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Mr. Grant R Cameron
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Dear Mr. Cameron,

I apologize for my late reply to your letter of 07 November, but I did not receive it until the middle of January, and some of the urgency seemed to have dissipated. And I am afraid that I can provide very little information on the research of Wilbert B. Smith.

Until I received your letter, all I knew on the subject was what my boss, R. Glenn Madill, told me in the early 1950's, probably. My understanding is that Mr. Smith, a technically respectable electrical engineer, believed that flying saucers somehow derived the energy they needed for their spectacular manoeuvres from the Earth's magnetic field, and possibly its gravity field. Smith had managed to set up a small observatory somewhere near Ottawa, and he was trying to borrow equipment to record rapid variations in the geomagnetic field, and maybe in the gravity field. At the Dominion Observatory we had nothing in those days in his frequency range sensitive enough to be any help. He must have got some instruments somewhere, because I understand that he was recording continuously something or other at his station. The only other information I can give you is that a couple of years after Mr. Smith's death, somebody (I cannot remember who) told me that Smith's widow, in Ottawa, was preparing a book on his researches for publication, based on a great quantity of papers he had left.

I have been trying to think of people who could help you, and they are all dead, except for one who is very much alive: Dr. Peter M. Millman, who still goes to work at the National Research Council, Sussex Drive, Ottawa. I believe he knew Mr. Smith. I myself never met Smith.

As Director of the Division of Geomagnetism at the Observatory, I used to answer many questions about Project Magnet. There were so many that I kept a stack of pamphlets to send out describing Project Magnet, an unclassified program of the U.S. Navy to survey the ocean areas of the world with an airborne magnetometer. Until I read your letter, I did not know that Smith's program was also called Project Magnet. Even its name was secret!

Sorry I cannot be of more help.

Yours sincerely,
Paul H. Serson
Paul H. Serson

cc. Prof. G.D. Garland

The Society of Prevention

death. I also prepared a memorandum as an enclosure to Einstein, under both letter and memorandum were handed to the President by Dr. Sachs in October 1939."

This version of what took place seems the more probable to Dr. Otto Nathan, who had known Einstein for many years and later acted as his executor. Teller, however, affirms positively: "Einstein only signed his name. I believe that at that time he had no very clear idea of what we were doing in nuclear physics." Sachs, too, states, not without a certain degree of cynicism: "We really only needed Einstein in order to provide Schindler with a halo, as he was then almost unknown in the United States. His entire role was really limited to that."

"I really only acted as a mail box. They brought me a finished letter and I simply signed it." Sachs was the apologist offered by Einstein after the Second World War to Antonina Valentin, his old friend and biographer. He very soon began to regret his action. This gifted man of learning and great friend of peace explains further, clearly in personal letters and notes which will probably be made public in future years how through a paradox of fate he had decided to give the starting signal for the most horrible of all weapons of destruction.

Einstein was of course at that time convinced that the government, which he had recommended take an active interest in the uranium problem in order to guard against possible surprise by a German atom bomb, would handle the tremendous new power entrusted to it with true wisdom and humanity. He acted on the assumption that the United States would never use such a bomb for any object other than self-defence against a similar weapon and even then only if it was the only last resort to an extreme degree. This belief was shattered by the first atomic bombing of Japan, and the second, coming later in the same month of September, he felt that both he himself and the atomic scientists who had worked on the construction of the weapon had been deceived.

The tragedy of the decision taken by the pacifist-minded Einstein derives when one realizes, as is possible today, that

(1939-1942)

the menace of a German uranium bomb, doubtless believed perfectly genuine by the eminent scholar and those who influenced him, was in fact nothing more than a terrible phantasm. Einstein said, with deep regret, after the war: "If I had known that the Germans would not succeed in constructing the atom bomb, I would never have lifted a finger." The ability of the Third Reich to produce new weapons capable of deciding the issues of war was then greatly overestimated throughout the world. Subsequent investigations by Allied committees proved that on the outbreak of war the German leaders erroneously believed that they could achieve final victory with the weapons they already had. It was not until 1942 that the development of new weapons attracted any attention in the Reich. The advantage held by the Allied Nations was by that time also recognized. That there was no longer any hope of winning the war, the V2 long-range rocket, came too late as a stage of the conflict when Germany's position had become quite desperate.

The indifference of Hitler and those about him to research in natural science amounted to positive hostility. It had at a very early period cost the Führer the good will of physicists. Only a handful of them, out of ambition or because they had failed to make their mark prior to the advent of the Third Reich, offered Hitler their full co-operation. The great impotency, however,

*The only exception to the lack of interest shown by authority was constituted by the Air Ministry. The Air Force research was concentrated on the development of aircraft such as the Heinkel (Henschel) and "Flying disc". The first of these "Flying saucers" as they were later called—circles in shape, with a diameter of 100 feet, and a weight of 10,000 lbs.—was built in 1935, over Pilsen and reached in three months a height of nearly eight miles. They had a speed of 1,200 m.p.h. and a range of 100 miles. The Heinkel, a single-engine aircraft, fell into the hands of the Russians. It was developed at a later date under "Flying saucer" at A. V. Roe and Company for the United States. They engaged on theoretical research only co-operated in exceptional cases. It is true that the Allied Nations hesitated, after the occupation of Germany, found thousands of new