

CHAPTER 2

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE BOMB

Alicia Video: Intro to Chapter

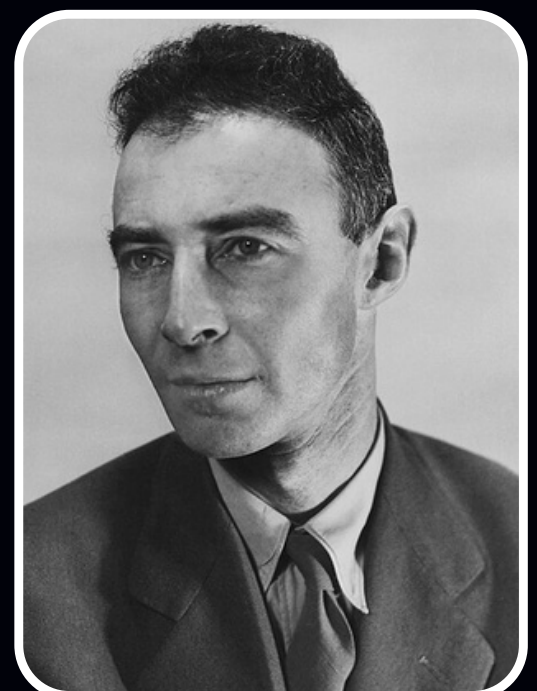
“

Both the man of science and the man of action live always at the edge of myserty, surrounded by it.

”

ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

I am Robert Oppenheimer, the “father” of the atomic bomb; I was the scientific director and one of the chief architects of the Manhattan Project. When becoming appointed director of the project in 1942, I became a well known public figure. I showed leadership during my work on the theoretical side of the bomb, while additionally managing over 3,000 people.



1. noah video: talking about people in Los Alamos

HANS BETHE

2. zach video: talking about Hans Bethe



I, Hans Bethe, contributed to the development of the hydrogen bomb, following my work on the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos. I was able to demonstrate how my involvement in this pivotal historical event influenced future technologies.

I, Ernest Lawrence, was often referred to as the "Atomic Smasher," leading the electromagnetic separation efforts at Oak Ridge as part of the Manhattan Project. My innovative techniques played a pivotal role in the bomb's creation. Beyond my military contributions, I set the stage for future civilian applications of nuclear technology and firmly established my legacy as a key figure in the Manhattan Project.



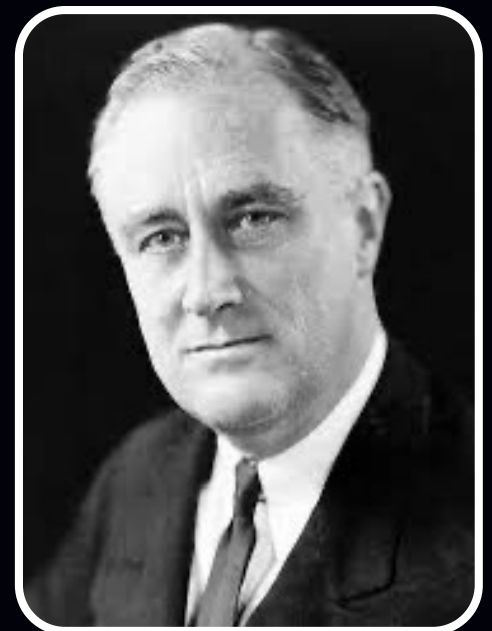
ERNEST LAWRENCE



I, Enrico Fermi, played a pivotal role in the Manhattan Project due to my groundbreaking contributions to nuclear science. I was born in Italy and became renowned for my work in creating the first nuclear fission chain reaction. This was regarded as a critical breakthrough that paved the way for the development of the atomic bomb. In 1944, I oversaw a team of scientists that supervised the operation of the B reactor. This was a key milestone in the Manhattan Project's purpose to harness nuclear energy for military purposes.

ENRICO FERMI

I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, was President of the US from 1933 - 1945. In 1939 my significance to the Manhattan Project extended beyond my role as President. I was amongst the first to learn about the discovery of fission in uranium, signalling the potential for atomic weapons. In 1942 I officially started the project by approving 500 million dollars in funding research. This was ultimately pivotal for getting government support for science in times of both war and peace.



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT



I, Vannevar Bush, played a pivotal but relatively discreet role in the Manhattan Project. I wasn't widely recognized for my contributions to the project, but was able to still make an impact through harnessing my background with my leadership NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics). When I became its director in 1939, I was provided with the necessary scientific and organizational expertise to facilitate the Manhattan Project's success.

VANNEVAR BUSH

As a German university student in 1924, **HANS BETHE** initially majored in chemistry but became discouraged when he spilled sulfuric acid on his lab coat during an experiment. He found theoretical physics more to his liking.

Statement in Los Alamos National Museum about Hans Bethe's interest in theoretical physics



Image From Manhattan Project National Historical Park Los Alamos

Information in the Los Alamos Museum starts the idea the Manhattan Project was a huge turning point in history because it led to significant progress in science and technology. Hans Bethe and his colleagues proved this from their work on new technologies like the hydrogen bomb. This development shows how working on the project prompted important developments in science and military capabilities.



EDWARD TELLER, STANISLAW ULAM, and **HANS BETHE** all contributed to the design of the hydrogen bomb. After reporters called Teller the Father of the H-bomb, Bethe said: "I think it is more precise to say that Ulam is the father, because he provided the seed, and Teller is the mother because he remained with the child. As for me, I guess I am the midwife."

Statement in Los Alamos National Museum about Hans Bethe's "contribution to the design of the H-Bomb"

AUTHOR'S THOUGHTS