

An Editorial . . .

A CENTER for research into man's relation to the atom— Why didn't someone think of it before?

It is so overwhelmingly "right" that it would seem automatic for someone in this country to have started that project immediately after those first bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Unfortunately, things don't always work that way. "Making atomic power the slave of man" is a pretty phrase, but to establish a real coordinating center for research takes imagination, money—plenty of money—perseverance and a lot of energy.

Maybe a few people did dream of cars harnessed with atomic power, or a few others, of problem diseases conquered through the atom. Perhaps everyone assumed that something was being done, but no one, no institution, really figured it all out practically as well as idealistically, and started the project.

IT IS ALMOST three years since the people of Nagasaki and Hiroshima died not even knowing the meaning of what had struck them. And during those three years, this country hasn't gotten very far in this "harnessing of atomic energy." Oh, a few isolated laboratories are working on the industrial aspect, and scattered scientists are concentrating on the medical benefits, but considering that the basic problem is already solved, progress has been a lot slower than the coordinated drive which led to the atom bomb.

Well, someone finally has come up with that "so obvious" project, a center for the study of the relation of man and the atom. And to the University of Michigan's everlasting glory, that center will rise right here in Ann Arbor.

THE BENEFITS of this project will go to the mass of the people, not to just the few who can afford fancy gadgets, for the first object of study will be the atom and medicine. The best minds all over the world will work together in this basic service to humanity.

And as this project expands, as it will continue to do for longer than we can now imagine—its scope will broaden, too. Social sciences, as well as the biological and physical will be included in the Phoenix Project. Any repercussion of the atomic bomb which will add to man's knowledge or well-being will be proper subject matter under the ultimately broad purpose of the center.

Perhaps if better homes, progressive communities, finer living develop from this ambitious program, we will have atoned for the awful necessity of the suffering in those two Japanese cities.

WE SAID that it would take imagination, plenty of money, perseverance and a lot of energy to create such a center.

The Phoenix Project is here because of the imagination and perseverance of the War Memorial Committee, the Board of Regents and the student leaders. But money and hard work are still on the agenda.

This is not only a student project, an alumni project, a university project, but a project for all the people in this country. Students and alumni can write their home town newspapers, pledge funds, and stump the country on behalf of the Project.

All the people of this country can show by a whole-hearted response that the Phoenix Project is what they've been waiting for.

This IS what we all expectantly waited for, a project that can make the atomic era a new beginning for man, and not his final destruction.

Threat to Man

EDITOR'S NOTE: We reprint a portion of an editorial published in The Daily August 6, 1945, the date of the bombing of Hiroshima.

IF THE WORLD were in need of a conclusive reason for the prevention of future wars, that reason was supplied by the disclosure of the perfection of the atomic bomb by the United States and its use against the Japanese.

The atomic bomb, even in its preliminary stages, represents a force of destruction that pales the havoc wrought by all previous weapons of war. Hitler's V-bombs were bad enough, but this new weapon throws the robots into insignificance.

It takes little imagination to foresee the possibilities of large air fleets loaded with these parcels of destruction, fleets which could wipe out all living things in a large area at a single blow. Nor is it unlikely that man, with his abilities at technical improvement, can eventually improve the atomic principle into explosives far more powerful than those used against Hiroshima. This is probably only the beginning.

Harnessing the sun's energy may eventually prove tremendously useful in constructive peacetime technology. As a source of power, it may easily accomplish miracles hitherto only dreamed of by man. But in the hands of an aggressor, this new discovery can be turned into the most terrible of all weapons, a weapon which might easily enable one nation to destroy completely another.

Those who are now formulating, and will continue to formulate, the coming world order for peace and security should recognize this new element of warfare and its potential threat to human life. They should take whatever measures are necessary to secure its use for the benefit, not the destruction, of mankind.

Presumably, only a matter of time separates knowledge of the atomic principle from other countries of the world. Germany was approaching that knowledge at her surrender. Only strong measures taken now can insure the proper type of international control that will give to the world the potential benefits of this deadly device without leaving it as a menace to the future.



BIKINI BLAST—Pictured above is the underwater test explosion of the Atomic Bomb off Bikini Atoll. Phoenix Project tentative plans now call for a mural depicting this blast to be painted on the high ceilinged memorial rotunda proposed as part of the research center. Plaques containing names of University war dead would line the rotunda walls. The far end of the proposed rotunda would open onto a series of work rooms and laboratories for scholars probing peacetime uses of atomic energy.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN WAR DEAD

To the family of each alumnus or student of the University who died in World War II, the University has sent a certificate bearing the following words: The University of Michigan has placed this name upon the roll of those students and alumni who, in the fine traditions of loyalty and self sacrifice established by former generations, served their country in time of peril and have given their lives in defense of our national liberties. It will forever be held in honor. To the family and friends who have suffered bereavement, the Regents and faculties of the University offer their deepest sympathy.

- Adler, Richard L.; Joliet, Ill.
Allen, R. Phil, Jr.; Grand Rapids, Mich.
Allen, Charles M.; St. Louis, Missouri.
Allen, Lawrence A.; Windsor, Ontario.
Allen, Robert W.; Oaslan, Iowa.
Allen, Robert W.; Gowanda, N.Y.
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Anderson, Robert O.; Virginia Beach, Va.
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Cannon, George H.; Ann Arbor, Mich.
Cannon, George M.; Iron River, Mich.
Carpenter, Orin O.; New Orleans, La.
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Chambers, Richard H.; Detroit, Mich.
Chandler, Theodore E.; Washington, D.C.
Chaney, Henry F.; Address Unknown.
Chapman, Robert J.; Jackson, Mich.
Chapman, William E.; Washington, D.C.
Cohen, Maurice L.; Brookline, Mass.
Collins, Denmore B.; Hinsdale, Ill.
Collins, Richard J.; Detroit, Mich.
Combs, Billy B.; Perryburg, Ohio.
Conn, Robert J.; Detroit, Mich.
Cook, William K.; Ann Arbor, Mich.
Cooney, Chauncey; Address Unknown.
Cornwell, Harvey F.; Detroit, Mich.
Cord, John D.; Birmingham, Ala.
Cox, Howard L.; Pearl River, N.Y.
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Cramer, Seward S.; New York, N.Y.
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Day, Bluford O.; Brookhaven, Miss.
Day, Charles T.; Saginaw, Mich.
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Debonis, Livio G.; Mims, Florida.
Degener, Lawrence J.; Jackson, Mich.
Deming, Jack M.; Jackson, Mich.
Demuth, Robert; Cincinnati, Ohio.
Deutseh, Robert; Detroit, Mich.
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Dewey, Kenneth M.; Grosse Pointe, Mich.
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Ditz, William T.; Saginaw, Mich.
Dolliver, George B.; Battle Creek, Mich.
Donner, Otto H.; Ann Arbor, Mich.
Drummond, David H.; Greenfield, Ind.

OFFICIAL . . . —The Phoenix Project

REPORT TO REGENTS

Following are excerpts from the War Memorial Committee's resolution to the Board of Regents.

The Phoenix Project: We have named the memorial The Phoenix Project because the whole concept is one of giving birth to a new enlightenment, a conversion of ashes into life and beauty. The Phoenix Project, as we visualize it, would consist of an academy of scholars recruited from this and other universities. It is our thought that they would devote their full creative powers to the task of converting atomic energy to peace-time purposes and of utilizing it for the benefit of mankind. These men would carry on their researches in a group of laboratories and work-rooms which would be entered through a memorial rotunda or similar structure. This structure would in itself be a constant reminder that the University had effectually recognized the aims for which its students and alumni gave their lives. A functional memorial, it would explore the beneficent aspects and implications of atomic energy with the same determination and enthusiasm as the Manhattan Project explored the destructive aspects.

Scope of the Phoenix Project: This would be a perpetual operation; it would not be a "mere mound of stone which might soon be forgotten." The scope of the project would not be limited to the physical and biological sciences; it would include social sciences as well. Since the relationship between man and the atom cries as loudly for attention as the atom itself, the Phoenix Project would focus at the University of Michigan activities of all sorts which relate to the peace-time applications of atomic energy. It is our suggestion that a consecutive series of operations be planned, each one of which can be carried out as soon as money is available. The first of these should be applied for through the United States Atomic Energy Commission immediately so that it might be in operation by July 1, 1948. The exhaustion of operations is inconceivable because there will be a continual growth and development of new projects out of those already begun.

RESOLVED: that the War Memorial Committee recommend to the Board of Regents that the University create as its War Memorial a Center to explore the ways and means by which the potentialities of atomic energy may become beneficent influences in the life of man.

- Respectfully submitted,
Robert C. Angell
Roscoe O. Bonisteel
Arthur R. Derderian
William Haber
Christian Matthews
Marvin L. Niehus
Arthur M. Rude
E. Virginia Smith
Jacqueline K. Adams, Secretary
Erich A. Walter, Chairman

UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION WASHINGTON

March 24, 1948

War Memorial Committee
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Gentlemen:
The Atomic Energy Commission has learned with interest of the proposal of the War Memorial Committee of the University of Michigan to establish on the Michigan campus a permanent living monument to the students, alumni and faculty of the University who served the nation in World War II.

The aim to create an institution devoted to intensive study of life mechanisms as they exist, together with research into the effects of atomic energy upon man and his living environment, is a welcome addition to the research facilities of the nation. The Commission applauds the decision of the War Memorial Committee to further knowledge in this new field and the intent to explore the beneficial potentialities of atomic energy. From the proposed center may come an answer to some of the urgent biological problems of today. Funds of the Atomic Energy Commission for basic research, its fellowship program and its training facilities are planned to assist in development of programs of this broad type.

Sincerely yours,
CARROLL L. WILSON
General Manager

NAVY DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

30 Mar 1948
Chairman of Memorial Committee
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Doctor Walter:
We in the Office of Naval Research are interested in and sympathetic with the idea of the formation of Research Institutes. We believe them to be a highly efficient tool for the conduct of both basic and applied research. One reason for this lies in the fact that the Institute is set up in a horizontal fashion, thus affording assistance from numerous disciplines of sciences all bearing upon a single field of endeavor.

The Medical Sciences Division of the Office of Naval Research will be happy to render its support in any way possible toward the organization of such a Medical Research Institute . . .

Sincerely yours,
C. W. SHILLING
Director, Med. Sciences Div.

HERSEY STATEMENT

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is a special statement to The Daily from John Hersey who wrote "Hiroshima," the famous description of atomic destruction.)
"Never before in his history has man possessed such an ambiguous power as he now does: power, that is, for infinite good or—the choice, too, is his—for definitive evil. That power lies in a phenomenon so complex that only a handful of men, a group of perhaps one thousand scientists in a world containing two and a half billion people, understands everything about it. The Phoenix Project, it seems to me, symbolizes the hopeful aspects of man's power and man's choice."

—John Hersey

The Michigan Daily

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