

**October 2, 1944**

**Letter from Boris Merkulov (USSR People's  
Commissar for State Security) to Lavrenty Beria  
(USSR People's Commissar for Internal Affairs)**

**Citation:**

"Letter from Boris Merkulov (USSR People's Commissar for State Security) to Lavrenty Beria (USSR People's Commissar for Internal Affairs)", October 2, 1944, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Reproduced from Jerrold L. & Leona P. Schechter, *Sacred Secrets: How Soviet Intelligence Operations Changed American History*, (pp. 315-7). See also CWIHP e-Dossier no. 11, "Was Oppenheimer a Soviet Spy?"  
<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111512>

**Summary:**

Letter from Merkulov to Beria regarding the KGB's efforts to obtain information about the creation of the atomic bomb and specifically about the related problems with uranium

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

Letter from Boris Merkulov (USSR People's Commissar for State Security) to Lavrenty Beria (USSR People's Commissar for Internal Affairs), 2 October 1944

2 October 4 [1944] TOP SECRET

1107/M URGENT

Copy # 2

PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE USSR  
GENERAL COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY

Comrade BERIA, L.P.

In accordance with your instruction of 29 September 1944, NKGB USSR continues measures for obtaining more detailed information on the state of work on the [problem of uranium] [handwritten] and its development abroad.

In the period 1942-1943 important data on the start of work in the [USA] [handwritten] on this problem was received from our foreign agent network using the contacts of Comrade Zarubin and Kheifitz in their execution of important tasks in line with the executive committee of the Comintern.

In 1942 one of the leaders of scientific work on [uranium] in the USA, Professor Oppenheimer while being an unlisted (nglastny) member of the apparat of Comrade Browder] [handwritten] informed us about the beginning of work.

On the request of Comrade Kheifitz, confirmed by [Comrade Browder,] [handwritten] he provided cooperation in access to research for several of our tested sources including a relative of [Comrade Browder] [handwritten].

Due to complications of the operational situation in the [USA,] [handwritten] dissolution of the [Comintern] [handwritten] and explanations of Comrades Zarubin and Kheifitz on the Mironov affair it is expedient to immediately sever contacts of leaders and activists of the [American Communist Party] [handwritten] with scientists and specialists engaged in work on [uranium.] [handwritten]

NKGB requests the consent of the leadership [Instancia].

PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF STATE SECURITY USSR  
Commissar of State Security First Rank  
Signed/ MERKULOV

Handwritten note by Beria "Correct". 2 October 1944

Printer—3 copies

No.1 Comrade Beria

No.2 Sec. NKGB

No.3 Dept. NKGB

[Ed. Note: On page 1, signed acknowledgement of L. Beria "Received" signed by Merkulov on 3 October 1944 .

The original document was typed with blank underlined sections. The missing information was written in later by hand. This security measure made sensitive information available only to "need to know " officials and was a standard Soviet security practice.]