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Reactions...

During WWII, while there was still a global threat by the Stalin and Hitler, the scientists who could, flocked to the United States and worked on the Bomb Project. Science could not exist in an atmosphere that exists under an oppressive dictatorship.

Since it was in the vital interest of each of these scientists that science not be destroyed by the world domination of Hitler, and they were many times feeling direct pressure in the form of purges such as the one at Göttingen. They thought Atomic weapons were possibly and that if Hitler had one, he would surely overtake the world.

From another standpoint, viewing the entire scientific community as a single entity following a certain "group Darwinism," it seems only proper that they rallied behind the US Bomb Project so that their it if there was to be a bomb a country that fostered an attitude more conducive to Science would control it.

Once this direct threat was shown to be false, that Germany would not have a bomb and that the US would not need such a weapon to win the war, many scientists disagreed with the decision to continue to build the weapon, and then go ahead and use it. The scientists saw no need to use the weapon, or even finish building it, if the possibility of another power creating one was small.

The mistake they made was assuming that the military and government had the moral sense and vision that they did. It is easy to see the folly of the government. They assumed that it was some "American Secret," how to build the bomb, instead of just applied physics. They got too big for their britches and assumed that no one else *could* build such a weapon in less than 10 – 15 years.

This assumption, and the general hailing McCarthyism in the postwar period helped the decisive, and in hindsight blind, conviction of the Rosenbergs.

The arms race, in which the super-powers created increasing amounts of more and more destructive and evil weapons is another example of their folly. Surely the use of even one of these weapons in a populated area would be do destructive that in the best case, a couple million people would be killed and a city destroyed, and in the worst case there would be retaliation and hundreds of millions would die in just a few hours, while the impact on the environment would probably end up killing billions more in the future.

The dismissal of Oppenheimer is characteristic of this reactionary McCarthyist atmosphere. He gave his work everything during the Bomb Project, and then was later fired because it was fashionable.