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August 14, 1944

G. B. Kistiakowsky

J. R. Oppenheimer

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Organization of Explosives Division

In order to put in writing the results of our discussions of the last few days I would like to formulate as follows the functions of the Explosives Division of which you are assuming the direction.

1. To investigate promising explosives, methods of initiation, boosting, detonation, etc. for implosion.

2. To develop methods for improving the quality of castings.

3. To develop lense systems and methods for fabricating and testing them.

4. To develop a suitable engineering design for the assembly of the explosives and of the initiating systems to be used with them in an actual gadget.

5. To cooperate closely with the Gadget Division in providing the necessary charges for their investigations.

It should be clearly appreciated by you that you are responsible for the specification and the initiation of design of those parts of the final gadget which fall within the directive outlined above, as well of course as for the developmental equipment involved in your program. In so far as such designs involve the final gadget or involve items to be fabricated away from the Site, it is requested that these designs and specifications be checked with the engineering group, E-6, at the earliest possible moment in their development. You are of course free to consult E-6 on any other problems where you may wish to have their help.

The carrying out of the fundamental work on implosion gadgets is the joint responsibility of the explosives division and the gadget division under Dr. Bacher. It is clear that this arrangement can only be successful if it is based upon the most careful collaboration of the two divisions. In particular you will in general find it necessary to share jurisdiction over sites, facilities, equipment and in some cases personnel

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Organization of Explosives Division, Page 2

in order that your common program can be executed rapidly and without undue duplication. I should like to leave the elaboration of arrangements to you and to Dr. Bacher with the confident hope that the broad outlines of jurisdiction will be sufficient guide and that you will both bring good will and a common interest in the solution of the problem to more specific questions.

It is of great importance that in carrying out a program which is so intimately interrelated with that of the engineering groups, with military plans and with the work of the Gadget Division, you keep Captain Parsons promptly and fully informed of the developments of your division, of the results and of the plans for the future. It is requested that in addition to such informal conferences as may prove useful, you provide summary reports which in the near future should probably be prepared at least twice a month. You should of course feel free to present me with any problems in whose solution I could prove useful. I feel a sense of obligation to make your duties as little arduous as in the nature of things they can be.

J. R. Oppenheimer

cc: Dr. Bacher
Captain Parsons
Dr. Shane

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