions with intense enthusiasm and made them the basis of a radical revision of his Western European defense plans.

UNFORTUNATELY, however, there was one thing in Oppenheimer's VISTA draft that made it as unwelcome to the Air Force Staff as it had been welcome to Eisenhower and his staff at SHAPE. Oppenheimer, who was well aware we were entering the era of atomic plenty, proposed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff make a new division of our atomic stockpile, allocating part to reserve, part for tactical use, and part to the Strategic Air Command.

The Air Generals, no great believers in atomic plenty, had been fighting tooth and claw for five years to keep the entire atomic stockpile as the Strategic Air Command's monopoly asset. Compared to SAC, the Air Generals cared very little indeed about tactical air, which was one of the reasons for the difficulties in Korea. Now Oppenheimer was suggesting that the Joint Chiefs change the rules, and allocate some of SAC's hard-won bombs to tactical uses. This automatically reduced most of the leaders of the Air

Staff to a condition of apoplectic fury.\*

Then came the drama of opinion's third act, in 1952. This time the back-drop was the increasingly alarming intelligence about the growth of the Soviet atomic stockpile, about the rising power of the Soviet Strategic Air Army, about the first long-range reconnaissance flights over this hemisphere. And, besides this immediate backdrop, there was also some earlier background.

**I**N 1950, JOE I had started a battle in the National Security Council. The majority had insisted that the new Soviet atomic bomb made continental air defense an urgent matter. The Air Generals, who cared even less about air defense than about tactical air, had pooh-poohed the whole idea. But over the angry opposition of the Air Force, the National Security Council had issued a directive giving the air defense of this continent the highest defense priority. In reluctant obedience to this directive, Project LINCOLN had been established at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to study the air defense problem. Since then, as the intelligence indicated, the problem had grown urgent. And now, in the summer of 1952, LINCOLN had collected its data; it had made certain brilliant technological break-throughs; and a large number of the country's leading scientists were gathering to act as consultants of a special Summer Study Group, which would organize the LINCOLN results in a coherent plan.

Even before the LINCOLN Summer Study Group began its work, the Air Staff was on the *qui vive*. We have the testimony of Dr. Jerrold Zacharias, a leading member of Project LINCOLN, that Air Force Chief Scientist Griggs attempted to "sabotage" the effort at the very start. Griggs was repelled, however. Oppenheimer, Dr. Rabi, Dr. Lauritsen, and many others gathered as planned. And in the end, the Summer Study Group produced a powerful report which is now proving to have been another great turning point in na-

tional defense planning. This report made two main points:

(1) That the Soviets would soon have the air-atomic capability of destroying the United States.

(2) That owing to the recent technological break-throughs, an effective American air defense could now be constructed, although at very great cost.

You would have supposed the Air Force would have welcomed the report. Instead the Air Force authorities first sought to prevent the LINCOLN results from being communicated to the rest of the government. Then, when the results were nonetheless communicated and air defense became a serious issue, the word went out from the Air Staff that the LINCOLN program was nothing but a plan for "another Maginot line," and an impractical, long-hair plan at that. This crude propaganda was further combined with a mounting personal attack on Oppenheimer, portrayed as the devil of the Summer Study Group.

There was talk of a sinister cabal called ZORC (standing for Zacharias, Oppenheimer, Rabi and—illogically—Charles, from the first name of Lauritsen) that was darkly plotting against the security of the United States. A *Fortune* article full of snide hints about Oppenheimer's motives was directly inspired by the Office of the Chief of Air Staff. And the issue of Oppenheimer's loyalty was officially raised in government councils.

**T**O THE ordinary American citizen, who is not familiar with Big Bomber Generals and Battleship Admirals, these goings-on may appear downright fantastic. Yet they are described without exaggeration, as these reporters, who lived through all these episodes, can testify from first-hand knowledge. And, if you consider all the factors, the fantasy is not so extreme as it may appear.

In brief, the Big Bomber Generals, the champions of strategic air power, have always dominated the American Air Force. For human reasons, Big Bomber Generals are possessed by the same passionate feeling for their own special weapons, even at the expense of all other air weapons, that was also the mark of the Battleship Admirals who fought the carriers so long and so bitterly. Moreover, the Big Bomber Generals were and are more justified than the Battleship Admirals. Since

\*David Griggs' testimony indicates that there were other things unfavorable to the Strategic Air Command in this Oppenheimer draft of the VISTA report's fifth chapter. But, after the Gray Board hearings ended, the original draft was found by Oppenheimer; and it provided documentary proof that Griggs' memory was at fault in this matter.

the end of the last war, strategic air power has been our only form of offensive power against the major enemy; and it has been absolutely vital to have an adequate and efficient Strategic Air Command.

THE fight for an adequate Strategic Air Command has been long and hard, and it has been especially envenomed whenever appropriations were in question. Zealots who must endlessly fight for their beliefs humanly tend to lose their sense of proportion—to feel that the object of their zeal is all that matters, and that all else is nothing. Hence the leaders of the air staff saw one thing, and one thing only, in the LINCOLN Program for American Air Defense. They saw that it would make heavy demands for funds. They further feared, and perhaps reasonably feared, that the economizing politicians might partly subtract the funds for air defense from the appropriations of the Strategic Air Command. And that danger (which the LINCOLN scientists had not considered) was enough to persuade the air staff that the LINCOLN air defense plan was nothing less than a sinister, insidious, indirect attack on strategic air power.

All these points emerge very clearly in the Gray board hearings, if you read the testimony of David Griggs and then subtract the many errors of fact shown up in it by the testimony of Rabi, Zacharias, and others. Of course LINCOLN was not a plot against SAC, any more than VISTA was a plot against SAC. Of course the Summer Study Group's idea was the one Dr. Rabi neatly expressed when he was asked whether a belief in air defense necessarily proved hostility to strategic air power: "But there are the two arms," said the mild Rabi patiently. "There is the punching arm, and there is the guard. You have to have both."

Oppenheimer said the same thing even better, when he remarked that he had "never seen a first-class prize fighter with a complete glass jaw." The fact that this country dare not continue with a complete glass jaw is now being officially recognized—belatedly, and with insufficient urgency—by the Eisenhower Administration. The Summer Study Group's recommendations are now being acted upon, but after two precious years have been wasted.

But surely it is no longer necessary to labor the point, in the new era of the Soviet hydro-

gen bomb, that Oppenheimer and the scientists were right in urging a serious American air defense. The opposition to the air defense idea, which incidentally defied national policy as laid down in the Security Council directive of 1950, was the blind, angry reaction of a military bureaucracy both set in its ways and easily irritated by military proposals of civilian origin. The question remains why Oppenheimer was chosen, among so many others, as the particular target of this irritation. The answer comes in two parts.

ON THE one hand, the political follies of Oppenheimer's prewar years made him vulnerable, as he was well aware—for one of the things that stand out in this story is Oppenheimer's cool courage in challenging the greatest power groups of the government with this knowledge of his own vulnerability always in his mind. And because Oppenheimer was vulnerable, the temptation to try to smear his past politics over onto his present advice could hardly be resisted by the little men who were upset by that advice. On the other hand, the Air Force zealots quite rightly smelled, if they did not quite understand, the difference between Oppenheimer's strategic concept and their own. They still believed that America could be satisfactorily and uniquely defended by strategic air power and atomic weapons. They had a lot of support for that belief—and still have, for that matter; the present Secretary of Defense has clearly adopted this theory to suit his budgetary convenience.

After the Soviet atomic bomb, on the other hand, Oppenheimer had enough sense to realize that the "grand deterrent" or "massive retaliation" theory of American strategy had become pure nonsense. He did not oppose strategic air power. He certainly wanted to avoid a war of absolute destruction with the absolute weapons if that were possible, but he also worried about whether we had enough strategic air power and whether SAC was modern enough. Furthermore, he could foresee that mere "massive retaliation" would become very cold comfort, when the thing to be retaliated against was the total destruction of these United States. He could foresee the weakening of will, the paralysis of policy that total peril would inevitably beget, and indeed has already partly begotten

in Britain and Western Europe. And he could foresee that in time of total peril, there would be an increasing reluctance to respond to local challenges, such as those in Korea and Indochina; and his correctness on this point has been proven too.

For all these reasons, Oppenheimer pleaded for a more balanced defense system; and he made his plea before the march of events rendered his reasons comprehensible to most people. So the zealots' attack on him was organized, and the ground was prepared for the Oppenheimer case. On this aspect of the case the final word was said by Dr. Vannevar Bush, in a superb explosion of indignation to the Gray board.

The Grand Old Man of American science told the board, point blank, that the AEC's statement of charges ought to be sent back for re-drafting, because it included the charge that Oppenheimer had opposed the hydrogen bomb. This, he said, was "quite capable of being interpreted as placing a man on trial because he held opinions, and had the temerity to express them."

"If this country ever gets . . . that near to the Russian system," Bush continued, "we are certainly not in any condition to attempt to lead the free world. . . . We have been slipping backward in our maintenance of the Bill of Rights. . . . I think . . . no board should ever sit on a question in this country of whether a man [served] his country or not because he expressed strong opinions. If you want to try that case, you can try me."

In those brave words, Dr. Bush was indicting the whole American security system. His single indictment was enough to damn, yet the record of the Oppenheimer case contains half a dozen other points which Dr. Bush might have attacked with equal justice.

**C**ONSIDER, first, the organization of the case. As Gordon Gray repeatedly asserted, it was supposed to be a fact-finding proceeding. In procedures it was nonetheless a prosecution, and in organization it shows the very opposite of a serious desire to find out the facts.

The proof of that is simple. All the witnesses called by the AEC were hostile to Oppenheimer in one way or another. Prosecutor Robb was content to marshal his parade of Oppenheimer-haters. It was Lloyd Garrison

who called to the stand Conant and Fermi, DuBridge, Bacher, Bush, Bethe, John J. McCloy, George F. Kennan, Zacharias, Rowe, Lauritsen, Lilienthal, John von Neumann, Gordon Dean, and even General Groves and Colonel Lansdale.

In the air defense case, for instance, did Robb really prefer Griggs' wildly distorted version of the facts to the solid and detailed evidence of Zacharias, Rabi, and Lauritsen? And if so, what kind of fact-finding was this?

**A**GAIN, consider the way this case was managed. As has been shown already, one set of charges was originally specified by the AEC; Gray and Morgan convicted Oppenheimer on quite another set of charges; and Strauss in turn rejected the main Gray-Morgan finding and held Oppenheimer a security risk on still a third set of charges never mentioned until then. The peculiarity of this process is made all the more glaring by the obvious fact that sustaining Gray and Morgan would have been fatal to Strauss. For most of the other great American physicists had fully shared Oppenheimer's lack of enthusiasm for the H-Bomb, and thus the AEC could not dare to accept this lack of enthusiasm as proof of risk to security.

If these are the methods—if the guardians of our security may continuously make up new charges as old ones are refuted or found inexpedient—when or where can the defendant-citizen hope to find solid ground?

Then too, consider the presentation of the case, and particularly the strange episode of the last-minute publication of the transcript of the Gray board hearings. During the hearings, Chairman Gray strongly warned every witness that all that passed was strictly confidential, and would never see the light of day. But the public reception of the Gray-Morgan opinion was puzzled, cold, and unfriendly. As it came time for Strauss to hand down his own condemnation of Oppenheimer, the climate was decidedly unfavorable. At this juncture, despite all that Gray had said, the transcript was hurriedly printed by order of Admiral Strauss. It was handed to the press—all 992 pages of it—eighteen hours before the deadline set for publication. By a most singular coincidence, Prosecutor Robb's star client, the McCarthy incense-slinger, Fulton Lewis, Jr., broke the deadline immediately to tell

his radio audience about all the ugliest stuff that the transcript contained. No one has explained how Lewis so rapidly located these gamy morsels. Other reporters, at any rate, had the utmost difficulty in finding their way through the massive document. So most of them followed Lewis, headlining precisely the charges of disloyalty that Gray, Morgan, and even Strauss had held to be utterly unfounded. And thus the stage was admirably, if somewhat artificially, set for the Strauss opinion, which followed hard on the heels of these misleading headlines.

Nor is this all. A main buttress of Prosecutor Robb's case was the group of Air Force documents in which the zealots spewed out their suspicions of Oppenheimer. These documents were communicated to the Gray board before the hearings began. These documents were never communicated to Oppenheimer on the grounds that they were highly classified, and thus Oppenheimer and his counsel were required from start to finish to answer accusations which were never fully known or forthrightly made. But since the hearings ended, Admiral Strauss has made the attempt he so strangely did not make during the hearings to have at least one of these documents declassified, and it is a fair bet that as the inwardness of the Oppenheimer case begins to be more widely understood, these same documents that were always hidden from Oppenheimer will be spread before the general public to start a counter-fire.

If these things are permitted, why may not the American government blacken the name of any honest citizen it chooses? After all, we are officially encouraged, nowadays, to write poison-pen letters about one another in security's sacred name. The security files bulge with them. What could be easier than to daub the ugliest dirt on the most innocent man by fishing the appropriate nastiness out of the files and giving it solemn and official publication?

**F**INALLY, consider with the utmost care, consider as an American citizen who may some day be called to answer as Oppenheimer was called, the standards of security that this case establishes. Look, for these standards, to the opinion of Gordon Gray and Thomas Morgan. Look, and look well, at these things Gray and Morgan said

about this man whom they then held a "security risk":

We find no evidence of disloyalty. Indeed, we have before us much responsible and positive evidence of the loyalty and love of country of [Robert Oppenheimer]. . . .

Dr. Oppenheimer served his country because it sought him. The impact of his influence was felt immediately and increased progressively as his services were used. The nation owes [such scientists], we believe, a great debt of gratitude for loyal and magnificent service. This is particularly true with respect to Dr. Oppenheimer. . . . the Board had before it eloquent and convincing testimony of Dr. Oppenheimer's deep devotion to his country. . . .

We have given particular attention to the question of his loyalty, and we have come to the clear conclusion, which should be reassuring to the people of this country, that he is a loyal citizen. . . .

It must [also] be said that Dr. Oppenheimer seems to have had a high degree of discretion reflecting an unusual ability to keep to himself vital secrets.

**S**O HERE is this man, passionately spoken for by the great men of his profession and his finest colleagues in the government, his "deep devotion" to his country acknowledged, his immense services admitted, his perfect discretion approved, with not an iota of evidence in the record that he ever, at any time since he became a mature man, failed to put this nation's interests first and the rest nowhere. And what has happened to him? On the evidence that has been shown, by the methods that have been described, for the reasons that have been suggested, and by such accusers as have been displayed, he has been held a "security risk," fit to serve his country no longer, pilloried before his fellow citizens and the world, debarred from continuing his immense contribution to the true security of the United States.

Earlier in this report, we have said that the ruling of the Atomic Energy Commission disgraced Robert Oppenheimer. But we were wrong. This act did not disgrace Robert Oppenheimer: it dishonored and disgraced the high traditions of American freedom.

## Schlesinger Misquotes Report on Oppenheimer

THE HARVARD HISTORIAN and A. D. A. philosopher Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. has written a piece on Robert Oppenheimer for *The Atlantic Monthly* which intrigues me because when an historian turns propagandist, he may permit himself liberties which a journalist would reject.

Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote:

"Is absolute security possible short of an absolute state? Robert Oppenheimer was doubtless at moments a cocky, irritating, even arrogant man. But surely no arrogance of Oppenheimer equals the arrogance of those who, in the frightening words of the Gray Board, affirm that 'it has been demonstrated that the government can search . . . the soul of an individual whose relationship to his government is in question.'"

"The government which claims to do this would hardly seem a government for Americans."

UNFORTUNATELY that is not what the Gray Report said. The three dots which show an ellision are insufficient. Much more is omitted from a short paragraph which makes Professor Schlesinger's quotation altogether inadequate. First I shall give the sentence in full that the learned historian has shortened:

"We believe that it has been demonstrated that the government can search its own soul and the soul of an individual whose relationship to his government is in question with full protection of the rights and interests of both."

Of course, the omission of the words, "with full protection of the rights and interests of both," changes the meaning of the sentence completely.

Robert Oppenheimer's troubles arose from the fact that he lied, that his lies made no sense as the truth might have made sense. Granting his enormous abilities, one still wonders at the moral qualities of a man who deliberately lies and who, when he is forced by cross-examination to admit that he lied, seems to find nothing immoral about it.

THE FOLLOWING quotations from the Gray Board's report are of value in this connection:

"19. It was reported that you have consistently denied that you have ever been a member of the Communist Party. It was further reported that you stated to a representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1946 that you had a change of mind regarding the policies and politics of the Soviet Union about the time of the signing of the Soviet-German Pact in 1939. It was further reported that during 1950 you stated to a representative of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that you had never attended a closed meeting of the Communist Party; and that at the time of the Russo-Finnish war and the subsequent break between Germany and Russia in 1941, you realized the Communist Party infiltration tactics into the alleged anti-Fascist groups and became fed up with the whole thing and lost what little interest you had . . .

"19. (A) Prior to April, 1942, you had contributed \$150 per month to the Communist Party in the San Francisco area, and that the last such payment was apparently made in April, 1942, immediately before your entry into the atomic bomb project."



Professor of American history at Harvard, ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR., was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in History for his book, *The Age of Jackson*, which was published in 1945. A Jacksonian Democrat, he has been commissioned to do *The Age of Roosevelt*. His preparation for this big undertaking, as well as the outspoken anti-Communism which has won him bitter condemnation on the far left, qualifies him particularly to analyze one of the most absorbing and portentous volumes in print, the 992-page report on the Oppenheimer hearing.

## THE OPPENHEIMER CASE

by ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.

IT is not likely that a great many people will bother to read *In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer: Transcript of Hearing Before Personnel Security Board* (United States Atomic Energy Commission), though it is available for \$2.75 from the Superintendent of Documents. Its 992 pages are in the finest of the Government Printing Office's fine print; its form is meandering and discursive; its points are often confused and obscure. Yet it is a work of the greatest fascination and the highest significance. It offers an unequalled picture of the paradoxes of national security. It provides, in addition, the first authentic series of glimpses into the new, post-atomic, scientific-military world which in the past dozen years has risen behind and beyond and above lay American society.

Without our fully realizing it or their fully desiring it, this new community of weapons scientists has become in many ways the arbiter of our destinies. One regrets that no American novelist seems to have been attracted by this phenomenon; we do not even have the picture which C. P. Snow and Nigel Balchin have provided of its British counterpart. This lack of a sense of human background makes the impression which emerges from the Oppenheimer record all the more strange and shadowed. The record is not only fragmentary in its portrayal of the new technocracy; but too much of what is portrayed is unintelligible to the layman,

because of both the difficulty of the scientific ideas and the excisions of the security officer.

Yet an impression does emerge—a singular, tantalizing, incomplete impression of this new world where science and policy intersect at the point of maximum destruction; where the life and death of civilization may hang on incomprehensible equations fed into giant calculating machines; where yet the old human emotions—love, loyalty, envy, hate—are still alive and powerful. It is a world of machines and processes—cyclotrons and reactors, heavy water piles and neutron diffusion. But it is also a world of men. What sort of men are these who inhabit this world, where so little can be freely communicated save images of destruction and death?

Their names have been known long enough—Oppenheimer, Rabi, Fermi, Teller, Bethe, Bacher, Zacharias, and the rest; but they have been words in headlines, faces flashing by in newsreels, the agents of catastrophic but vague experiments in distant places, shadowy magicians of the atomic age. One merit of the Oppenheimer transcript is that it presents these men to us in action, and not so much as scientists, impersonal and unchallengeable, but as human beings, involved in the inquiry into the loyalty and security of the one among them who more than any other was considered by the public to be their archetype and their leader. Inquisition both reveals and diminishes them. At the same

time, it admits sharp light (too much, according to some specialists in security) into those debates in the back rooms which may already, by now, have shaped the future or non-future of civilization.

## 2

THE scientists, it must be said, have long resented the secrecy in which they must live; that is one of the counts the state has against them. One feels almost, at moments, that the final struggle of our time will be between the scientists and the security officers — between those whose business it is to discover and propagate truth, and those whose business it is to conceal it. But science, now that it has invaded the world of policy and power, cannot hope to escape the burden of security. These scientists are not fools. They know that their secrets in the hands of others — in the hands of the Communists — might be fatal; so the tension between dissemination and suppression is deep in themselves. They form a compact, taut community — brilliant men working under indescribable pressure on unimaginable weapons, cut off by “security” from the rest of society, thrust in terribly upon themselves and their science. Los Alamos during the war only carried this isolation to its logical extreme — the troop patrols around the perimeter, the monitored phone calls, the censored mail, the surveillance of personnel away from the base. But all scientists working in the higher reaches of the weapons field continue to dwell in Los Alamoses of their own construction.

For such men, science and life must become in the end almost indistinguishable. Each is joined indissolubly with his colleagues in the excitement and beauty of the scientific passion. Each may be divided irrevocably from them as technical divergences turn, under the pressure, into intolerable differences of personality and philosophy. The line between fusion and fission is close, for humans as well as for atoms. So Oppenheimer, who loathed the thermonuclear bomb as a dreadful weapon, could exult, “From a technical point of view it was a sweet and lovely and beautiful job.” So Teller, who admired Oppenheimer and helped drive him from public service, could say with sincere regret, “There is no person whose friendship I’d value more than Oppie’s if the circumstances of our deep technical disagreements would permit it.”

These were the men now presenting their testimony to the AEC’s Personnel Security Board — to Gordon Gray, former Secretary of the Army, president of the University of North Carolina, brisk, competent, unassuming, and businesslike; to Dr. Ward V. Evans, the aging chemist from Loyola, with his seemingly aimless but sometimes piercing questions and his sociable inquiries about old friends or students the witnesses might have encountered; to Thomas A. Morgan, former president of the Sperry Corporation, silent and enigmatic.

Witnesses friendly to Oppenheimer sought to prepare the Board for the queer inhabitants of this post-atomic scientific world. One such witness was General Groves, the wartime commander of the Manhattan District. Before the Board, he was an odd and not unimpressive mixture of candor and arrogance, essentially banal and unimaginative in his judgments, but still trailing the glory of the great war experience which for a moment had brought out the strength within him and in which he had played so honorable, if at times so reluctant, a role. He spoke of the scientists as one might of one’s children — they were men “who would become violently excited about the most minor thing. . . . They were tense and nervous and they had to be soothed all the time.” He understood that scientists could have little sympathy with security requirements. “I never held this against them,” said General Groves, “because I knew that their whole lives from the time they entered college almost had been based on the dissemination of knowledge.” They had fought the General incessantly, forcing him into the position of having to accept things they knew he disapproved. Yet “they were the kind of men that made the project a success. If I had a group of yes men we never would have gotten anywhere.”

John Lansdale, Jr., said much the same thing — Lansdale who had been a lieutenant colonel and security officer at Los Alamos and is now a lawyer in Cleveland; in 1944 exercised over the commissioning of Communists by the Army, in 1954 exercised over other matters (“I think that the hysteria of the times over communism is extremely dangerous”). Like Groves, Lansdale had been much exasperated by the scientists. In crisp and effective testimony, he described as “almost maddening” the tendency of the “more brilliant people to extend in their own mind their competence and independence of decision in fields in which they have no competence.” Yet Lansdale, again like Groves, was prepared to accept arrogance as the price of genius and to take calculated risks. Both had agreed in rejecting the original recommendations of security officials that J. Robert Oppenheimer be barred from atomic work. Both believed that he should be placed in charge of Los Alamos in 1943. Neither, in the spring of 1954, saw any reason to regret this decision.

Oppenheimer was, of course, the first of the scientists to appear. Not always his own best witness, he gave precise, fluent, impatient testimony, filled with the wonder and disgust which might afflict a man of reason compelled to contemplate past imbecilities. The AEC counsel, Roger Robb, vigorous and bludgeoning, intent not to comprehend but to indict, took full advantage of Oppenheimer’s predicament. Most of the hammering came over the indication to Oppenheimer in 1943 by his friend Haakon Chevalier that, if he wanted to transmit

secrets to Soviet scientists, channels were available; Oppenheimer's attempt to tip off the Manhattan District security officers to espionage possibilities without implicating his friend had resulted in a miserable botch of falsehoods, though it could not be clear whether he had uttered them in 1943 or was uttering them in 1954. Robb, pitiless, pressed every advantage, extorted every concession: "You lied to him?" "Yes." "... So you lied to him, too?" "That is right." "... This also was a lie?" "Yes, sir." "... Was that part of what you call a cock and bull story, too?" "It certainly was." "... According to your testimony now you told not one lie to Colonel Pash, but a whole fabrication and tissue of lies?" "Right." Why, oh why? "Because I was an idiot" was all Oppenheimer could say, perhaps despairing to convince anybody, perhaps despairing to convince himself. "This whole thing is a piece of idiocy. I am afraid I can't explain why there was a consul, why there was a microfilm, why there were three people on the project, why two of them were at Los Alamos. . . . I wish I could explain to you better why I falsified and fabricated."

Out of such perplexity, hard questions emerge. Could Oppenheimer have been telling the truth to Colonel Pash in 1943? Could he be lying now? Could he still be shielding atomic scientists involved in an espionage ring? Practical judgment on this had to rest on analysis, not of this episode alone, but of Oppenheimer's total career.

## 3

On the basis of the written record, it is hard to tell how effective Oppenheimer was before the Board; apparently not enough. Yet the Berkeley scientists, when they came to testify, argued that Oppenheimer's powers of persuasion surpassed all normal bounds — that, as Dr. Wendell Mitchell Latimer, professor of chemistry at the University of California, put it, "He is one of the most amazing men that the country has ever produced in his ability to influence people. It is just astounding the influence that he has upon a group. It is an amazing thing." No one could resist this influence, said Professor Latimer, not even General Groves; "not only General Groves, but the other members of the committee, Conant and the other members, they were under the influence of Dr. Oppenheimer, and that is some influence, I assure you"; only geographical remoteness, added Professor Latimer, had saved himself; "I might have been [under Oppenheimer's influence] if I had been in closer contact."

Another Berkeley scientist, Dr. Luis Walter Alvarez, professor of physics, reported, "Every time I have found a person who felt this way [that is, against the thermonuclear bomb] I have seen Dr. Oppenheimer's influence on that person's mind . . . one of the most persuasive men that has ever lived." The Gray Board, however, found in Oppen-

heimer not the qualities of Svengali but rather those of Trilby and criticized him for showing an undue "susceptibility to influence."

Yet Oppenheimer's persuasiveness had certainly worked in the past. Groves and Lansdale had known of the Chevalier episode in 1943 and had not withdrawn Oppenheimer's security clearance; David Lilienthal and the AEC had known about it in 1947, when Oppenheimer's clearance was confirmed; Gordon Dean, Lilienthal's successor as AEC chairman, had known about it. Indeed, Lilienthal and Dean headed a remarkable group of public officials, not scientists themselves but men who had exercised grave responsibilities in the weapons field, who now appeared to testify for Oppenheimer. The testimony of both Lilienthal and Dean revealed traces of past friction with Oppenheimer; but both men — Lilienthal, precise and cautious, carefully referring to documents and memoranda; Dean, vivid, lucid, definite, pointed — swore their utter confidence in Oppenheimer's loyalty and his reliability. Other such men appeared: George F. Kennan; John J. McCloy; General Frederick Osborn; Sumner T. Pike — one after another praising the man and pledging their reputation to his probity. Even Bernard Baruch offered an affidavit on Oppenheimer's behalf.

And then the scientists: Dr. Vannevar Bush, dean of the American scientific community, said of Oppenheimer: "More than any other scientist that I know of he was responsible for our having an atomic bomb on time," and affirmed his entire faith in his character. Dr. Hans Bethe said, "I believe that Oppenheimer had absolutely unique qualifications for this job [Los Alamos] and that the success is due mostly to him." Dr. James B. Conant said, "He is 1 of the 3 or 4 men whose combination of professional knowledge, hard work, and loyal devotion made possible the development of the bomb." Dr. Norman Ramsey said, "He did a superb technical job, and one which also made all of us acquire the greatest of respect and admiration for . . . his loyalty and his integrity." Dr. I. I. Rabi said, "Oppenheimer set up this school of theoretical physics which was a tremendous contribution. In fact, I don't know how we could have carried out the scientific part of the war without the contributions of the people who worked with Oppenheimer." Dr. L. A. DuBridge, president of the California Institute of Technology, said, "I feel that there is no one who has exhibited his loyalty to this country more spectacularly than Dr. Oppenheimer. He was a natural and respected and at all times a loved leader." And Bacher, Bradbury, Compton, Fermi, Fisk, Lauritsen, Von Neumann, Whitman, and Zacharias spoke to the same effect — all eminent scientists who had played the most essential roles in the American weapons program.

Yet from the start another note sounded: other men — other eminent scientists — had different

things to say. The discordant theme had its origin in three places — in Dr. Edward Teller; in the scientists clustered around Professor Ernest Lawrence at Berkeley (whom Teller has since joined); and in the Strategic Air Command and especially in the former Air Force scientist, David Griggs.

Teller had received his first mention in Oppenheimer's own testimony. He appeared there as a brilliant and stormy figure, dissatisfied with the progress of research at Los Alamos, anxious that Fermi or Bethe or Oppenheimer himself take charge of the thermonuclear work. Then Gordon Dean described Teller as "a very, very able man . . . a genius . . . a very good friend of mine . . . a very difficult man to work with." Dean added: "You can't break up a whole Los Alamos laboratory for one man, no matter how good he is." Said Hans Bethe, "He did not want to work on the agreed line of research. . . . He always suggested new things, new deviations." Said Sumner Pike, "Dr. Teller was never one to keep his candles hidden under bushels . . . a very useful and a very fine man, but . . . lopsided." Dr. Bradbury, present head of Los Alamos, told of the circumstances which led to Teller's final departure from Los Alamos. And yet Professor Latimer of the Berkeley group, when asked whether Teller was a hard man to work with, replied vigorously, "I can hardly think of a statement that is further from the truth. . . . In any friendly climate, Dr. Teller is a perfect colleague, scientifically and personally."

It was Teller who believed in the thermonuclear bomb, worked for it from 1944 on, strove single-mindedly on its behalf, resented any diversion from it, and, in 1951, produced the invention which made it possible. But the great battle over the thermonuclear bomb — over Super, as it was termed in the scientific-military world — had been fought two years earlier. The Soviet achievement of an atomic explosion in September, 1949, had detonated the American thermonuclear effort. Simultaneously Professor Lawrence and his Berkeley colleagues and the generals of the Strategic Air Command saw in Super the only means of recapturing American weapons superiority; and Teller now had the chance to make his dream come true.

The Gray Board made a great deal of Oppenheimer's opposition to Super; the Atomic Energy Commission, in the end, excluded it as a factor in the case. But, whether a formal factor in the final decision, it was certainly the primary factor in setting in motion the train of events which brought Robert Oppenheimer to Room 2022, Building T-3, of the Atomic Energy Commission, on April 12, 1954. For the opposition to Super fixed in Teller's mind the belief that Oppenheimer was acting "in a way which for me was exceedingly hard to understand"; after the Super debate Teller concluded that the vital interests of this country should be "in hands which I understand better, and therefore

trust more." The opposition to Super persuaded Ernest Lawrence and the Berkeley group that there was a doubtful if not sinister pattern in Oppenheimer's behavior. And the opposition to Super launched David Griggs of the Air Force on his campaign to save the Strategic Air Command from Oppenheimer's ideas and influence.

From a dramatic viewpoint, Teller's eventual appearance before the Board, after all the build-up, must have been something of an anticlimax. A Hungarian by birth, a student in Germany, a teacher in England, a research fellow in Denmark, a professor at American universities since 1935, Teller seemed troubled, earnest, and, in obvious intent, fair-minded, torn between his concern for the United States and his desire not to do an injustice to Oppenheimer. He said of Oppenheimer at the start, "I have always assumed, and I now assume, that he is loyal to the United States. I believe this, and I shall believe it until I see very conclusive proof to the opposite." In his testimony, he tried hard to draw a just balance sheet on Oppenheimer's activities. Gordon Gray, seeking something more clear-cut, finally put the direct question: would it endanger the common defense and security to grant clearance to Oppenheimer? Teller replied that, so far as loyalty was concerned, he saw no reason to deny clearance; but "if it is a question of wisdom and judgment, as demonstrated by actions since 1945, then I would say one would be wiser not to grant clearance. I must say that I am myself a little bit confused on this issue." He did, indeed, seem confused about the nature of the security problem, since the giving of bad advice has not usually been considered to make a man a security risk. But Gordon Gray replied: "I think that you have answered my question."

The Berkeley group — Alvarez, Latimer, Pitzer; Lawrence himself was prevented by illness from testifying — added to this only the emphasis on Oppenheimer as the great persuader. The more intense attack on him came from a man who had only been a minor and transient figure in the early testimony — from David Griggs, formerly Chief Scientist of the Department of the Air Force.

## 4

THE broad Air Force view had been first presented by General R. C. Wilson, en route from command of the Air War College at Maxwell Field to the Third Air Force in England. But General Wilson had begun by saying firmly that he wanted the record to show "that I am appearing here by military orders, and not on my own volition," and that he had no question concerning Oppenheimer's loyalty. He did feel, he conceded under questioning, that Oppenheimer's advice on strategic questions had threatened to jeopardize the national defense. But by this, it became clear, General Wilson simply meant

that Oppenheimer's strategic views were opposed to the theory of the Strategic Air Command — the theory that the central reliance of our national defense should be on SAC and the hydrogen bomb. "I am first of all a big bomb man," General Wilson explained.

The General remained a reluctant and reserved witness, testifying only because he had been ordered to do so by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. David Griggs was less inhibited. A geophysicist, now at the University of California at Los Angeles, Griggs had served as Chief Scientist of the Air Force from September, 1951, to July, 1952.

His testimony was nervous, detailed, and copious. He announced his suspicions of Oppenheimer's loyalty and further alleged the existence of a scientists' conspiracy, headed by Zacharias, Oppenheimer, Rabi, and Lauritsen, which operated, he said, under the name of ZORC, and which was pledged to the destruction of the Strategic Air Command. His words, as he candidly warned the Board, throbbed with strong emotion. He even produced a memorandum describing an occasion when he told Oppenheimer face to face that he could not be sure whether or not Oppenheimer was pro-Russian. Oppenheimer "then asked if I had 'impugned his loyalty.' I replied I had. He then said he thought I was paranoid. After a few more pleasantries our conversation came to an end."

Those who used to know Griggs when he was around Harvard in the late thirties remember him as a man of violent feelings, working out aggressions against a world which he conceived to have injured him. He told now of watching Zacharias write the initials ZORC on a blackboard before fifty or a hundred people in a meeting in Cambridge in September, 1952; yet Zacharias and other participants at the meeting deny that such an episode ever took place; Zacharias, indeed, swore that he had never heard of the initials until he read them many months later in an article in *Fortune*. Similarly Griggs imputed to Zacharias, as the proponent of continental defense, the statement that it was necessary to give up American strategic air power, at a time when a strengthening of the Strategic Air Command was an essential part of Zacharias's theory of continental defense. And he similarly charged Thomas K. Finletter, then Secretary of the Air Force, with making remarks about Oppenheimer's loyalty which Finletter has since said he never made.

Griggs strongly favored the thermonuclear bomb, and it is certainly true that Oppenheimer opposed it. It is even true that Oppenheimer opposed it — and the strategy of making atomic retaliation the main reliance of our defense — with passion and anger. Oppenheimer thus seems to have believed, and perhaps even to have repeated, stories about Finletter as a bomb-brandishing imperialist which were patently false and vicious. Yet many other re-

sponsible people opposed the bomb, too — some, like Conant, before Oppenheimer had crystallized his own opinion. One ground for opposition was the reasonable belief that the cost of the thermonuclear effort in terms of plutonium bombs might well result in the weakening of American defense.

Oppenheimer's own reasons were more complicated than that — so complicated, indeed, that the problem of his motives thoroughly fascinated the Gray Board, which concluded that he had not been "entirely candid" in his statements on the issue. There are real puzzles here. Oppenheimer, for example, expressed in 1949 a moral distaste for Super which he did not seem to feel for the atomic bomb; yet in 1945 he had supported the research which led to Super, and in 1951, after Teller's brilliant invention, he seemed, according to some witnesses, wholly sympathetic to the thermonuclear project; others thought he was still dragging his feet. To complicate the affair, the thermonuclear bomb, as it was finally built, was, because of Teller's invention, a quite different matter from the bomb which had been discussed in 1949. By Teller's own testimony, Oppenheimer said that if the new style of bomb had been suggested earlier, he would never have opposed the project. Oppenheimer's record of vacillation here is manifest, though it would, of course, be a hopeless government in which officials did not feel free to change their minds or to express their dissenting opinions. Vannevar Bush stated the issue with eloquence when he discussed before the Gray Board the original bill of particulars against Oppenheimer. The AEC letter, Bush said, "is quite capable of being interpreted as placing a man on trial because he held opinions, and had the temerity to express them. . . ."

"I think this board or no board should ever sit on a question in this country of whether a man should serve his country or not because he expressed strong opinions. If you want to try that case, you can try me. I have expressed strong opinions many times, and I intend to do so. They have been unpopular opinions at times. When a man is pilloried for doing that, this country is in a severe state."

In the end, the H-bomb problem settled itself. Truman, Acheson, McMahon, Finletter, Louis Johnson, Teller, Griggs, and the other supporters of the thermonuclear effort were vindicated. And, in the end, Oppenheimer's opposition to the effort was not to be formally held against him by Lewis Strauss and the AEC. Yet few who read the record are likely to doubt that, if Oppenheimer had not opposed Super in 1949, he would not have had to stand trial in 1954.

## 5

If the thermonuclear debate was eliminated, what was left in the record to cast doubt on Oppenheimer's loyalty or security? One would presume

something fairly weighty; for the Gray Board by a 2-1 vote and the Atomic Energy Commission by a 4-1 vote concluded that Robert Oppenheimer was a security risk, not to be trusted with secret information without danger to the United States. The AEC majority, which had the final say, rested its decision on two main allegations: "imprudent and dangerous associations" and "substantial defects of character."

On the question of associations, the AEC majority reproached Oppenheimer not only with his early and admitted Communist relationships, but with "persistent and continuing association with Communists" in the years since the war. In terms of the record, this last phrase is perplexing; and the AEC itself only specified one association — that with Chevalier — to support the "persistent and continuing" charge. As for Chevalier, whom the AEC assumed without proof to have been still a Communist in 1953, Oppenheimer dined with him one night in Paris that year, and on the next day drove with him to meet with André Malraux. Malraux, of course, is not only the pre-eminent literary man of France but is also an intimate political adviser of General de Gaulle and a fanatical anti-Communist. It seems unlikely that any friend of Malraux would be an active Communist today. (But Gordon Gray and Thomas Morgan, in discussing this incident, could only refer vaguely to the distinguished writer and notable anti-Communist as "a Dr. Malraux.")

Beyond the Chevalier incident, the record reveals no other post-1946 associations with Communists or even ex-Communists on Oppenheimer's part, save for occasional chats with his brother, a chance meeting in 1949 with two Fifth Amendment physicists while leaving the barbershop in Princeton, a scolding of the Harvard ex-Communist, Dr. Wendell Furry, for having employed the Fifth Amendment, and perhaps brushes with persons at scientific conventions. Did these brief and random meetings over a decade really constitute a sinister and deliberate pattern of association with Communists? If so, one wonders what will now happen to Vannevar Bush, Bethe, Fermi, Rabi, and the other scientists who will doubtless continue to associate with Oppenheimer — and thus will have far more of a record of "persistent and continuing" association with a certified security risk than Oppenheimer himself has had since the war.

On this whole problem of associations, George Kennan reasonably remarked to Gordon Gray, "I suppose most of us have had friends or associates whom we have come to regard as misguided with the course of time, and I don't like to think that people in senior capacity in the Government should not be permitted or conceded maturity of judgment to know when they can see such a person or when they can't." Kennan added, "I myself say it is a personal view on the part of Christian charity to try to be at least as decent as you can to them." But

neither the Gray Board nor the AEC majority were prepared to accord to high government officials the exercise of maturity, or to indulge them in impulses of charity. The higher the government official, contended the AEC, the less latitude should be permitted him.

Oppenheimer's truly damaging pattern of association took place, of course, before the war and might be presumed to have been offset by his war and post-war record. That record, as unfolded in the hearings, was, after 1943, a not unimpressive one. Before 1943, he was, like so many scientists (and like some of his colleagues who retain clearance today), a political sentimentalist, soft-headed and unsuspecting. But as early as 1943 he could tell the Los Alamos security officer that present membership in the Communist Party was in his judgment incompatible with loyalty to the atomic bomb project. After the war he ignored even liberal opinion in the scientific community to testify in favor of the May-Johnson bill, fearing lest the disintegration of Los Alamos might weaken American defense. He resigned from the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions in 1946, when its pro-Communist tendencies became apparent to him. He helped formulate the principles in the Baruch plan which the Communists found least acceptable; and when General Osborn took over the job of negotiating for atomic control in the United Nations, Oppenheimer flew from San Francisco to urge him to discontinue negotiations because of the hopeless attitude of the Communists. When his counsel was sought by scientists in trouble for past political associations, he told them not to plead the Fifth Amendment; and in 1949 he freely testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee concerning the Communist relationships of at least one atomic scientist. As hostile witnesses testified, he was more responsible than anyone else for educating the Army and even the Air Force to the potentialities of tactical atomic weapons and for integrating such weapons into military plans; and, as they also testified, he played a substantial role in the fight for adequate air defense against possible Soviet attack. No one before the Board charged him with a "soft" or pro-Communist utterance in the last half dozen years. In writing, in speech, and in conduct, Oppenheimer would seem to have acted like a passionate and even obsessed anti-Communist through most of the last decade; Dr. Rabi even told the Board that Oppenheimer had seriously discussed the advisability of preventive war.

## 6

THE problem of "substantial defects of character" is even harder to pin down. The AEC majority assembled half a dozen apparent ambiguities and equivocations, purporting to demonstrate Oppenheimer's basic unreliability. Some of these had to

do with lapses of memory. Nor, judging by the hearing, was Oppenheimer the only scientist liable to such lapses. Indeed, noting the fallible memory exhibited by one scientist after another, one began to wonder whether there was something about the scientific focus which, in the purity of its concentration, left human relationships in a vague and easily forgotten penumbra. In one such incident, Oppenheimer denied having received a letter from Dr. Seaborg though the government had the letter in its possession, having taken it from Oppenheimer's files. Obviously, if Oppenheimer had recalled the existence of the letter, he would have gained no advantage by denying it, for he would have known that the government had it. With the exception of the Chevalier episode, the six examples cited by the AEC majority were about of this weight. On the basis of this, would Oppenheimer's character as disclosed in the hearing seem more defective, say, than Griggs's? At least Oppenheimer's demonstrated lies were in the past and were freely conceded. Yet, despite the misrepresentations in Griggs's testimony, it can be assumed that Lewis Strauss had made no move to withdraw Griggs's Q clearance.

The whole concept of "defects of character" seems a hazardous one. The American government from 1789 on has always had a large share of people — including some of the ablest men in it — who had, by AEC standards, "substantial defects of character." Yet even if characters become so deplorable that one fears contamination from them, one still shudders to have the concept of "security risk" so tortured that it becomes a synonym for a character less righteous than one's own. By the Lewis Strauss interpretation of "security risk" Alexander Hamilton and Grover Cleveland would have been fired out of government service as adulterers, U. S. Grant as a drunkard, and so on. Would such exclusions have improved the safety of the republic? Bureaucratic infighting in the government has always been bitter and acrimonious; it is likely to be, when dedicated men strongly believe that the safety of the republic depends on their policies; and each side characteristically regards the other as deficient in morality. But when the winning side starts trying to outlaw the losers as "security risks," as happened in the China service and is now beginning to happen in the scientific-military world, one wonders what sort of people our future governments will attract.

## 7

THE culmination of the AEC case against Oppenheimer's character had to do with something else: it had to do with Oppenheimer's attitude toward the security system — as the AEC majority put it, his "persistent and willful disregard for the obligations of security." But once again the AEC was astonishingly weak in bringing forward concrete

evidence. The decision mentioned only the Chevalier case — which was, after all, eleven years old — and referred, without specification, to "other instances."

It is true that there had been ambiguous incidents during the war, and the Chevalier episode was certainly much more than that. But, as General Groves testified, all the scientists chafed under security restrictions; and, as others testified, Oppenheimer was far more security-conscious than most. General Groves told how he had once warned Niels Bohr not to talk about certain things at Los Alamos; "he got out there and within 5 minutes after his arrival he was saying everything he promised he would not say." Groves had a similar experience with Ernest Lawrence; and he also reported that Lawrence had bucked when Groves told him to get rid of a security risk in the Berkeley laboratory. Colonel Lansdale recalled that Lawrence "yelled and screamed louder than anybody else about us taking Lomanitz [a Communist for whose draft deferment Oppenheimer made perfunctory intercession] away from him." Yet, in 1954, only illness prevented Lawrence from bearing testimony against Oppenheimer. Similarly, as much substantial testimony was brought forward in the hearing to show that David Griggs had tried to retard and sabotage the project for continental defense as was brought forward to show that Oppenheimer had tried to retard and sabotage the hydrogen bomb project.

The AEC majority had begun by defining the issue as whether Oppenheimer should continue to have access to "some of the most vital secrets in the possession of the United States." This definition suggested that a security risk was a person who could not be trusted with vital secrets because, deliberately or inadvertently, he might allow them to reach the enemy. Yet no serious person faintly contended that Oppenheimer's defects of character and association, over a period of a dozen years, had been responsible for the loss of a single secret. Colonel Pash, a hostile witness, swore that he had no information "of any leakage of restricted data through Dr. Oppenheimer to any unauthorized person."

Nowhere was Oppenheimer charged with doing concrete injury to the national security through mishandling of secrets. His essential crime, as the Gray Board finally suggested, was lack of "enthusiastic support of the security system"; as Commissioner Murray argued at length in an AEC concurring opinion, "loyalty" should mean, not just loyalty to the nation, but "obedience to the requirements of [the security] system." Oppenheimer thus became a security risk, not because anything he had done had harmed national security, but because he had declined at times in the past to collaborate with professional security officers. Yet even here the AEC majority cited no specific instance of such non-collaboration later than 1943!

When Groves kept Oppenheimer at Los Alamos

in 1943, he overrode the recommendations of the professional security officers. Possibly if the Gray Board and Lewis Strauss's AEC had been in existence then they would have kept Oppenheimer well out of the Manhattan District. Yet it seems hard to believe that our national security over the past dozen years would have been greater today if Oppenheimer had been barred from atomic work. And, unless one would argue this, it would seem even harder to argue that our national security is now to be greatly strengthened by barring an older, wiser, and more chastened Oppenheimer in 1954.

The Gray Board was prepared to excuse Groves's 1943 decision on the ground that there might then have been an "overriding need" for Oppenheimer's services; such a need, the Board contended, no longer exists in 1954. Conceivably our weapons program will not suffer unduly from the elimination of Oppenheimer: physicists are said to age fast (though Oppenheimer is only four years older than Teller) and a new generation has come along to take up the research burden. But is it not an error to construe the Oppenheimer decision as having no greater effect than subtracting a single overage scientist from government weapons work? Will the new generation of physicists now flock so eagerly into the government laboratories? And what will the consequences be for American security if they don't? It is of importance that the two official protests against the purge of Dr. Oppenheimer — by Dr. Evans of the Gray Board and by Dr. Smyth of the AEC — came from the only scientists to take part in the review of the case. Dr. Smyth, pointing to the role of "powerful personal enemies" in bringing the action against Oppenheimer, could only conclude with a despairing appeal to thoughtful citizens to read the record.

The AEC made its decision at just the point when we have begun to realize that the Soviet Union is fast cutting down our lead in the weapons race (or at least so the man in charge of these things at the Pentagon, Donald Quarles, has said; his boss, Charles E. Wilson, has denied it). This is surely a race which may mean life or death for us all. At just this point, one would think, the government might be doing what it could to enlist the ardor and devotion of the scientific community in our weapons program. Instead, one of our great scientists has been struck from the program, not because of any specific harm he has brought — or is considered to be likely to bring — to national security, but because his character and his associations are disapproved by professional security officers. In so doing, the administration has evidently spread consternation through the scientific community and has made it harder than ever for our allies to trust our judgment and accept our leadership. In the name of a wholly ritualistic conception of "secu-

rity," the administration may have done irreparable injury to the substance of America's national interest. "Our internal security system has run wild," Dr. Vannevar Bush has said. "It is imperative to our real security that the trend be reversed."

John J. McCloy, speaking before the Gray Board, pointed to what he called the "relative character of security." Security had two aspects, he proposed: the negative aspect of preventing the loss of secrets, and the affirmative aspect of making sure that we have a continuous supply of secrets to be protected. The fervor which stimulates thinking, the freedom which gives it scope — these, McCloy contended, were just as much a part of the security problem as the blocking of espionage. "If anything is done which would in any way repress or dampen that fervor, that verve, that enthusiasm, or the feeling generally that the place where you can get the greatest opportunity for the expansion of your mind and your experiments in this field is the United States, to that extent the security of the United States is impaired. . . . If the impression is prevalent that scientists as a whole have to work under such great restrictions and perhaps great suspicions in the United States, we may lose the next step in this field, which I think would be very dangerous for us."

McCloy made this point with great earnestness; but the Board (except perhaps Dr. Evans) did not react. "I don't want to cut you off at all," said Gordon Gray, cutting him off, "but you were getting back about something of the Nazis during the war." And, in his own report, Gray emphatically rejected McCloy's notion of the relative character of security. National security, said the majority of the Gray Board in solemn language, "in times of peril must be absolute."

Absolute security? Might this not be the most subversive idea of all? Dr. Evans in his dissent demurred: "All people are somewhat of a security risk." George Kennan has elsewhere observed that "absolute security" is an unattainable and self-devouring end — that its frenzied pursuit must incline toward absolute tyranny. The problem of security, as Kennan sees it, is not to seek "a total absence of danger but to balance peril against peril and to find the tolerable degree of each."

Is absolute security possible short of an absolute state? Robert Oppenheimer was doubtless at moments a cocky, irritating, even arrogant man. But surely no arrogance of Oppenheimer equals the arrogance of those who, in the frightening words of the Gray Board, affirm that "it has been demonstrated that the Government can search . . . the soul of an individual whose relationship to his Government is in question."

The government which claims to do this would hardly seem a government for Americans.

intervention not only in the military affairs of Spain but also in its financial and monetary policy, including the preparation of the state budget. Azcarate puts his finger on the most neuralgic point of Spanish susceptibilities when he says that since the Franco government has agreed to turn Spain into a concentration base for American planes carrying A-bombs and H-bombs, the country will be exposed to immediate atomic reprisals if World War III breaks out. "This would mean Spain's total destruction," he concludes. The prospect has provided anti-government propaganda in Spain with an unparalleled popular appeal. The argument will have even greater effect if international tension rises and the threat of war grows more imminent.

An effort has been made, both on the Spanish and on the American side, to make the presence of the United States in Spain as inconspicuous as possible. But some 400 Americans, 280 belonging to the armed forces, are there on missions connected with the carrying out of the treaty. The people of Madrid see a growing number of cars marked "U. S. A.-Germany Forces." These cars appear most frequently in front of the sumptuous new Air Ministry on Romero Robledo Street and the España sky-

scraper, where the "principal contractor"—the person in charge of the United States relations with Spanish firms looking for dollars—has his office. The label "U. S. A.-Germany Forces" is surely symbolic. To the Spanish people it seems to unite West Germany and Franco Spain, the two "replacement allies" chosen by the Pentagon to compensate for the loss of E. D. C.

A Madrid cable on September 11 from United Press correspondent Peter Knox, appearing in the New York *Prensa*, states that in the "agonizing reappraisal" which is sure to come if efforts to find a substitute for E. D. C. fail, official circles are sure "Spain will be assigned a most important part in the military future of the Continent." Knox gives interesting details about the closer American-Spanish collaboration that has come with the defection of France and the growing sense of crisis in Western Europe: "In the new plans for the peripheral defense of Europe, the United States will depend on bombers and other types of planes stationed in Spain to face any act of Communist aggression. The United States air force, using Spanish bases, will be able to attack the faraway Soviet territory. Though the United States has a series of bases in Europe and

parts of North Africa, it is the Spanish bases, protected by the Pyrenees, that are regarded by experts as most valuable for the ultimate defense of Europe."

It is certainly curious that this interesting U. P. cable was not published in the chief New York newspapers. I don't know whether it was because the story seemed indiscreet from a military point of view or because Mr. Knox concluded his report with the following significant and honest comment:

It is the purely military aspect that makes the Spanish bases so important; but at the same time American democracy is involving itself in too many future risks for a country where there have been no elections for almost twenty years and where freedom of expression is non-existent. As long as the regime of Generalissimo Franco continues, the United States can trust Spain in its fight against communism; but it is difficult to predict what will happen after the Caudillo disappears, since nobody knows what the Spanish people think.

In all modesty I believe I *do* know what the Spanish people think. And I can say without hesitation that the question of the "succession" should be worrying not only the Duke of Maura and Spaniards generally but even more the American government.

# AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY

## The Oppenheimer Case . . . by Waldo Frank

THE transcript of the hearings before the Personnel Security Board of the Atomic Energy Commission runs to nearly a million words. It is not comfortable reading. Spoken speech without the presence of the speaker flattens to the elliptical; syntax is often lost as new thoughts invade. The matter here is both complex and repetitious, touching depths without exploring them. And one encounters sentences like this by David Lilienthal: "It is the reasoning

that I adduced was not the reasoning in substantial part the reasons that are stated in the G. A. C. report and that is evident by reading it." Yet the drama of this "matter" is so intense, so archetypal, so symbolic and relevant for the lives of us all, that the fat tome of the United States Printing Office becomes an experience like a great novel. Here, for those who lack time to read its 992 pages, is a glimpse of the story.

The reader is soon immersed in a climate, pervasive, obsessive, like a nightmare; a climate of unchallenged axioms and dogmas.

1. The world has only two parts: the United States and Russia.

2. These two parts are joined in absolute opposition. For America, Russia is "the enemy"; Russia's one interest in America is to destroy it.

3. America's security, in terms of *fact* and *act*, is a matter of weapons to be brandished or to be used.

4. Although each individual American may have values that transcend physical security and survival, values that may move him to risk life for them, the nation shall have no such values. Its supreme aim, like the beast's, is to survive. For the individual, values dearer than life; for the individual's nation, life at the cost of all values.

5. In the three weeks' hearing the

WALDO FRANK, novelist and critic, contributed a widely discussed article, *The "Anti-Communist Peril,"* to *The Nation* of June 19.

September 25, 1954

*The Nation*

word *genocide* is not used; the relevance of fission and fusion bombs to genocide is not mentioned.

6. There is occasional reference to "our civilization" and to the fact that fission-fusion bombs might destroy it. There is no inquiry into the nature of this civilization; into the bond between the bomb and the culture which produced it; into the perilous possibility that the bomb, *even if not used, even if merely made*, to "defend" this civilization, might undermine it and destroy the values of the men and women who live within it.

7. Although Russia and communism are the ever present "other" in this schizoid world, there is no hint by any of the free-ranging witnesses, who are not limited by court procedure, that deeper understanding of Russians and communism, of our mutual hostility and of *ourselves*, might contribute to defense and survival; and that some of the traits of which Oppenheimer is accused might make him a national asset for such understanding.

Of course, the business before the board is to measure the man by specified rules as a security risk. But Oppenheimer's personal motives and the nation's needs are a constant presence in the meanings of his conduct. His *character* is the issue. And the problems involved belong to politics, history, sociology, psychology, ethics, religion. They are never pursued beyond a superficial range within the reach of a schoolboy.

SO MUCH for the ideological scene and climate. What of the actors? The most emotional of the forty witnesses are the men of science. Within their concrete minds glows love for the accused. They have worked with him; they do not understand his former associations, and when the board prods them to explain, they are simply sure that this is a loyal and safe man. They cannot analyze their conviction (as they can analyze the atom), because love is in it. And this same quantum of the man that makes most of them love, makes a few of them hate: the victorious few—Teller, Latimer, Borden, Pitzer, et al. The hate also is below the threshold of intellectual conviction. "He is the most persuasive man in the world!" cries Dr. Latimer, with no hint of why this persuasiveness is a peril. Dr. Teller, presiding genius of



J. Robert Oppenheimer

the H-bomb, has nothing definite to say against his enemy: not that he is disloyal or unsafe, not even that he opposed or discouraged the project. But the same quantum which others love and which moves Oppenheimer to be less than passionately for the H-bomb, moves Teller—who loves the bomb as his own child—to hate him.

The bumptious General Groves, the sedate security officer, Colonel Lansdale, have more cause than the scientists to doubt this ex-radical and inventor of "a cock-and-bull story"; they trust him, nevertheless. "I want you to know," exclaims Lansdale in a talk registered by planted dictaphone, "that I like you personally, and believe me, it's so! I have no suspicions whatever and I don't want you to feel that I have. . . ." A quality in the man moves those who know him to love or hate *beyond*—not necessarily *against*—their rational convictions about him.

With others, the motivations are not personal; in their minds, clearly, Oppenheimer "stands for something" and they're against it. Roger Robb, the board's counsel, for instance. The hearing is not supposed to be a "trial." But

Robb is nakedly the prosecutor, working for a kill. He uses both net and poniard. Even the brilliant Lilienthal is tangled by him. When Dr. Von Neumann, generous-minded mathematician, is challenged to explain Oppenheimer's tale about the physicists and gropes for a psychological clue to help his certainty that Oppenheimer is both loyal and safe, Robb tosses him out:

Robb: One further question, doctor. You have never had training as a psychiatrist, have you?

Neumann: No.

Robb: That is all.

One cannot doubt what Robb's stand would have been had a psychologist been called to shed light on Oppenheimer's vacillations. But Robb's aggressiveness at times exceeds what a pettifogging lawyer in a more carefully restricted court of law could get away with. Dr. Vannevar Bush expresses outrage at a "paragraph" in General Manager Nichols's letter of charges which implies that Oppenheimer is being impugned for his opinions. In its original form this item is merely part of a very long paragraph which the New York Times, following common newspaper usage, has broken into several—for greater readability—but without changing the text by a word. Robb tries to trip Bush on the fake point that he is complaining about a "paragraph" that doesn't exist! This might have effect before a jury of twelve bewildered men. But Robb is working for a board of three experts. Clearly he is moved by an intellectual—or an anti-intellectual—passion.

CHAIRMAN Gordon Gray's emotional state is not so lucid; and his muddled language shows it. There is conflict in Dr. Gray, formerly Secretary of the Army, now president of the University of North Carolina. Unto the end he keeps insisting that the board has not yet made up its mind—protesting too much. Often he seems to plead with an eminent witness, justifying the board's "rights" and "duties." He needs to appear just; to preserve the esteem of these men of power who are fighting for the accused; above all, he needs to be "correct" in his obedience to the unspoken dogma that is the hearing's climate. Oppenheimer, as we shall see, is not a prophet. But Gray's role recalls that of

the grand inquisitor in Dostoevski's novel—or of Caiaphas, the sincere high priest whose love of the official order is so pure that he finds blasphemy in all dissent. At times this strongest motive of Gray flashes—sharp and free, like lightning from a storm cloud. When John J. McCloy, formerly of the Department of War, now of the Chase National Bank, testifies that "all of the scientists, I believe, but certainly Dr. Oppenheimer, were in favor of dropping the bomb on Japan," and goes on to speculate how Oppenheimer's misgivings about the H-bomb could be legitimate, Gray summarily silences the witness. When Dr. Walter Whitman, head of chemistry at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, corroborates two previous witnesses in their "feeling" that perhaps it was unwise to proceed with the H-bomb *before a new attempt was made to get Russia to agree not to produce it*, Gray ignores the supposed freedom of the hearings and shuts him off sharply.

Whitman: I do not feel that the future of civilization—

Gray: I don't question your feeling. I don't want to pursue it.

THE professional soldiers are the coolest actors, the ones most at ease in the hearing's ideological climate. General Roscoe Charles Wilson, for example, lives in the simple world of a military airman. "Russia," his sole syllogism goes, "is a land power . . . practically independent of the rest of the world"; neither naval blockade nor foot invasion can destroy it—and of course it must be destroyed; therefore "I am first of all a big bomb man." Oppenheimer is soft about the big bomb? What's the difference whether this means he is disloyal or merely mistaken?

Concerning Dr. Oppenheimer's future usefulness, General Wilson agrees with Dr. Teller that the creator of the A-bomb "might as well go fishing for the rest of his life." In the witnesses of this class, man's problems are simplified by elimination of all but the bare military facts as they happen to see them. Yet here too there is emotion. When fire-eater Wilson is asked if thermonuclear weapons are important, his reply, "Vastly, yes sir!" reveals a gloating appetite, a *gourmandise*; one can almost hear him purr, "M-m-m,

good!" like the Texan on the Campbell-soup radio program.

THE statement of science, of "big business," and diplomacy (Conant, Kennan, Bush, Lilienthal, Rowe, McCormack, et al) offer the best reasons for not letting Oppenheimer "go fishing." They have not so intimately worked with the man; they know and respect what he has done rather than love or reject what he is. They try to suggest, against stubborn opposition of chairman and counsel, that they can understand Oppenheimer's interest in social justice, in Russia's "experiment," while Russia was still our ally; even his failure, in that atmosphere of 1943, to rush at once to the F. B. I. with a vague story that would have injured a trusted friend. But this is dangerous ground! Not even Oppenheimer's counsel dares to tread it. One feels that the brilliant men, Kennan, above all (and one remembers how he was severed from State office), could have been clearer in analyzing Oppenheimer if the "dogma," the "climate," had not barred them.

The essence of the case—the quantum in this man which made some love and others hate him—is never approached directly. It glows briefly in the lucid testimony of Oppenheimer's wife. But Robb shrewdly declines to cross-examine her. He can count on the "irrelevance" of what she has to say.

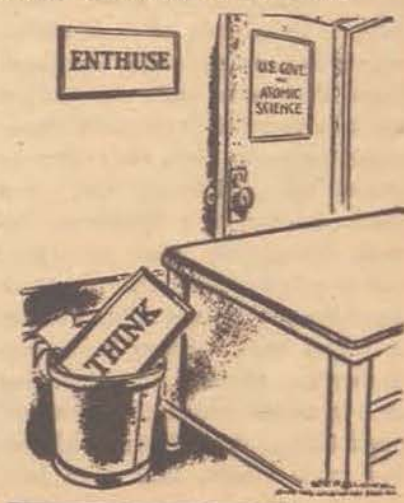
Related to this essence, of course, is "the feeling about the future of civilization" to which Gray grants no quarter. The scientists are not experts in this "feeling," nor is Oppenheimer; but in him they sense their own preoccupation. When Oppenheimer expresses doubt as to the political, strategic, economic wisdom of a certain program for H-bombs, they know he is on legitimate ground even if he is wrong. But they know also that a deeper, inarticulate instinct moves him, and that *there* he is right! The Tellers—the haters—also feel this instinct, and that it is a risk to the paranoid world, "the climate" of the hearing, to which they are committed.

We come close to the tragic heart of this story in the effort of Oppenheimer's liberal lawyer, Lloyd K. Garrison, to minimize the unorthodox in his client; to hide from view his "wrong" early friendships and interests by disposing of them as mere indiscretions of ig-

norance and youth, and by piling high the inventory of his "correct" later actions. Mr. Garrison cannot be blamed for this; he wants to win his case. But the need to hush up what is generous and noble in the man, even if mistakenly directed, points frighteningly to the sick spirit of our country. And why does Mr. Garrison disdain to cross-examine William Borden, the man who openly accuses Oppenheimer—on no evidence whatever—of being a Soviet spy? Why does he miss this opportunity to reveal the type of mind which, confronted with intellectual beauty,\* "reaches for the gun" of character-assassination? Nothing Mr. Garrison and his associates could do would, I suspect, have changed the verdict. But at least by exploring the facts they might have got the truth more clearly in the record.

OPPENHEIMER is not a good witness for himself. His report on his leadership in the General Advisory Committee (G. A. C.) is exact, exhaustive, assured. But on the question of his early associations he hardly goes beyond the plea that he "had no framework of political conviction or experience to give me perspective in these matters." He is a scientist of practical genius. If he cared to solve a problem in physics and his first efforts failed, would he cease to experiment? Would he not try again and again? His first "experiment" in search of social justice moves him toward the Communists. He soon learns his mistake; before the Hitler-Stalin pact, returning scientists from Russia convince him of Soviet tyranny. Thereupon, according

\*The reader who is barred from the language of mathematical equations can taste the quality of Oppenheimer's mind in his recently published volume of lectures, "Science and the Common Understanding" (Simon and Schuster, \$2.75).



to his word, he chucks the whole matter and becomes an orthodox believer in the capitalist system. Is this in line with the man's nature? Is there no trace left of the motives which warmed him to Communists and Russia in the first place? The board thinks so.

"The matter which most engaged my sympathies and interest was the war in Spain . . . but I knew nothing of its history or politics or contemporary problems." Perhaps: a man can't study everything. But he now calls his whole concern for Spain "idiotic." Did he not know at least that Spain's republic, whose aim was to liberate a long-suffering people, was struggling for its life against the fascists? What's idiotic about that? The board doesn't believe that he has lost the motives which made him champion Spain, although he may have outgrown a particular method of expressing these motives. These are the unforgivable; these make him a "risk."

His friend, Haakon Chevalier, tells him of Eltenton's pipeline to the Soviet consul in San Francisco. Oppenheimer dismisses it as evil—and for months does not report it. Yet he is on record as having said that he regretted that our Commander-in-Chief could not openly share our technical know-how with the Russian ally, in order that there might be no ground for information slipping in by "the back door" of espionage. A wise remark. It could be argued that our war-time distrust of Russia stratified the previous twenty years of active capitalist hostility, confirming Stalin in his suspicious, soon aggressive post-war policy against us. Oppenheimer makes no such case for himself.

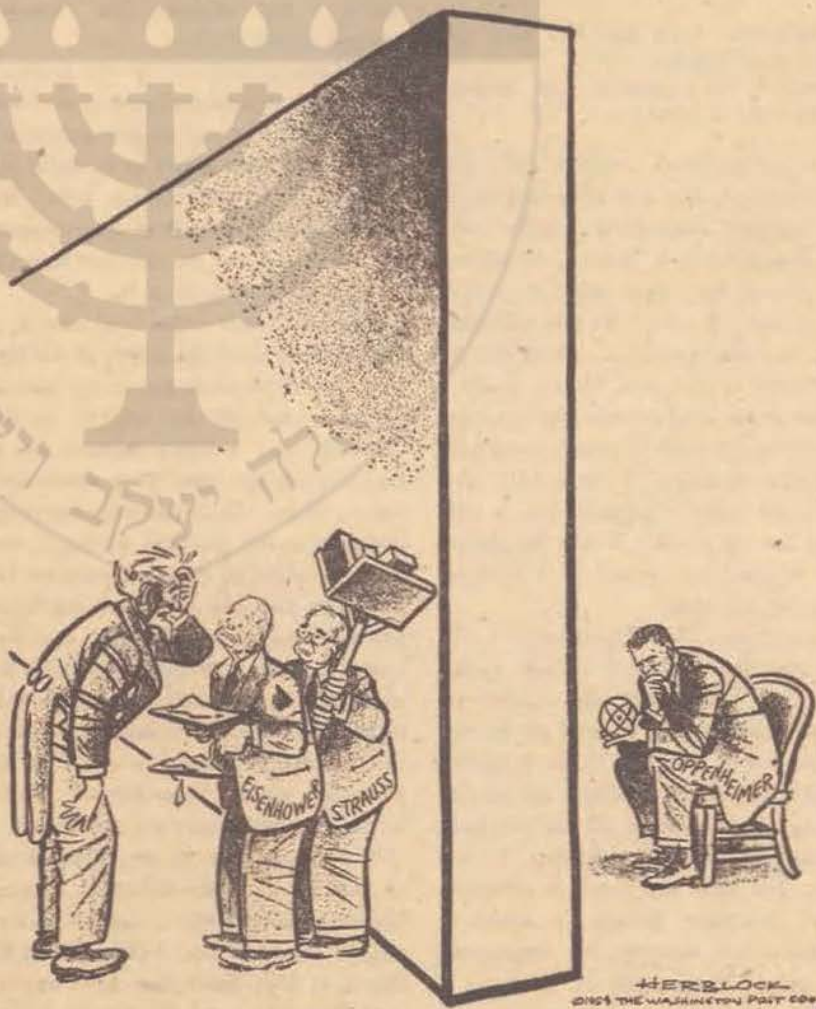
I am sure Oppenheimer told the facts to the board. What he leaves out are the motives: normal, in part noble, which, jarring with his role of conventional service to his country, caused confusion in him. Perhaps he omits the motives because he does not clearly know them; perhaps because he fears their effect on "practical" men and through a defensive instinct feels that these elements in his nature, linking him with the poets, would disqualify him for his privileged place in the political and military world. The judges feel *something* is left out; and they are not likely to fill the gap with a generous picture the defendant himself fails to draw. If they had possessed more insight, they could have

sensed, as Ward Evans and Henry Smyth sensed, what remained unsaid. Would they then, in our civilization, have been the majority judges? Yet the whole story is there, in the record; all it needs is to be assembled.

OPPENHEIMER'S well-to-do New York Jewish background was a rich culture bed for all the new century's drives and trends. In this lush world the go-getter was nourished, and the poet; the mechanist and the mystic; the exploiter of economic and intellectual wealth for his own success and the rebel who feels insecurity and guilt because he is rich and aware of the have-nots. In most individuals one strain prevails, the others are buried. In the man of genius all the drives clash, creating the need of integrating chaos, which is the work of genius. To this over-endowed group Oppenheimer belonged. Even his features, asymmetrical as Poe's, reveal it. The eyes command a half-face of sensibility, bland and open, and a half-face

of tough analytic power. In the mouth the division is horizontal: the upper lip tense and coldly resolved, the lower lip aggressively sensuous.

The young man becomes a physicist. But the aesthetic of the age lures him also; the aesthetic of mysticism, above all, which has its strongest structures in the East (he studies Sanskrit to learn of deeper causes and cures of human bondage than the Marxist). He never becomes a Communist, but the new modalities of social justice, the new horrors of injustice exemplified by Hitler, move him. His conscience as the son of a rich man impels him, before his marriage, to make a will bestowing his entire inheritance on the University of California for the founding of fellowships in nuclear physics. Like every sensitive Jew, who for all his ties feels subtly detached from his fellow-countrymen, he is sympathetic to revolutionists, less perhaps because he respects their doctrines than because they too are minority persons. At the same time acceptance and success in majority



"Who's Being Walled Off from What?"

terms appeal to him strongly. And so the war years found him, and thrust him, through his special gifts, into leadership of a majority cause.

IT IS unthinkable that the motives which made him sympathetic to radicals should have died in him because he has rejected some of their convictions. He does not "cut" his friends when he becomes the leader of Los Alamos. On the contrary, his job of making bombs, repulsive to any imaginative man, must have heightened his thirst for contacts with what is humanly fresh, free, and creative. He believes there is good cause for what he is doing: he knows through Einstein that Hitler has been seeking the atomic bomb since 1939. He is defending America and the free world. Ironically, he is also defending Russia. And the ambivalence of this, which troubles no one in 1943, will in a decade make it appear possible for his enemies to hint that he was directly serving Russia. What indeed could a Soviet spy like better than that America with its infinite resources should perfect a weapon against Hitler?

His literary friend, Chevalier, alerts him vaguely to Soviet espionage. Why does he keep silent? It is 1943, and he is busy, and he has never dealt with policemen, and Chevalier is his true friend: why subject him to that trouble? And Russia is our ally, so what's the danger? And deep in his heart does he feel that America may have been wrong in not sharing secrets with an ally? Later the threat of espionage at Berkeley is made more clear to him; and now he reports Eltenton, stubbornly withholding the name of Chevalier whom he knows to be innocent. He is nervous, and the vacuum of what he has to say disturbs him. They may not be impressed by his scant news; and by now he is beginning to fear Russia. Before he knows it, in his nervous confusion and trouble about not naming his friend, he speaks of "three scientists" who, he affirms, have been approached. He cannot name them. But this will at least give more weight to his warning.

At this point, we assume two "guilts," deep and vague in Oppenheimer's mind. One is due to a residual tenderness for the old image of Russia as the home of social justice; the second is that this tenderness is a wrong to his own coun-

try, threatened perhaps through espionage by the actual tyrannical Russia. The two "guilts" contradict each other. He opts in favor of the second feeling, and enforces it by inventing his three physicists. There is another hint of this "over-determination."

Dr. Zacharias testifies that, more than his colleagues, Oppenheimer came close to advocating a preventive war against Russia. This is as foreign to the man's organic nature as his tale of the physicists. Neurotic nervousness can explain it. I don't know how plausible this "reconstruction" may appear to the reader. Surely, it is less incredible than that this man voluntarily appeared before his judges in order to lie under oath.

The cloudy affair gives the board and the commission their pretext for deciding as they do. Similar ambiguities exist in the lives of every man—even the most simple. They are not usually exposed. If public service were confined to men with no ambivalence in their souls, we would be ruled by robots; and perhaps this was the true will—unconscious, of course—of the tribunal.

BUT Oppenheimer's real "sin"—the hearing resembles a theological inquisition in that no "crime" was even suggested—began with the long sessions, about which Lilienthal testifies, to shape an agreement with Russia for control of the bomb. We hear of the months of solemn deliberation by important men before the Baruch plan is perfected; and of Oppenheimer's major contribution to its main ideas. Any shrewd peasant, knowing the facts of the distrust between Russia and the West since the invasions of Russia in the 1920's by capitalist armies, and knowing the continuance of this distrust in the second war, could have predicted that Russia must reject the Baruch plan. That the pompous "big men" did not know this is credible; but surely Oppenheimer knew it. Which means that, while he deliberated, in good faith, there was conflict in him. His work on the bomb had been justified because of the danger of Hitler's making it first. *But the bomb was dropped on Japan after Hitler's death.* How justify that? "It saved lives by shortening the war." Oppenheimer is far too intelligent to be moved by this dishonest nonsense.

Now the difficulties—before Teller's

invention makes it feasible—in producing the H-bomb seem to Oppenheimer to give the world another chance to reach agreement with Russia. Let no one create this genocidal weapon whose existence, even if it is never used, warps the very organs of our culture! Such thoughts, such reserves and deep concerns in the man, must have been felt by his accusers. They are enough in 1954 to doom him as trusted servant of a state already taking on the rigid lines of its fears and of the forces which produce the weapons of fear.

IF Oppenheimer had honored his misgivings by speaking them out, he would have found countless allies: did not Dr. Conant say the H-bomb would be made "over my dead body"? It is conceivable that the genocidal race in which we are now plunged might never have begun; and from this birth of good faith and of courage, agreements with the Soviets might have deepened and broadened. Such a pact with such an enemy would mean risk? Russia might cheat? The peril would have been infinitely less than the certain one of our present "security course." And the American people would at least have heard, through a conspicuous public servant, that the nation which refuses to risk its life for sanity and honor is as craven and doomed as the man who refuses to risk his life for what man should love more than his life.

Probably Oppenheimer's appeal for such a course would have failed. But the genius that served death would have emerged into a leader of living men. That Robert Oppenheimer was too strongly shackled by his conventional loyalties to rise to this lucid height is his tragedy. That his fate is typical and symbolic is America's tragedy. Our sensitive and imaginative and creative men are placed on the defensive. Their generous gifts are not encouraged to be free and to explore—at the inevitable risk of heresy and error. They are being stifled into rigid conformity with dogmas of fear—or they are not used at all. A national program whose heart is the insanity of seeking shelter from a world in revolution by denying its elements of justice, by reliance on the threat of genocidal weapons, is bound, if it continues, to eliminate mind and spirit from the men who lead us.

5 Nov 54

THE

## Pauling, Nobel Chemist, Assails Treatment of Scientists by U. S.



The New York Times

**NOBEL WINNER AT PRINCETON:** Prof. Linus C. Pauling, who received Nobel Prize for Chemistry, and his wife, Mrs. Ava Helen Pauling, as they arrived yesterday at Princeton. Professor Pauling will give lectures there.

### California Savant, Once McCarthy Target, Calls Action on Oppenheimer 'Worse Case of National Ingratitude I Know'

Special to The New York Times.

PRINCETON, N. J., Nov. 4—Prof. Linus C. Pauling, Nobel Prize winner for his discoveries in chemistry, relaxed with his wife here today but took time to condemn the treatment of scientists engaged in Government work.

Professor Pauling, soft-spoken and brilliant in research work, is outspoken when it comes to his beliefs. Today in an interview he described the withdrawing of security clearance from Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, key man in the atomic bomb development, as "the worst case of national ingratitude I know—there was no need to pillory him publicly."

The California Institute of Technology professor was accused in 1950 by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of leftist leanings, but Professor Pauling has retorted that he has never been a member of the Communist party but that he will continue to speak and associate exactly as he sees fit.

#### The Oppenheimer Case

Regarding the case of Dr. Oppenheimer and the criticism of the atomic expert's opposition to the so-called "crash program" for the hurry-up development of the hydrogen bomb, Professor

Pauling said that "advisers to the Government, if they are to be valuable, must be free to express their opinions."

The same goes, he contended, in the field of education. The introduction of politics into the universities would, without doubt, "produce a dangerous situation, although there is always the temptation for the church and the state to step in," he said.

Professor Pauling switched to the Nobel award and said rumors that he would win the coveted prize had been circulating for a couple of weeks. The official announcement, he recalled, reached him yesterday at Cornell University in Ithaca, N. Y., where he went to conduct a seminar. The news, the 53-year-old chemist said, arrived just forty-five minutes before the seminar started. "I had a little trouble with the seminar," he declared.

Professor Pauling will be in Princeton for the next two weeks. Tomorrow, at a meeting of the New York Chapter of the American Chemical Society, he will deliver a paper on the "Abnormal Hemoglobin Molecules and their Relation to Disease." He is in the East to renew old friendships and to give a series of lectures at Princeton, beginning Nov. 15.

equipment, a Scrabble game ("I'm just learning to play") and an umbrella-shaped umbrella stand. At Saks Fifth Avenue there was a mob scene as the Queen Mother bought jeweled cashmere sweaters for Queen Elizabeth (size 12) and Princess Margaret (size 10). "I'm afraid I'm buying too much," said the Queen, with a sudden womanly qualm. But then, in an equally womanly way, she comforted herself: "But I can see that Christmas is not going to be any trouble."

This week the royal grandmother, joining in the observance of Columbia University's 200th anniversary, donned a black cap and gown and marched with another touring VIP, Germany's sturdy old Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, in a solemn convocation at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Awarding her an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, Columbia cited her as more than a queen. Said the citation: "A gifted musician, accomplished linguist, and understanding student of the arts."

## THE ATOM

### The H-Bomb Delay

More than a year ago, two Washington reporters, piecing together many fragments from the public record of the hydrogen bomb's history, concluded that: 1) there had been unnecessary delays in the construction of this weapon; 2) part of the delay had been traceable to opposition to the building of an H-bomb; 3) this opposition was not merely technical, but was associated with deep intra-governmental dissension, confusion and indecision over general weapons policy; 4) these struggles, in turn, have been bound up with larger conflicts about the strategic, political and moral aspects of the international scene; 5) as a result of the delay, the U.S. had narrowly

missed losing its superiority of atomic weapons, the essential check on Communist aggression.

If these conclusions were right, the two reporters—James Shepley, chief of the TIME-LIFE Washington Bureau, and Clay Blair Jr., military reporter in that bureau—had glimpsed a piece of history that the public should be told. Correspondents Shepley and Blair decided that their account of a complex struggle needed book-length scope.

The Shepley-Blair report, *The Hydrogen Bomb*, is now the center of a roaring controversy. The book has been denounced by men of weight, including many leading atomic scientists. Certain journalists have said that the book implies a plot on the part of atomic scientists against the U.S. They have said that the book is part of an anti-intellectual wave that is making it impossible for scientists to work for the Government of the U.S.

Such a conflict would be even more serious than the H-bomb delay. For if the U.S. cannot continue to enlist the support of science, if it cannot solve the critical problems of the relationship between the national interest and the pursuit of knowledge, then the U.S. will not survive—and will not deserve to survive. These are not questions for scientists alone or for public officials alone; they affect everybody, and it is wholesome, though painful, that the Shepley-Blair report brings a much larger part of this important argument to public view.

**The Limitations.** The Shepley-Blair book begins with the following important statement of its own limitations: "A full assessment of the delay in development of the hydrogen bomb and its effect on the survival of the U.S. as a nation and upon the future of mankind will be impossible for some years to come. These reporters have not attempted to do so here, or to ascribe motives to the individuals responsible."

Essentially, this promise is kept. It is possible to believe everything in the book without finding disloyalty in Robert Oppenheimer or any other man who appears in it (except confessed spies like Klaus Fuchs). In fact, those newspaper and magazine commentators who have mentioned the book without attacking it do not find it a story of a plot or a betrayal. The statement that the book describes or implies a plot comes from the book's bitter critics. But confusion, indecision and bad judgment can do as much damage as plots. A lot of roads to the dead ends of history have been paved with good intentions.

**Sin & Danger.** Here is the road the book describes:

Soon after V-J day, the U.S. relaxed with the illusion that universal peace was at hand. In the case of many leading atomic physicists, this national mood was modified by their unique reaction to the atomic bomb that they had produced. Oppenheimer, in an eloquent and memorable sentence, described this feeling:



PHYSICIST OPPENHEIMER  
... was almost lost.

"In some crude sense, which no vulgarity, no humor, no overstatement can quite extinguish, the physicists have known sin, and this is a knowledge which they cannot lose."

Most of the physicists entered the post-war period with 1) an intense desire to drop weapons work and get back to their universities, 2) a deep distrust of "the military" with whom they had been associated under circumstances very hard on the scientists, and 3) a resolve to expiate "the sin of Alamogordo" by influencing national policy in such a way that the atomic weapon would never be used again.

As the nation became more aware of the Communist threat, the main body of atomic-science leaders, Oppenheimer at their head, appear to have become increasingly uneasy about the degree of the free world's dependence on their (sinful?) weapon. For whatever reasons, no encouragement was forthcoming from Oppenheimer and his leading associates when Physicist Edward Teller, fearing that the Russians would overtake U.S. A-bomb superiority, tried to speed up work on a more powerful kind of bomb.

Teller felt that he was running into objections of a nonscientific nature. There is much evidence in the statements and attitudes of scientists that their distrust of hardening U.S. political-military policies was connected with a fear that a thermonuclear bomb would intensify those policies. During the Gray board hearings, Oppenheimer was confronted with a letter he had written on Oct. 21, 1949 to Harvard President James B. Conant, calling the proposed H-bomb a "miserable thing," expressing doubts as to its technical or military feasibility. Then he said that it was "really not the technical problem" that concerned him about Teller's H-bomb proposal, but the danger that it would further "unbalance" war plans, and that it would be mistakenly looked upon



AEC CHAIRMAN STRAUSS  
A check on aggression . . .

"as the way to save the country and the peace."

**The Timetable.** It is the Shepley-Blair thesis that the resistance of the scientists—and others—is reflected in the following chronology of events:

July 1945: Teller and Oppenheimer wrote a report that a thermonuclear bomb would be "probably feasible."

Spring of 1946: A roundup conference of scientists at Los Alamos was titled: "Final Conference on the Super." Discouraged at the lack of interest, Teller left Los Alamos. (Klaus Fuchs attended the conference.)

August 1949: The Russians achieved their first atomic blast.

Fall of 1949: Strenuous efforts by Teller and other nonconforming physicists to revive interest in a thermonuclear bomb to counter the Russian gain. Among non-scientists who allied themselves with Teller: Lewis Strauss, then a minority member of the AEC; the late Senator Brien McMahon, head of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy; Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson.

October 1949: The AEC's General Advisory Committee (Robert Oppenheimer, chairman) rejected Teller's proposal.

November 1949: President Truman asked AEC members for written opinions on whether or not to go ahead with an all-out effort to build a super-bomb. He found two for, two against and one astraddle.

November and December 1949 and January 1950: The fight raged on while a special Truman committee—Johnson, Lilienthal and Secretary of State Acheson—failed to act.

January 1950: Klaus Fuchs confessed that he had long been a spy for the Russians.

Jan. 31, 1950: A few days later, Truman's committee met. Tensely, they discussed the chance that the Russians, briefed by Fuchs, might have a start in thermonuclear development. Acheson and Johnson voted to recommend full speed ahead. Lilienthal voted against. That afternoon President Truman announced his decision to go ahead with the H-bomb.

July 1952: After another hot Washington struggle, a special laboratory for Teller was established at Livermore, Calif.

November 1952: Mike, a cumbersome hydrogen device, was exploded at Elugelab Island in the Pacific.

Aug. 20, 1953: The first Russian H-bomb was exploded.

March 1, 1954: The first droppable U.S. H-bomb was exploded.

**The Father of the Bomb.** In the months after the President's order, there is evidence of further delay. After Truman's order, Oppenheimer never publicly opposed the H-bomb. But other scientists did. Twelve top physicists signed a statement that said: "We believe that no nation has the right to use such a bomb, no matter how righteous its cause." It is a fact that Teller had great difficulty recruiting scientists in the year after the President's order.

The book presents Teller as the father of the hydrogen bomb. He broke the almost solid front of scientists who were opposing an all-out effort in the fall of 1949; in 1951 he had the "flash of genius" without which the bomb could not have been made.

But he did not make the droppable H-bomb. The book credits his Livermore laboratory with sparking Los Alamos by "competition," but the "more mature" group of scientists at Los Alamos made the bomb—finally.

**The Attack.** Among those who have attacked the book since publication are former AEC Chairman Gordon Dean and many leading atomic scientists, including Enrico Fermi and Hans Bethe. The comment of Dr. I. I. Rabi, present chairman of the AEC's General Advisory Commit-



Walter Bennett

COLUMNIST JOSEPH ALSOP  
Menacing mythology.

tee, is a sample: "A sophomoric science-fiction tale, to be taken seriously only by a psychiatrist."

One of the strongest attacks came from Dr. Norris Bradbury, since 1945 head of the Los Alamos laboratories. Resenting the Shepley-Blair charge that Los Alamos had "dragged its feet" on thermonuclear development, Bradbury said that this work from 1946 on was pursued with "the maximum appropriate emphasis," and that the bomb was in fact produced probably as fast as it could have been. Does this mean that the whole Washington struggle described by Shepley and Blair was nonexistent or irrelevant? Or that the Washington struggle was to decide whether to change the appropriate emphasis? Certainly, Oppenheimer, Teller and other participants in the Washington fight thought that they were engaged in making an important decision about the priorities at Los Alamos. Those on Oppenheimer's side did not take the position that greater concentration on thermo-

nuclear work was impossible. They said—for a variety of reasons—that it was undesirable.

It would be amazing beyond anything told in the Shepley-Blair story if these widely recognized scientists were consciously lying when they say that the book is basically wrong. Without doubt, they believe what they say, but if history gives another verdict when "all the facts" are in, it will not be the first time that honest men, involved in tense and complex struggles, turned out to be not the best reporters of what they lived through. Military history is full of competent and honest officers who gave accounts of battles that were not fought the way they remembered them.

**The Character Assassins.** By far the most violent and sustained attack on the book comes from the brothers Alsop, Joseph and Stewart. Their columns in papers throughout the land have carried this sensational piece of news: "Before very long, the Eisenhower Administration is likely to have to answer a short, highly practical question: 'Do we really need scientists, or can we just make do with Lewis Strauss?'" They think that Strauss must go because he confirmed the verdict of the Gordon Gray board which withdrew Oppenheimer's security clearance—although neither the board nor Strauss reflected on Oppenheimer's loyalty. That was bad enough—now by silence Strauss seems to confirm the Shepley-Blair book.

Before the Shepley-Blair book appeared, the Alsops, in a long *Harper's* article (now about to be published in book form), gave their explanation of the case against Oppenheimer. They said it was a plot, and they showed no reticence about describing the motives of the anti-Oppenheimer plotters. Air Force "zealots" knew—or rather "smelled"—Oppenheimer's opposition to the doctrine of defense centering on strategic air-atomic striking power. These men knew that he was "vulnerable" because of his past Communist associations, so they decreed his demise. (The Alsops for years have been attacking those who did not agree with their ideas of military strategy—notably their doctrine that more attention should be paid to air defense.)

But this theory of anti-Oppenheimer motive will not account for Admiral Strauss, no Air Force "zealot." The Alsops supply Strauss with a far baser motive than zealotry. It seems—and this will surprise hundreds of his business, official and intellectual acquaintances—that Strauss is an incredibly vain, arrogant and vengeful man. Years ago, Oppenheimer had the misfortune to humiliate Strauss in an argument about isotopes, say the Alsops, and Strauss never forgot.

The Alsops also compare the Oppenheimer hearings with the Dreyfus case. There are differences. Oppenheimer's chief "judge" was Gordon Gray of North Carolina, one of the five or ten university presidents in the U.S. most respected by the academic community of the nation. The

procedure of the Gray board was scrupulous, and most of the weighty testimony against Oppenheimer came out of his own mouth.

Dreyfus was legally lynched by perjured and forged testimony sustained by a group of reactionary pinheads. There is no dirtier thing that could be said of Lewis Strauss than that he set up a Dreyfus case; that for personal motives of the most picayune sort he sought the ruin of a man to whom the country owes so much.

**The Book's Lesson.** The Alsopian myth that the hydrogen-bomb controversy is part of an anti-science, anti-intellectual crusade could do profound damage in this country. There is bound to be—and there is indeed—trouble between intellectual principles and any government of a great modern state. The governments deal with terrible responsibilities of the here and now. The intellectual deals with truths that transcend national boundaries.

The modern state, encouraged over the last century by some intellectuals of the right and left, has assumed monstrous proportions and makes monstrous demands of all its citizens. The U.S. has been and continues to be relatively free of the big-state ideology. But in the presence of the Communist threat, it cannot stop conscripting its young men or the income of its people; nor can it fail to ask the scientists to help—on terms that will be onerous to them. Relief is not in sight—short of the time when a world monopoly of atomic weapons is established in the interest of justice, which both intellectuals and governments are supposed to serve.

Anybody, including an atomic scientist, has a right to press upon the Government his opinion of how to attain this or any other goal. From such pressures a healthy government will know how to derive nourishment for clear, strong, decisive policy-making. The struggles related in *The Hydrogen Bomb* took place in a Government (and in a nation) that was confused about its own strategic situation and unclear about its aims. A determined pressure group can play havoc in such a situation. To relate the story of how one such pressure group almost did, is not to set up a conflict of science v. the state. It is to warn that feeble top leadership can lead even the most powerful nations into mortal danger.

## THE CONGRESS

### The Closed Mind

Senator Joe McCarthy last week predicted that the U.S. Senate will vote to censure him in the special session scheduled to begin next week. He had a typical McCarthy explanation: "I don't expect more than a very few Senators will go in there with an open mind." In the next breath, he showed that he has one of the closed minds. Said he: "I am not going to defend myself before the Senate. [I am going to] make a record so the American people will know what the Senate is doing."

## HEROES

### Life with Papa

Rolling to starboard like an old freighter, Ernest Hemingway lumbered about his weather-beaten manor in the village of San Francisco de Paula, Cuba one day last week, greeting the press. He had summoned reporters and photographers for an announcement from Stockholm. At 55, "Papa" Hemingway had received the Nobel Prize for Literature. When the announcement came through, he was ready with an uncharacteristic statement: "I am very pleased and very proud to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature." But later, Hemingway could not resist being Hemingway. He seized a microphone and cracked (in colloquial Spanish): "This will notify any friends, or others who are

began to say that maybe he shouldn't have had the 1954 award. He would have been happy if Carl Sandburg ("a very dedicated writer") had won, he said. Later he thought that Bernard Berenson, the art historian, would have been a worthy recipient. Several gin and tonics later, he decided that the Danish authoress, Baroness Karen Blixen (pen name: Isak Dinesen) should have had it. But he was still happy that he had won; he needed the dough.

**"A Fine-Looking Corpse."** The robust novelist looked as fit and frisky as a Spanish bull: he was deeply tanned, and the beard on his chin, which had been a casualty of his harrowing adventures in Uganda and Kenya last winter (*TIME*, Feb. 1), was restored to snowy magnificence. But he would be unable to make



Leonard McCombe—LIFE

NOBELMAN HEMINGWAY AT HOME IN CUBA  
Bullfights, booze, wars, women, and grace under stress.

planning to bum me, that the money hasn't arrived from Stockholm yet."

**Ultimate Honor.** Thus the world's ultimate literary honor came to America's best-known novelist,\* a supercraftsman who has won enormous popularity while setting a new literary style. As a globe-trotting expert on bullfights, booze, wars, women, big-game hunting, deep-sea fishing and courage (which he once defined as "grace under stress"), his personality had made as deep an impression on the public as his novels.

While the Nobel award is usually given for a writer's life work, the Swedish Academy singled out Hemingway's Pulitzer Prizewinning 1952 novella, *The Old Man and the Sea* (which was first published in *LIFE*), for honorable mention. At the Hemingway home, as the day waned and the celebration waxed, the great author

the trip to Stockholm to receive his prize in person. He was on a strict regimen of abstinence ("but I broke training today") and 10:30 bedtime, recovering from his African injuries. "I look robust," he said, "and would undoubtedly make a fine-looking corpse, but I'm really in no shape to travel."

Recovering from a broken spine, a ruptured kidney, an injured liver and a fractured skull was a slow process, even for Hemingway. By last week, he had found his convalescence a little trying. "Starting tomorrow, I won't be able to receive anyone else," he told the reporters. "I must get back to work. I don't expect to live more than five years more, and I have to hurry."

When the \$35,000 prize money arrives from Stockholm, he plans to use \$8,000 to pay off pressing debts. The rest he will spend "intelligently," which, by Hemingway standards, will include a return trip to the brushfires and Mau Mau and the green hills of Africa.

\* Five other American-born writers have won the Nobel Prize: Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill, Pearl Buck, William Faulkner and T. S. Eliot.

# Some Atomic Facts

## Not Only Total, but Destructive Capacity Of Nuclear Armaments Has Increased

By HANSON W. BALDWIN

The United States Atomic Commission's confirmation of a series of nuclear tests in the Soviet Union provides a somber background for the Communist disarmament proposals in the United Nations and for the current party line of "peaceful co-existence."

The tests in the Soviet Union, and two series of nuclear tests scheduled by the United States next year emphasize some fundamental facts of life that have been too often overlooked since world tension decreased after the end of the Indochinese and Korean wars.

The first and fundamental fact is that the atomic arms race is increasing in intensity.

Until Oct. 1, the Soviet Union tested about eight nuclear weapons, including one thermonuclear, or hydrogen, weapon. Since Oct. 1, there have been additional tests so that Soviet nuclear detonations probably have now reached ten or more. In five years, the Russians have tried ten weapons or test devices, an average of two a year.

### New Series Planned

The United States has exploded about forty-nine nuclear weapons and test devices, including two bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II and the first atomic test at Alamogordo, New Mexico, in 1945. In nine years, we have detonated almost fifty weapons, or an average of about five and a half a year. The United States is planning a new series of tests next year. The first will start about mid-February at the Nevada Proving Grounds; a second probably in the fall at Eniwetok and Bikini atolls.

There also have been three nuclear tests conducted by Britain in cooperation with Commonwealth.

The quantitative tally of the world's atomic tests indicates that we have entered the age of atomic plenty and that stockpiles of operational, deliverable weapons are steadily increasing. These stockpiles probably are numbered in a very sizable four figures in the United States, in a sizable three figures in the Soviet Union and in two figures in Britain.

But the nuclear race is qualitative as well as quantitative. The meaning of the current Soviet tests is that the Soviet Union of atomic weapons, comparable to (thought not yet as varied as, or as qualitatively equal to) the "family" of weapons possessed by the United States. It is probable that one or more of the current Soviet tests have been tests of bombs that can be carried by fighter-bombers, or of atomic shells or warheads usable from artillery pieces or with guided missiles.

United States tests in Nevada starting next February will in-

clude detonations of tactical nuclear weapons of a new type, weapons of particular usefulness against troops in the field. The Army has four means of delivering atomic weapons: the 280 mm. (eleven inch) field artillery gun; the 762 mm. (Thirty inch) Honest John free-flight field artillery rocket with a range of eighteen to twenty miles; the Corporal guided missile with a range of up to about 100 miles, and the Redstone guided missile with an even longer range.

It is probable that some of the United States tests will involve trials of small-size weapons that could be fired from much smaller artillery pieces than the 280 mm. gun or fitted into warheads for small guided missiles. The development of small-caliber atomic weapons capable of being fired from medium-caliber field artillery pieces, from anti-aircraft guns, or fitted as warheads to small guided missiles is now well within the bounds of feasibility. The United States will soon have these weapons; eventually the Soviet Union will have them.

The development of the "city-busters," the huge thermonuclear or so-called hydrogen weapons, also is progressing rapidly. The United States has had about three tests of very powerful fission-fusion devices in November, 1952. Operation Ivy produced a "yield" of about 8,000,000 to 12,000,000 tons of explosive force in TNT equivalent. This was not an operational device. A static or ground test in March, 1954 of a bomb that could be carried by a plane yielded something like 15,000,000 to 22,000,000 tons of explosive force. There was also a third test of a major weapon last March.

### Careful Calculations

The exact yield of these tests usually requires months of careful calculations. For this reason we do not know with exactitude the "yield" of the first Soviet thermonuclear test in August, 1953. Micro-chemistry, the study of radioactivity disseminated in the atmosphere, and analysis of the earth shock caused by the explosion can give only approximate dimensions of the first Soviet device. These studies indicate that the first Soviet hydrogen device was a "big boy" in explosive force but not as big as the first United States fission-fusion test device of November, 1952.

But the Russians have "progressed" since then. We certainly have operational hydrogen bombs, or bombs capable of being dropped; the Russians may not yet have such operational weapons (as compared to test devices) but if they do not, they soon will.

On the horizon are thermonuclear weapons powerful enough to devastate a city but small

enough to be carried by single-seater fighter-bombers or to be fitted to a medium-size guided missile. The means and methods of waging warfare are still increasing far more rapidly than man's ability to control these instruments of destruction.

# Books of The Times

By CHARLES POORE

WHAT is the H-bomb? When did we really start to build it? How soon after that did the Soviet Union announce that it had one of its own? What is its looming role for life or death on earth?

These are questions of a fateful hour in history. They are discussed in two important books published today. "The Hydrogen Bomb," by



Dr. Edward Teller

James Shepley and Clay Blair Jr. of the Luce publications, and "Power and Policy," by Thomas K. Finletter, wartime special assistant to the Secretary of State and Secretary of the Air Force from 1950 to 1953—crucial years in the hydrogen bomb's development. The first is a tense narrative of absorbing action. The second is a study in cool, farseeing statesmanship. Both have the same end in view: the security and welfare of the United States of America.

"The Hydrogen Bomb" is, in fact, already the most controversial book of the year. Its outstanding newsworthiness—born of the Oppenheimer hearings—has in the last fortnight mushroomed all over the place. It has stirred chain reactions from Los Alamos (where last Thursday a special press conference was held to consider it) to Washington (where last Sunday the chairman of Atomic Energy Commission was accused of trying to suppress it for the good of all). The end of the fissions and fusions it may still cause in its transmutation from magazine to book form is by no means in sight. This book is a critical mass of explosive material in a notably sonic warhead. It is as readable as a thriller, as frank as a friend's advice.

"A full assessment of the delay in the development of the hydrogen bomb and its effect on the survival of the United States as a nation," Messrs. Shepley and Blair observe, "will be impossible for some years to come. These reporters have not attempted to do so here or to ascribe motives to the individuals responsible. They have, however, reported what occurred so that at least the events themselves shall at last be removed from the dark forests of secrecy and speculation and in order that the people of the United States can have some basis for judging how their interests have been served." Apparently it took Soviet A-bombs and Korea to get us really cracking on the H-bomb after a delay of some four years.

## Vigor in Peace Moves Urged

Mr. Finletter's book is dedicated to the proposition that, before very long, "unless we become considerably more alert than we are, the supremacy in air-atomic power, which to date has been ours, will shift from us to Russia." He calls for new efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the world—and a hydrogen-age re-

arrangement of our diplomatic and armored might in the meantime. For a single H-bomb now packs the power of all the bombs we used on Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese war lords combined.

"Power and Policy" is written with a rare combination of modesty and authority. In fact it is from Messrs. Shepley and Blair's book, rather than from his own, that we learn what a courageous part Mr. Finletter played while the Prometheuses of atomic physics were carting their consciences around from one meeting to another.

Time and again they show Mr. Finletter backing Edward Teller, the atomic scientist who never lost sight of the main point—that science could develop a hydrogen bomb that might make the early atomic contraptions obsolescent. He always seems to have been aware that men who—from the loftiest motives—impeded the building of the H-bomb might one day find themselves in the position of British scientists, if, indeed, there were any, who opposed the development of radar, which was used in the defense of the British Islands when freedom was at stake.

In a discussion with Dr. Oppenheimer, we are told, the scientist questioned the morality of atomic retaliation.

"The greater immorality," Mr. Finletter answered, "would be for the United States to discard its strongest weapon while conditions of world disarmament are absent." If we had had the H-bomb at the time of Pearl Harbor, Bataan, Corregidor, the Battle of the Bulge, would there have been huge outcries against using it?

These are the kind of questions that rise constantly in your mind as you read today's books. Never say that the power of the printed word is waning. Read the Shepley-Blair scene where Teller gets the prearranged signal: "It's a boy."

## Idealism and Realism

The Communists, apparently, did not wait for the outcome of our idealistic debates in the late Nineteen Forties on the wisdom of building H-bombs when we already had A-bombs and a sincere desire to control atomic weapons through the United Nations. The revelation of the Soviet spy ring in Canada was one warning. And in January, 1950, the free world received another when Dr. Klaus Fuchs, onetime group leader at Los Alamos, confessed in England, where he was up to then head of the Theoretical Physics division at the main British atomic energy installation at Harwell, that he had been passing atomic secrets to the Soviets. The Russians announced their first H-bomb in August, 1953, just nine months after we fired our preliminary hydrogen shot.

If the story of the hydrogen bomb has a hero, then that hero is Edward Teller, who always hated the world's despots in red or brown and who plowed the longest, hardest, loneliest furrow. Yet he is by nature, this portrait shows, a cheerful and gregarious man. And he disclaims the main credit for the H-bomb, as readers of William L. Laurence's definitive interview with him, published in The Times last July 4, will recall.

It took many men in many laboratories to build the H-bomb. In fact, I think the lesson of today's books probably is that it generally takes the combined work of all active believers in democracy to make it a reasonably going concern.

\*THE HYDROGEN BOMB. By James Shepley and Clay Blair Jr. 241 pages. McKay. \$3.

†POWER AND POLICY. By Thomas K. Finletter. 408 pages. Harcourt, Brace. \$5.

# H-BOMB BOOK RENEWS OPPENHEIMER DISPUTE

## Old Wounds Reopened by Charges Scientists Hampered Program

By ELIE ABEL

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 2—The extraordinary furor over "The Hydrogen Bomb," a new book by James Shepley and Clay Blair Jr., has ripped open again the ugly scars left by the Oppenheimer case.

This time it is not only the friends and followers of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer in the scientific community who are bleeding. Rear Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, confirms that he offered to buy the manuscript and lock it in a safe for twenty-five years until most of the individuals involved in the H-bomb controversy were dead.

The book is a narrative of the United States-Russian race to develop the world's most powerful weapon. It claims that because of opposition by Dr. Oppenheimer and his supporters the United States hydrogen bomb program was delayed, giving the Soviet an early and dangerous advantage in the race.

Apart from providing the publishers with some fine advertising copy—"the book they couldn't suppress"—Admiral Strauss appeared in his statement to be trying to disassociate himself and the commission from the authors' highly sensational charges of bungling, foot-dragging and skulduggery in the atomic energy program.

Gordon Dean, Admiral Strauss' predecessor as A. E. C. chairman, took the equally extraordinary step of making public on the eve of the book's publication an angry review he had written for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists that will not appear in that magazine until a month from now.

### Dire Estimate by Dean

"These two boys," he wrote, [Mr. Shepley is 37 and Mr. Blair 29], "have done a serious disservice. Their book may very well do what the Communists would love to do—undermine the atomic energy program of this country."

Mr. Dean said he had culled from the text sixty to seventy misstatements, although he did not list them. In his charge of misstatements Mr. Dean had been anticipated by Dr. Norris Edwin Bradbury, director of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, who called his first press conference in eight years on the New Mexico mesa on Sept. 24 be-

cause, he asserted, the book contained "such extraordinary and fantastic comments, imputations, speculations" about the laboratory that "we could not rely on our traditional 'no comment'."

The layman may well ask what all the shouting is about, and why a 235-page book by two news magazine reporters has caused such furious reactions in high places. It is not possible to attempt an answer in one sentence, or even in a single paragraph. These are some of the factors involved:

A great many scientists—almost all the major contributors to the atomic-bomb program in World War II—were troubled, in greater or lesser degree, by the disqualification of Dr. Oppenheimer as a security risk. They had long felt uncomfortable working within the restraints of the security program, although they tended to accept it as necessary.

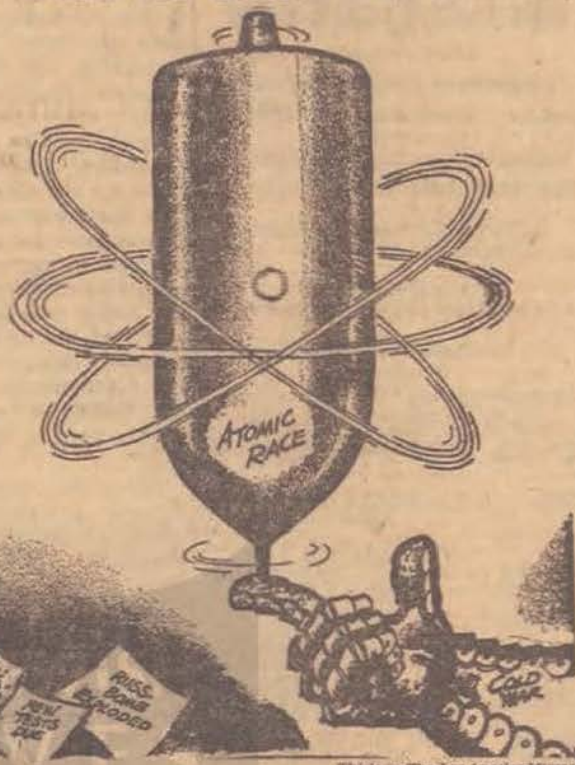
### Commission's Ruling

The Atomic Energy Commission, in reviewing the Gray board recommendation that Dr. Oppenheimer be dropped as a consultant, was at pains to rule out as not relevant the scientist's "lack of enthusiasm" for the hydrogen bomb. The commission recognized that to do otherwise would invite the criticism that Dr. Oppenheimer was being punished for his opinions. The Shepley-Blair book was written under no such restraint. It, therefore, has been received with dismay by those scientists who shared Dr. Oppenheimer's opinions or who, even if they differed with him, did not question his honesty and loyalty.

Much of the narrative is so detailed and circumstantial in describing closed-door meetings of policymakers at the summit of Washington bureaucracy as to suggest that the authors received a great deal more cooperation from certain responsible officials than is usually given. This in turn leads to the conclusion that particular officials wanted to see the book written and published, for reasons that can only be speculated on.

"This is more than a vicious smear on Oppenheimer and Bradbury," one scientist said. "Obviously Shepley and Blair had access to highly classified informa-

## 'ROUND AND ROUND IT GOES'



Thiele in The Los Angeles Mirror

tion. The officials who made that information available had only one purpose—to discredit and disqualify scientists as advisers to the Government."

Some scientists go a step farther. They reason that the Oppenheimer case itself and the publication of this book are part of a campaign by the military to recapture control of the atomic energy program from the civilian authority to which it was entrusted, after a bitter struggle in 1946, by the McMahon Act.

Chairman Strauss, a rear admiral in the Naval Reserve, is regarded by a number of scientists as an ally of the military. They are equally suspicious of K. D. Nichols, a retired Army general, who is the commission's general manager.

As for the charge that the authors had access to classified information, Mr. Strauss said:

"The only cooperation they got from the commission, so far as I know, was the routine matter of a security review such as is open to any writer."

### Bradbury's Rebuttal

Dr. Bradbury's statement struck at the authors' accusations that Los Alamos was "loaded with Communists and former Communists" and that the laboratory had dragged its heels for years until Dr. Edward Teller, Dr. Oppenheimer's chief antagonist in the H-bomb controversy, had persuaded the A. E. C. to set him up in a competitive laboratory at Livermore, Calif. He also disputed the view that Dr. Teller alone was responsible for the brilliant invention that made the bomb feasible.

He emphasized that translating

the idea into a workable weapon was a team effort upon which hundreds had labored and that Los Alamos had carried the main burden.

The authors concede, despite their stinging criticism of Dr. Bradbury and his laboratory, that "in the end the more mature staff and the more experienced atomic scientists at Los Alamos significantly outpaced the new [Teller] laboratory at Livermore in providing the hardware that became the hydrogen bomb."

### Reply on Communists

To the charge that Los Alamos was loaded with Communists, Dr. Bradbury replied heatedly that two Communists had indeed worked there during the war—Klaus Fuchs and David Greenglass, the one sent out as a member of the British research team and the other assigned by the United States Army as a soldier.

A number of former Communists also had worked there during the early years, Dr. Bradbury said, and he acknowledged having fought to save the job of one man who had "expiated his Communist attachment." But when the commission ordered that the staff member be dismissed, Dr. Bradbury declared, "we swallowed hard... and went to work."

Anyone who has talked recently with Dr. Teller himself may suspect that he will not be entirely pleased with the idea that the thermonuclear bomb was his invention alone.

"The whole idea of one-man inventions in this field," he remarked recently, "is bunk."

TIME - 1 Nov 54

## THE UNEASY SCIENTISTS

THE worried debate about the relationship of science and government got a going-over last week from widely divergent angles. In a new Government document, *Organization and Administration of the Military Research and Development Programs*, the scientists told some of their own troubles. In an impressive editorial, the Protestant *Christian Century* pointed out the cause of their distress.

The Government document, a book of 710 pages, is the record of hearings last June before a House of Representatives subcommittee. What the committeemen heard was not reassuring. Individualistic scientists, said witness after witness, cannot be regimented and still work at their best. When they are put under military command, as in the many laboratories of the armed services, they feel that they are misunderstood and their capabilities wasted. Said William Webster, executive vice president of the New England Electric System, twelve years a naval officer: "A military organization is a very trying climate for the best work of scientists."

The most violent opinion was expressed by John William Marchetti, who resigned last May as electronics director of the Cambridge Air Force Research Center after a row with a new commanding officer. Said Marchetti: "We got decisions that were stupid, just plain stupid, and some that were intolerable." He did not blame the military men for all the friction. "It is one clique pitted against another . . . It is said of a well-known Air Force research and development center that at the officers' club the relative ranks are officers, enlisted men, dogs and civilians."

Calmer witnesses testified that much of the trouble comes from the military habit of rapidly "rotating" the commanding officers of a laboratory. Sometimes these birds of passage stay a year or two, learning almost nothing about the complicated work that they are supposed to supervise.

Many of the witnesses ducked the dangerous problem of security. But a few eminent ones pulled no punches. President James R. Killian Jr. of Massachusetts Institute of Technology deplored "what sometimes seems to be a preoccupation with security procedures and policies at the expense of scientific progress . . . There has been, unhappily, a deterioration in recent months in the relationship between Government and science . . . Members of the scientific community are clearly discouraged and apprehensive . . ."

Said Mathematician John von Neu-

mann of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, who last week was appointed to the Atomic Energy Commission (see NATIONAL AFFAIRS): "Very many people who have some trivial blot way back in their past do not know whether they can take a chance on getting into sensitive work . . . To have once been dropped for security reasons is for the average person . . . a professional catastrophe."

Most vehement about the capricious operation of the security system was Dr. Vannevar Bush, President of the Carnegie Institution and wartime chief of the Office of Scientific Research and Development. "I feel," said Bush, "that the way in which our security system is working at the present time is driving a wedge between the military and the scientific people of the country, and is doing great harm . . . The whole air of suspicion is just not such as to produce . . . the kind of . . . collaboration between the military men and the scientific community that we very much need . . ."

To the worried scientists, the *Christian Century* offered its sympathy. "The unhappiness of our American scientists is increasing as they perceive how exposed is the position of one who is, in the last analysis, a tool of the Government. It may be necessary for scientists . . . to live under the eye of the FBI, but it is not pleasant."

"Our public has been taught to think of him [the scientist] as a mental colossus and a moral paragon—austere, dedicated and all but beyond human vanities in his pursuit of the truth . . . To this assumption of the scientist's moral superiority there has suddenly been added the social pre-eminence a society accords its workers of magic."

"Under such conditions one might expect the scientist to be the most secure man in our society. He holds almost ultimate power—the power of life or death. But many an American scientist is . . . in moral torment. He has watched his science move from theory to human holocaust . . ."

"Again many an American scientist is troubled because he finds himself dragged willy-nilly into a partisan conflict . . . The scientist discovers that he is no longer the austere and impartial figure of popular legend and his own desires. Instead he is a partisan in a relentless battle for power . . . The scientist who is engaged in atomic research for the Government has no stomach for such power struggles—but he cannot avoid becoming involved in them . . . To protect his sanity he disavows moral responsibility for the consequences of his work. But does he convince himself?"

get issue of  
American Judaism  
which had poll  
on whether  
A-bomb was  
justifiable?

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