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Los Alamos
Gen

June 29, 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

FROM: Walter Hamilton ✓

SUBJECT: Los Alamos ✓

The decision to maintain Los Alamos as our permanent principal weapons research center is the result, not of a single decision, but of the accretion of many decisions. Within the past six weeks, the Joint Committee has received two Budget overrun reports covering one plant and one laboratory at about \$26 million total cost. These two construction projects - the new explosives plant and the chemical-metallurgy laboratory - constitute the core of the technical and laboratory facilities of Los Alamos. They are part of the permanentizing program now in progress. Less than \$2 million has been spent on these jobs so far. Completion dates are in 1952.

This is probably our last economical chance to review the desirability of keeping the weapons research work at Los Alamos. "All the results of continued use of this remote site are being "brought" at one stroke. For the several hundred workers required to man these plants, there must also be several thousand service and supporting personnel. The high operating costs, Government town problems, difficulty of getting top scientists, and the bad military security of the area are all intrinsically accepted as inevitable in this decision. Yet there is nothing about 90 per cent of the work done at Los Alamos which couldn't be done equally well at a more accessible site such as Sandia, Berkeley, or some Eastern educational center.

The profits which might be gained by moving out of Los Alamos now might be more top scientists in the project, faster progress on weapons research projects, and financial economies which would free dollars for bombs instead of water wells and golf courses for Los Alamos. It's worth thinking about!

Borden	✓
Beraman	
Brebeck	✓
Hamilton	✓
Heller	
Mansfield	✓
Sheehy	✓

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JOINT COMMITTEE ON ATOMIC ENERGY

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