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TO J. R. Oppenheimer
FROM: G. B. Kistiakowsky
SUBJECT: My Activities During Your Absence
Dealings with the Washington Office:

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1. There has been much publicity in connection with the Japanese broadcasts about the continuing injury from radioactivity at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The General called up several people (Bacher, Hempleman) to get information on the subject. A teletype was dispatched to him making certain recommendations, which he turned down. This teletype is in your files, but the answer was made over the phone to me. I got rather concerned about the matter and asked Hempleman and others to prepare a memorandum, a copy which is attached herewith for your use if desired. I had the intention of sending it to the General, but in the meantime he issued an official statement to the press that there could be no injuries from radioactivity. This is rather final and on the basis of the attached memorandum, looks as if he stuck his neck out a mile. Finally, on Saturday, he called Colonel Seeman asking for approval ^{by} of the Project that a group of reporters under our supervision visit Trinity site just to look around, no photographs. I consulted with Bacher and with his approval teletyped back that we would be glad to have such a party provided competent scientists from this Project accompany it. The latter part seems to be very important and I believe either you yourself, or somebody like Bacher who can talk well (rather than only Bainbridge or Hempleman, both of whom are rather incoherent) accompany the reporters. As of today we have not received any reply stating the time of the visit.

2. In regard to construction on the Project, teletypes were sent jointly by Colonel Seeman and myself to General Groves and also by Colonel Tyler requesting the authorization for the so-called

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Expansion No. 4 at S-Site (to cost about \$150,000.00) and emphasizing that such construction is indispensable if production is to be continued at S-Site beyond the next 60 days, but that such construction in no way changed our firm opinion that as soon as possible S-Site should be scrapped and that a completely new plant built. We also recommended that immediate steps be taken to approach either DuPont or Hercules explosives departments (before they had a chance to dismiss the personnel) with the idea of engaging them as a design group to design the new plant with our assistance, the authorization for actual construction naturally coming from the permanent authority that is to be set up. To the latter proposal we had an answer from Major Derry that we were not to budge and that the General himself will enter into such negotiations when and if.

3. ^{only} In a round-about way I learned that the General has issued orders that the entire destination crew will stand by until the occupation of Japan is well advanced. We got into the matter merely on the question as to whether the observation crew (Alvarez and company) will be returned earlier than the rest. (We, Bradbury and I, with concurrence of Bacher) first recommended against, but after receiving a more explicit teletype, concurred in such return. I am not informed as to what is the final disposition of the men, but believe that some of them have already returned to the Project.

4. I had no communications whatsoever on the subject of general policies of the Project. Neither have I had anything to do with the present status of the Sandia Station. As regards to the former, the situation may be rather complicated by the announcement of President Truman that the state of hostilities may not be ended until next May.

Dealings with Colonel Stewart:

1. Under this heading there is only one item worth mentioning, but this one has taken very much of my time. It is the question of

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hours and wages. You will find in your files a copy of the teletype which was sent to Stewart by me after consultation with everybody I could locate on the Project. There followed a series of thoroughly unsatisfactory telephone conversations. Finally, Stewart came here and we had a meeting, the minutes of which are attached. I consider the results a great victory and it is due almost 100 per cent to a firm and an effective intervention by Colonel Seeman. Unfortunately Clausen was no help whatever. He presents altogether a picture of utter apathy and indifference. He even came to me today with the suggestion that the proposed correlation of the Tech Area jobs with Civil Service will be too much work for the Personnel Department and that therefore we should start dickering with Stewart for the retention of our old and haphazard salary classification system with increases to compensate for loss of income due to shorter working hours. I have vigorously objected to this and have insisted that they go ahead with the proposed re-classification (which will be complicated by the absence of Major Newcomb due to injuries received by him Saturday night). My frank opinion is that unless you ride Clausen hard he will not do the job quickly and we may get into the same nasty situation in which the Los Angeles office finds itself now. After meeting here, Colonel Stewart preemptorily reduced the working hours of that office to 44 and reduced the salaries correspondingly.

Internal Dealings on the Project:

1. Very little of importance has happened here. I have made a number of requests to Captain Jones about relaxations in security rules, none of which amount to changes in policy, but are merely intended to conform the present security rulings with the new status of the Project as an admitted atomic bomb laboratory. So far action

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has come only on two points, the permission for relatives and visitors to live in Santa Fe and permission for some Tech Area employes to live off this site. The latter concerns mainly the Spanish-American girls who work on detonators.

2. There has been no report from the SED Committee appointed by you, although I happen to know that it has a number of recommendations, some of which look sensible and even possible to carry out. It is rather unfortunate that this committee did not consider the WAC's and I think that the recommendations made by the committee should be made uniform (in so far as practicable) to apply to WAC's as well.

3. The college instruction committee ran into trouble during Bethe's absence because of vigorous protests by D.P. Site and S-Site supervisors that attendance at ^{Lectures} locations may ruin their schedule. There is almost unanimous opinion that lectures should be free to everybody, or there should be no lectures at all. I for one am very strongly for it and could not participate in the scheme otherwise. Maybe by the time you get back the difficulties will have been dissolved, otherwise the scheme should be dropped in my opinion.

4. There is a great deal of unrest throughout the Project because of uncertainty in the future. For instance, younger staff members are quite bitter that so many senior men are freely shopping for post-war jobs while the younger men have less opportunity for so doing. This is almost reaching the proportions of a scandal.

My own frank opinion is that it is truly unrealistic to "carry on as usual" as the General wishes. Could it be explained to him that the result of this policy will be a complete disintegration of the Project in the course of the next few months (not that I object to it, but I feel that he ought to appreciate the situation). My

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next feeling is that either one tells him this finally and then relaxes expecting the inevitable, or one makes a constructive effort to re-organize the Project on a semi-permanent basis, assuming that the new authority will accept our recommendations. This, among other things, would necessitate careful review of personnel requirements, substantially^{an} eviction of those who occupy necessary housing, but are not needed for the reduced working force and reasonably firm assurance to those needed that they have a fair chance for post-war jobs here. I am quite certain that Clausen is not the person to do this job. I made a mild start in this direction by getting from the personnel department a list of civilian scientific employes and the housing distribution of them. The Personnel Department promised a complete distribution of housing facilities, but hasn't delivered it yet. There is also a list of SED men participating in the Project and these documents are attached herewith for whatever use you may find for them.

5. There has been a great many unimportant events of substantially personal character. De Hoffman kicked up a terrible fuss about the threat of his induction into the Army, but quieted down without any action being taken by me. Creutz asked for a wide extent clearance for visits by him to Chicago and Oak Ridge. These were vetoed by Captain Jones, with Bacher's concurrence, who wrote a limited clearance. I understood later from Jones that Creutz was making a great deal of fuss at Chicago because the limitations did not permit him to visit anybody he wished. How this came out I do not know. I approved in principle a visit by Reines to the Woodshole Laboratory on the urgent request of Peierls.

I can't think of anything else to mention and am pretty sure that I forgot nothing of importance.

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