



National Academy of Sciences

J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

GENERAL SCIENCE

## Dr. Oppenheimer Retires

► DR. J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER, the world-renowned physicist who led the team of scientists that developed the first atomic bomb, retired on June 30 as director of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, N.J., a post he has held since 1947.

Dr. Oppenheimer's outstanding contributions to theoretical physics, as well as his scientific and administrative leadership have helped make the United States one of the foremost nations in the world in most areas of scientific research.

The beliefs on which Dr. Oppenheimer has based his life, both personal and professional, are perhaps best explained in brief form by the remarks he made when accepting the Enrico Fermi Award at the White House on Dec. 2, 1963 (see SNL, 64:375). Dr. Oppenheimer said then:

"In his later years Jefferson often wrote of the 'brotherly spirit of science, which unites into one family all its votaries of whatever grade, and however widely dispersed throughout the different quarters of the globe.' A few days before his death, with the bitter war still far from ended, and the new bomb not many months away, Roosevelt quoted these words, and said, 'today we are faced with the pre-eminent fact that, if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate . . . the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together and work together, in the same world, at peace.'

"We have not, I know, always given evidence of that brotherly spirit of science. This is not because we lack vital common or intersecting scientific inter-

ests. It is in part because, with countless other men and women, we are engaged in this great enterprise of our time, testing whether men can both preserve and enlarge life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and live without war as the great arbiter of history. In this enterprise, no one bears a greater responsibility than the President of the United States. I think it just possible, Mr. President, that it has taken some charity and some courage for you to make this award today. That would seem to me a good augury for all our futures."

Despite his far-ranging contributions to the theoretical and practical development of U.S. physics, Dr. Oppenheimer's security clearance was canceled by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1954.

Selecting him as the 1963 Fermi Award winner was viewed by many as an indirect apology from the Government for this highly controversial 1954 revocation (see SNL, 65:403, 1954 and 66:19, 1954).

The decision to give Dr. Oppenheimer the 1963 accolade was made unanimously by the AEC's General Advisory Committee, which he had headed from 1947 through 1952.

New director of the Institute for Advanced Study is Dr. Carl Kaysen, Littauer professor of political economy and associate dean of the Graduate School of Public Administration at Harvard University.

Dr. Oppenheimer will remain at the Institute as senior professor of theoretical physics, a post held by the late Albert Einstein.

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