

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO:

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February 28, 1950

General Dwight D. Eisenhower, President
Columbia University
New York, New York

Dear General Eisenhower:

Enclosed is your copy of the Seventh Semiannual Report of the Commission to the Congress. In it, we have recounted the unclassified major developments of 1949 in the atomic energy program; and we have also tried to outline the purposes, the methods, and the progress of the last three years in the unclassified phases of the physical research projects financed by AEC.

You and your colleagues carrying on work done by your institution under AEC contract have helped to build the record of advance in physical science written here. We believe you will find interest in the summary of the physical research job as a whole.

Sincerely,

Carroll L. Wilson
General Manager

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
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GENERAL MANAGER

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For General Eisenhower's Information

Copy of a statement unanimously approved
by the General Advisory Committee of the
Atomic Energy Commission as an expression
of the Committee's views.

(The statement was written mainly by
President Conant, partly by Professor Rabi.)



G. B. P.

react quite differently. An atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty is likely to be generated by the activities of federal agents among many groups of friends in colleges, universities, and in local communities. In short, the results of requiring investigations of candidates of fellowships will have serious repercussions throughout the country; it will almost certainly have a serious adverse effect on both the atmosphere of our educational institutions and the outlook of one age group of the entire nation.

Against the evil effects which we believe will probably follow the adoption of the proposals for FBI clearance of AEC fellows, let us place the possible gains. Let us admit that without such clearance an occasional clandestine member of the Communist party might receive a fellowship. But even the proponents of the proposals do not contend that security will be thereby endangered, for the holder of the fellowship has no privileges in regard to classified information. If after completing his studies the fellow wishes to work for the government he will be subjected quite properly to a thorough check which will reveal his affiliations if he is a Communist and he will be rejected. At the worst the government will have then spent its money on a man who can not be used for the furtherance of the national security. It should be noted in passing, however, that as a purely financial matter the amount of money thus wasted on the occasional awarding of a fellowship to a member of the Communist party would be more than offset by the additional expenses required for FBI clearance of prospective fellowship holders. But leaving aside the question of cost to the government, we submit the risk ~~that~~ a very few Communists ~~may~~ receive training through an open and uninvestigated fellowship program represents a negligible loss, as compared to the bad effects on the spirit of our nation which would result from a further extension of counterespionage methods to those of college age.