

University of Chicago Library Special Collections Research Center

Guide to the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists Records 1946-1952



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.ECAS
Title	Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists. Records
Date	1946-1952(inclusive)
Size	11.5 linear ft. (23 boxes)
Repository	1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637

Abstract The Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists was formed in May, 1946, by Albert Einstein, R.F. Bacher, Hans A. Bethe, Edward U. Condon, R. Hogness, Leo Szilard, Harold C. Urey, and V.F. Weisskopf. Their objective was to encourage and further the peaceful uses of atomic energy and to do this they would solicit private contributions in support of the work of the National Committee for Atomic Information. On August 6, 1946 the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists was incorporated in New Jersey in order "that the contributions it received might be devoted to other groups interested in the field of atomic information and education as well as the NCAI." The records of the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists consist of 11.5 linear feet cover the period 1946 to 1952. The collection includes correspondence files with the several organizations, which it helped to support financially, and those organizations and individuals with whom the Committee had a common cause. It also contains the official papers, memoranda, and minutes of the meetings of the Trustees and the annual members' meetings; material relating to its fund raising and educational campaigns; minutes, reports, and papers of various scientific and interested groups' meetings; the Committee's financial records; and the general correspondence files.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection the preferred citation is:

Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

Historical Note

In May, 1946 Albert Einstein, R.F. Bacher, Hans A. Bethe, Edward U. Condon, Thorfin R. Hogness, Leo Szilard, Harold C. Urey, and V.F. Weisskopf joined together to form the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists. These scientists in turn were later joined by Selig Hecht, Harrison Brown, and H.J. Mueller. The object of the Committee as stated in their by-laws was to encourage and further the peaceful uses of atomic energy. To attain this objective the "Committee was to solicit private contributions in support of the work of the National Committee for Atomic Information." On August 6, 1946 the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists was incorporated in New Jersey in order "that the contributions it received might be devoted to other groups interested in the field of atomic information and education as well as the NCAI." Included among these groups were the Association of Scientists for Atomic Education, the Federation of American Scientists, and the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. The Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, while supporting these various groups of scientists' organization whose ends were the education of the public and the United States' government in the potential uses and misuses of atomic energy, also carried on extensive educational programs. These programs had as their objective in addition to the raising of funds the eliciting of support for some form of international control of the atomic bomb such as the Baruch Plan submitted to the United Nations in 1946.

With the gradual decline in international amity, the failure of the United Nations' Commission on Atomic Energy to come to any agreement over international control of atomic energy, and with the increase of international tensions after 1947 the Committee decided to become inactive in 1949. It officially dissolved on October 10, 1951.

While Joseph Halle Schaffner and later E. Everet Minett were Executive Directors, the main office was in New York with the legal and banking office in Princeton, N.J. The executive offices were later moved to Chicago, but the Princeton office was retained until the Committee dissolved.

On March 14, 1952 the records of the Committee were transferred to the Library of the University of Chicago on the authority of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Vice-Chairman of the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists, Inc.

Scope Note

The records of the Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists consist of 11.5 linear feet cover the period 1946 to 1952. The collection includes the correspondence files with the several organizations, which it helped to support financially, and those organizations and individuals with whom the Committee had a common cause. It also contains the official papers, memoranda, and minutes of the meetings of the Trustees and the annual members' meetings; material relating to its fund raising and educational campaigns; minutes, reports, and papers of various scientific and interested groups' meetings; the Committee's financial records; and the general correspondence files. Also included are seven phonograph recordings of the discussions at the Princeton and other meetings; 13 wire recordings of the Princeton Conference (Nov 1947); one film entitled "The Atomic Bomb: Peace or Disaster; one audit book; miscellaneous financial records.

The collection has been arranged into twelve series: I. Corporation Papers, II. Trustees, III. Fund Raising Campaigns, IV. Financial, V. Affiliated Organizations, Grants-In-Aid, VI. Educational and Publicity Material, VII. Scientific Meetings and Conferences, VIII. Legal and Administrative Affairs, IX. Community Organizations, X. General Correspondence, XI. Minutes of Trustee's Meeting (volumes), and XII. Wire Recordings.

Series I, Corporation Papers includes the incorporation papers of the Committee along with sundry material related to the incorporation of the Committee in New Jersey. Series II, Trustees has been subdivided into correspondence of the trustees relating to the business of the committee and meetings of the Board of Trustees' and members' annual meetings which includes minutes, official notices of meetings, and miscellaneous material. Additional minutes of Trustees meetings can be found in Series XI. Series III, Fund Raising Campaigns includes plans, records, correspondence, mimeographed and printed material. Series IV, Financial includes correspondence, bills, and reports. Series V, Affiliated Organizations, Grants-In-Aid contains correspondence with organizations given financial support and grants, requests for grants, minutes of meetings, and reports of activities.

Series VI, Educational and Publicity Material, includes correspondence pertaining to films, lectures, publications, and news conferences. Series VII, Scientific Meetings and Conferences includes correspondence, papers, invitations, committee reports, speeches, press releases, telegrams, and interviews. Series VIII, Legal and Administrative Affairs, includes correspondence, financial records, membership lists, personnel records, and photographs. Series IX, Community Organizations contains correspondence from and to various local organizations regarding atomic energy. Series X contains general correspondence files. Series XI contains three volumes of minutes of Trustees' meetings from 1946 to 1951. Additional information on Trustees meetings can be found in Series II. And finally, Series XII, contains wire recordings from the Princeton Conference in November 1947.

Subject Headings

- Einstein, Albert, 1879-1955
- Bacher, Robert F. (Robert Fox), 1905-2004
- Bethe, Hans Albrecht, 1906-
- Condon, Edward Uhler, 1902-1974
- Hogness, T.R. [Thorfin Rusten], 1894-
- Szilard, Leo
- Urey, Harold Clayton, 1893-
- Weisskopf, Victor Frederick, 1908-
- Hecht, Selig, 1892-1947
- Brown, Harrison, 1917-1986
- Minett, E. Everet
- Lorentz, Pare
- Emergency Committee of Atomic Scientists
- Manhattan Project (U.S.)
- Association of Scientists for Atomic Education
- Atomic Scientists of Chicago

- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists
- Association of Cambridge Scientists
- Chicago Association of Scientists and Engineers
- Federation of American Scientists
- Association of Oak Ridge Engineers and Scientists
- Associations of Washington Scientists
- National Committee on Atomic Information
- Atomic scientists' movement
- Atomic energy
- Nuclear energy

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