

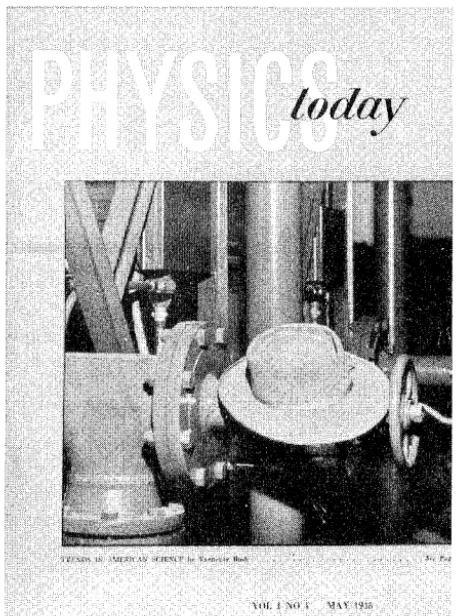
sive. With Oppenheimer and his friends in mind, he complained privately "that I have been guilty in their eyes of *lèse majesté* in having the effrontery to disagree with my colleagues." He believed that Oppenheimer's close friends Herbert Marks and Anne Wilson Marks were spreading stories "to the effect that I am an 'isolationist.' . . ." When a friend observed that some people seemed to think it "effrontery for anyone to differ with Dr. Oppenheimer on a scientific matter," Strauss wrote a memo for his files on the "theme of omniscience" in which he noted that Oppenheimer had once proposed "denaturing" uranium—a process that had since been proven impossible.

Strauss also convinced himself that Oppenheimer was consciously trying to slow work on the thermonuclear bomb. He thought of Oppenheimer as "a general who did not want to fight. Victory could hardly be expected." Early in 1951, Strauss, though no longer an AEC commissioner, went to AEC Chairman Gordon Dean and, reading from a carefully drafted memo, accused Oppenheimer of "sabotaging the project." He said "something radical" must be done, strongly implying that Oppenheimer should be fired. And, as if to underscore the political risks of taking on the scientist, Strauss ended the meeting by melodramatically throwing the memo into the fire in Dean's fireplace. Consciously or not, it was a metaphorical gesture; the security of the country demanded that Oppenheimer's influence be reduced to ashes.

Back in the autumn of 1949, just as the internal debate over the Super was heating up, Strauss was apprised of top secret information that further fueled his suspicions of Oppenheimer. In mid-October, the FBI informed him that decrypted Soviet cable traffic indicated that a Soviet spy had been operating out of Los Alamos. The crypts seemed to implicate a British physicist, Klaus Fuchs, who had arrived at Los Alamos in 1944 as a member of the British Scientific Mission. In the weeks ahead, it would become clear to Strauss and others that Fuchs had had ample access to classified information about both the atomic bomb and the Super.

While the FBI and the British investigated Fuchs, Strauss began his own investigation of Oppenheimer. He phoned General Groves and, referring to information in Oppenheimer's FBI file, asked about the Chevalier affair. In response, Groves wrote Strauss two long letters trying to explain what had happened in 1943 and why he had accepted Oppenheimer's explanation of Chevalier's activities. In his first letter, he was emphatic in his belief that Oppenheimer was a loyal American. In his second, he tried to convey the complexity of the Chevalier affair.

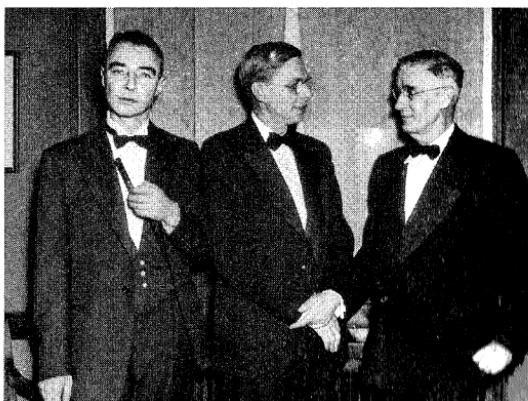
Groves also made it clear that he did not think that Robert's behavior in the incident was incriminating. "It is important to realize," he wrote Strauss,

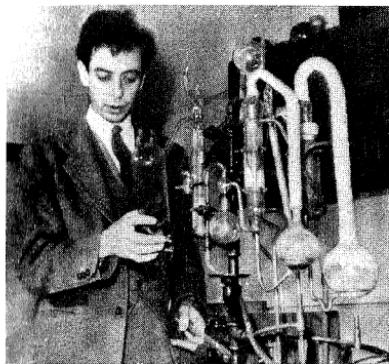


Ernest Lawrence, Glenn Seaborg and Oppenheimer. "Modern Prometheans have raided Mount Olympus again," opined *Scientific Monthly*, "and have brought back for man the very thunderbolts of Zeus."

Physics Today put Oppie's porkpie hat on its cover.

Harvard University elected Oppenheimer to its board of overseers (with James B. Conant and Vannevar Bush).





A gifted experimental physicist, Frank Oppenheimer (above) was fired in 1949 by the University of Minnesota when it was revealed that he had been a member of the Communist Party. He became a cattle rancher in Colorado.



Anne Wilson Marks was Oppie's secretary in 1945—and then she married Herbert Marks (lying on deck of the boat), his friend and lawyer.

Caltech's Richard Tolman and his wife, Ruth Tolman, a noted clinical psychologist who became one of Robert's deepest loves.





Time magazine put Oppenheimer on its cover in November 1948.

Center, Oppenheimer was chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission's General Advisory Committee. Here he is on a trip with James B. Conant, Gen. James McCormack, Harley Rowe, John Manley, I. I. Rabi and Roger S. Warner.

Bottom, Oppenheimer (far left) in 1947 receiving an honorary degree from Harvard, with Gen. George C. Marshall, Gen. Omar N. Bradley and other honorees.





Olden Manor, in Princeton, New Jersey, where the Oppenheimers lived after Robert was appointed director of the Institute for Advanced Study in 1947.

Kitty, Toni, and Peter in the greenhouse.

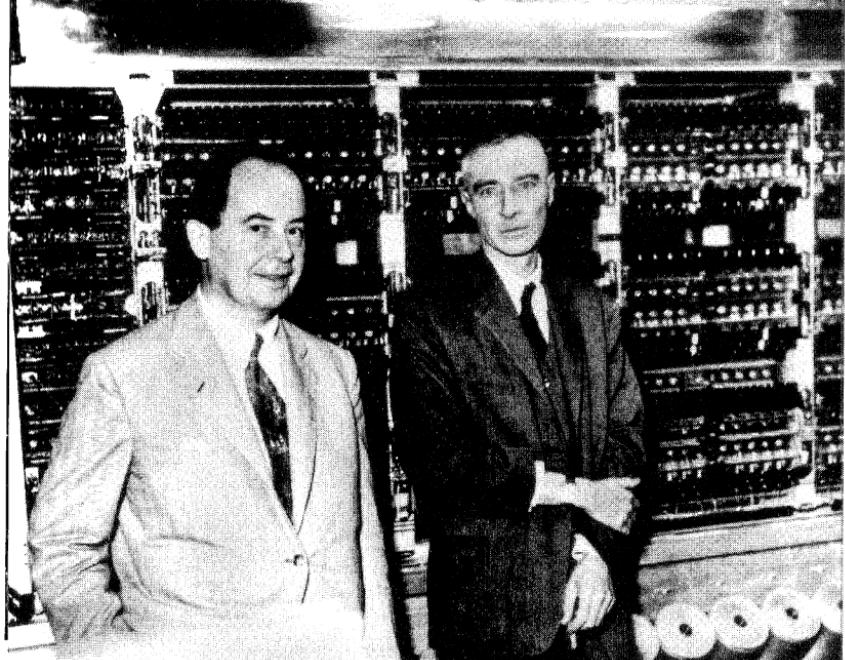




Robert and his children in the yard at Olden Manor.

Robert gave Kitty a greenhouse to grow her orchids. They entertained frequently. "He served the most delicious and the coldest martinis," Pat Sherr said.





Oppenheimer with mathematician John von Neumann, standing before von Neumann's early computer.

Oppenheimer discussing physics with students at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. "The Institute was his own little empire," said Freeman Dyson.





Oppenheimer with (from left) Hans Bethe, Senator Brien McMahon, Eleanor Roosevelt, and David Lilienthal.



Oppenheimer opposed a crash program to build a hydrogen bomb. He explained to a TV audience that a "superbomb was a matter that touch[ed] the very basis of our morality. It is a grave danger for us that these decisions are taken on the basis of facts held secret."



Oppenheimer at a conference with physicist Greg Breit. "What we don't know, we explain to each other."

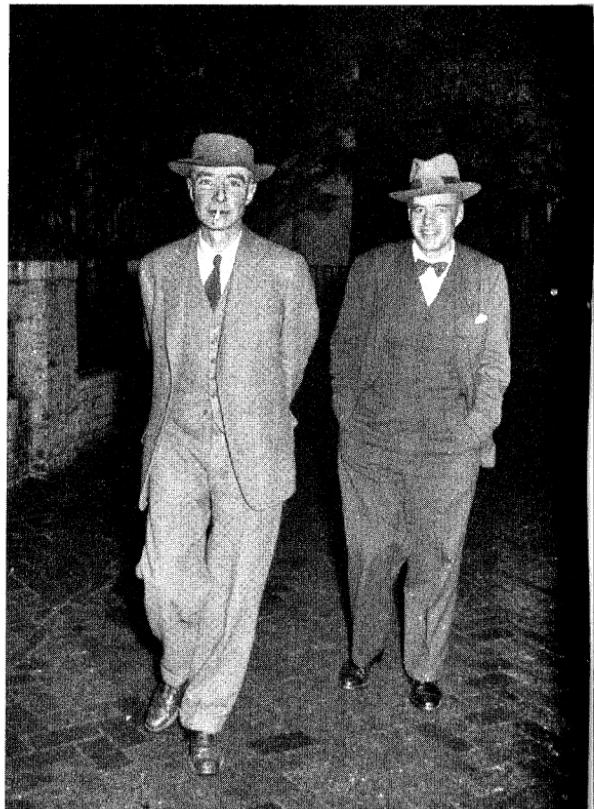
"Who's Being Walled Off From What?"

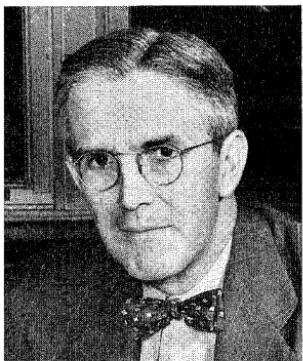
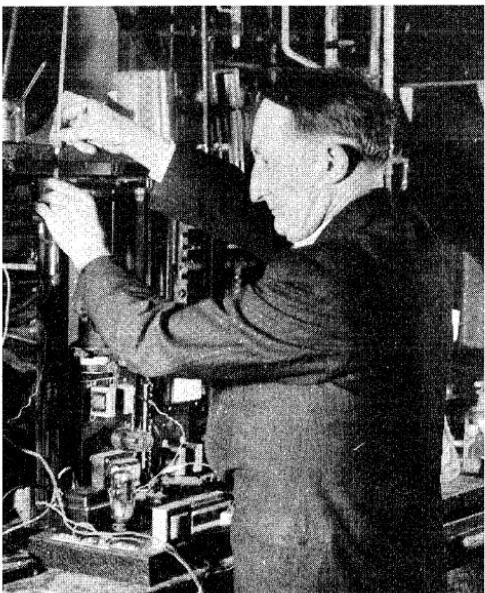


—from Herblock's *Here and Now* (Simon & Schuster, 1955)

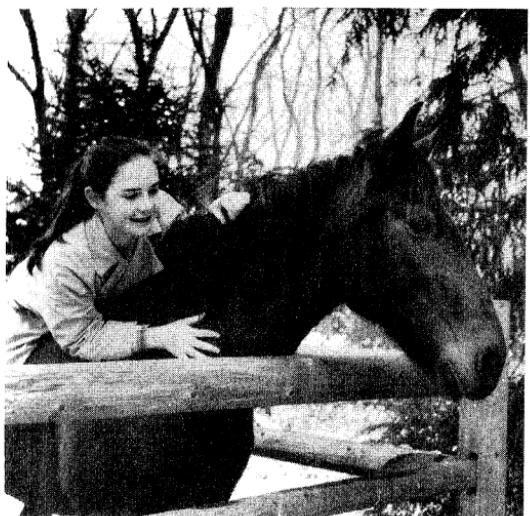


In December 1953 President Dwight Eisenhower ordered a "blank wall" between Oppenheimer and the government's nuclear secrets. Robert's ensuing security hearing was orchestrated by Atomic Energy Commission chairman Lewis Strauss (above, right), who was determined to purge Oppenheimer from government service. Oppenheimer hired lawyer Lloyd Garrison (right) to defend himself.





On April 12, 1954, Oppenheimer's security hearing opened, chaired by Gordon Gray (top, right). Only one AEC commissioner, Henry DeWolf Smyth (center, right), voted to reject the Gray Board's decision to strip Oppenheimer of his security clearance, AEC commissioner Eugene Zuckert (bottom, right) voted with the majority against Oppenheimer. Roger Robb (bottom, left) served as the Gray Board's prosecutor. Only one member of the Gray Board, Ward Evans (top, left) voted to uphold Oppenheimer's security clearance. Evans called the decision a "black mark on the escutcheon of our country."



Toni Oppenheimer on horseback.
"From when she was six or seven years old," Verna Hobson observed, "the rest of the family relied on her to be sensible and solid and to cheer them on."

Oppenheimer lost his security clearance, but kept his job as director of the Institute for Advanced Study. Here, walking with Kitty in Princeton.



Robert could "just pour in the love" he felt for Peter Oppenheimer.



After the 1954 security hearing Oppenheimer "was like a wounded animal," Francis Ferguson recalled. "He retreated. And returned to a simpler way of life." He took his family to St. John in the Virgin Islands. Later he built a spartan beach cottage, and the family (below) spent many months each year on the beautiful island. He and Kitty were expert sailors.



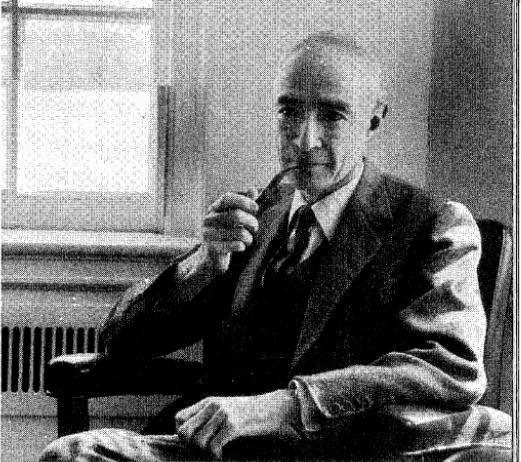


Sitting with his old friend Niels Bohr, 1955.

In 1960 Oppenheimer visited Tokyo (below) where he told reporters, "I do not regret that I had something to do with the technical success of the atomic bomb. It isn't that I don't feel bad; it is that I don't feel worse tonight than I did last night."



Oppenheimer in his office at the Institute.



In April 1962 President John F. Kennedy invited Oppenheimer to the White House. He is seen here shaking hands with Jackie Kennedy.

Frank at the Exploratorium in 1969, a science museum in San Francisco that gives visitors a "hands-on" experience with physics, chemistry, and other fields, which he founded with his wife, Jackie.



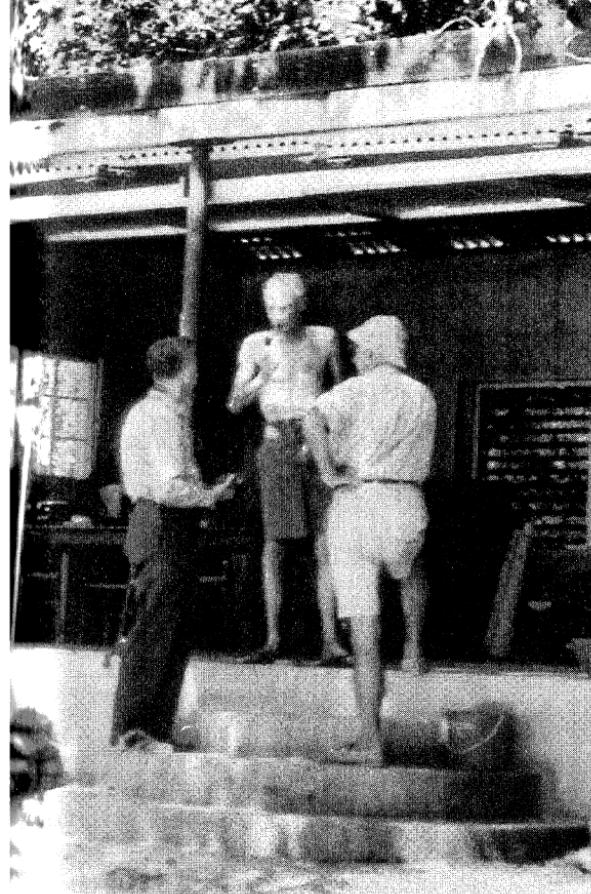


In 1963 President Lyndon B. Johnson (below) awarded Oppenheimer (left, with Kitty and Peter) the \$50,000 Fermi Prize. David Lilienthal thought the whole affair "a ceremony of expiation for the sins of hatred and ugliness visited upon Oppenheimer."



Right, Edward Teller, who had testified against Oppenheimer in 1954, approached to offer his congratulations. Oppenheimer grinned and shook Teller's hand, while Kitty stood stone-faced beside her husband.





In the summer of 1966
Oppenheimer greets two
beachcombers outside his
waterfront cottage on St. John.
He was already dying of throat
cancer.

A pensive Toni inside the cottage.
“Everybody loved her,” June Barlas
said, “but she didn’t know that.”



In happier days, Toni, Inga Hiilivirta, Kitty, and
Doris Jadan drinking cocktails on St. John.



