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ATOMS FOR PEACE AWARD, INC.

Records, 1944-1972

Manuscript Collection - MC 10

1 record carton, 10 manuscript boxes, 1 flat box
5 cubic feet
Accession numbers: 1978-5, 1988-54, 2004-49

Processed: December 1984
By: Elizabeth Craig-McCormack
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ACCESS

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HISTORICAL NOTE

On July 20, 1955, in Geneva, Switzerland, President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for an international effort to apply nuclear science to peaceful purposes and expressed his hope that "private business and professional men throughout the world will take an interest and provide an incentive in finding new ways that this new science can be used . . . for the benefit of mankind and not destruction." In response, Henry Ford II, Benson Ford, and Henry Clay Ford proposed that the Ford Motor Company Fund authorize an appropriation of one million dollars to be granted at a rate of \$100,000 annually for ten years to recognize outstanding contributions to the peaceful application of nuclear energy. The "Atoms for Peace Awards, A Memorial to Henry Ford and Edsel Ford," was established by the Directors of the Fund to receive and administer the monies. The creation of the Award was announced at the World Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 8, 1955, by Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, Chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission.

On August 12, 1955, James R. Killian, President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, accepted the invitation of Henry Ford II to serve as Chairman of the Organization and Planning Committee for the Atoms for Peace Awards. Six other committee members were subsequently appointed to consider questions of policy and administration. Their decisions and recommendations, which included a suggested Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws for the Atoms for Peace Awards, Inc., were submitted to the Ford Motor Company Fund. These were approved and, on behalf of the Fund, the Committee members were named Trustees of the new non-profit organization.

Award recipients were selected by the Trustees from among the world's scientists, engineers, and others who, in their judgment, had made the greatest contribution to the development of peaceful uses of atomic energy. The award winners were chosen without regard for nationality or political ideology and received a cash honorarium accompanied by a commemorative medal. Individuals and organizations were encouraged to nominate any person who had made a significant contribution. An Advisory Committee on Nominations, appointed by the Board of Trustees, conducted the preliminary screening of the nominations and submitted its recommendations to the Trustees who made the final decision. If the Board of Trustees failed to discover a candidate meriting the Award, the Award and medal were withheld during that year.

PROVENANCE NOTE

The records were given to the Institute Archives by James Rhyne Killian in 1977; an additional audio tape was given to the Archives in 1988.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The records of the Atoms for Peace Awards, Inc. were presented to the Institute Archives in 1978 by James Rhyne Killian, President of the Board of Trustees for Atoms for Peace Awards from 1955 to 1969. Processing of the original accession was completed under a grant from the United States Department of Education, Title II-C, in 1984.

The collection originally consisted of approximately six cubic feet of materials; a small amount of duplicate material was identified and discarded.

The records remain in their original folder units as established by M. Bryce Leggett, Executive Secretary of Atoms for Peace. The records were organized by Leggett into two files: a single alphabetical subject and correspondence series and an alphabetical nominee file.

Series I: Subject and Correspondence Files, 1955-1972

Boxes 1-3

The correspondence files in the Subject and Correspondence series reflect the communication between the Atoms for Peace administrators and the nominators and nominees of the award, ceremony participants, and individuals involved in the planning of the award convocations. Nomination-related correspondence provides a rich source of opinion expressed by the international scientific community in evaluating the contributions of its members in the area of peaceful nuclear application. Additionally, the memoranda and correspondence of the Atoms for Peace administration provide insight into the criteria upon which award nominations were solicited, evaluated, and presented.

Records of the Awards Ceremony (box 1) include audiotape recordings (boxes 6-11) of the award ceremonies produced by the Voice of America and Boston Public Broadcasting Station WGBH, invitation lists, invitation acceptances and declinations, press releases, biographical sketches of award recipients, and the published proceedings of the Atoms for Peace Awards for each year the Award was given. The proceedings document testimonials, responses, and speeches delivered at the ten award ceremonies between 1957 and 1969. The addresses primarily focus on the impact of science on society in the post-World War II era and the interaction of science and public policy.

The records of James R. Killian, (box 2) Chairman of the 1955 Organization and Planning Committee and President of the Board of Trustees from 1955 to 1969, encompass the years the organization was engaged in granting awards. Correspondence includes communication between Mr. Killian and members of the Advisory Committee on Nominations and the Board of Trustees relating to the selection of Award recipients. Additional correspondence concerns the disposition of the remainder of the Atoms for Peace Awards funds in 1969-1970.

Series II: Nominee Files, 1955-1966

Boxes 4-5

Individuals whose names were actually placed in nomination for the Atoms for Peace Award are listed in the Nominee Files. The nominations range from the obscure Arthur Arendt, who in 1956 proposed the feasibility of utilizing guided nuclear missiles to defuse hurricanes, to such distinguished contributors in the international scientific community as Niels Bohr, I. I. Rabi, and George de Hevesy. The files consist of letters of nomination, supporting documentation including publications, and evaluations of the nominees' contributions to peaceful nuclear research.

RECIPIENTS OF THE ATOMS FOR PEACE AWARD

First	Niels Henrik David Bohr	October 24, 1957
Second	George Charles de Hevesy	January 29, 1959
Third	Leo Szilard Eugene Paul Wigner	May 18, 1960
Fourth	Alvin M. Weinberg Walter H. Zinn	May 18, 1960
Fifth	Sir John Cockcroft	April 6, 1961
Sixth	Vladimir Iosovich Vekslev Edwin McMillan	October 24, 1963
Seventh	Bertrand L. Goldschmidt W. Bennett Lewis Isidor Isaac Rabi	November 14, 1967
Eighth	Sigvard Eklund Abdus Salam Henry DeWolf Smyth	October 14, 1968
Ninth	Aage Niels Bohr Floyd LeRoy Culler, Jr. Henry Seymour Kaplan Ben Ray Mottelson Compton Alexander Rennie Anthony Leonid Turkevich	May 14, 1969
Tenth	Dwight David Eisenhower	May 14, 1969

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1		SERIES I. SUBJECT AND CORRESPONDENCE
1	1	A: General Correspondence, 1956-1969
1	2	Advisory Committee on Nominations, Report, 1967
1	2a	Atoms for Peace Awards - Background publications, 1955 and 1956
1	2b	Atoms for Peace Awards - Financial closeout, 1969
1	3	Award Ceremony, 1957 (first)
1	4	Award Ceremony, 1959 (second)
6		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, 1959 (4 reels)
1	5	Award Ceremony, 1960 (third and fourth)
1	6	Award Ceremony, 1961 (fifth)
7		Award Ceremony, Audiotape and Videotape, 1961
1	7	Award Ceremony, 1963 (sixth)
8		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, presentation, 1963 (4 reels)
1	8-9	Award Ceremony, 1967 (seventh)
9		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, 1967 (3 reels)
1	10	Award Ceremony, 1968 (eighth)
	11-12	Award Ceremony, 1969 (tenth)
10		Award Ceremony, n.d. (4 reels)
11		Award Ceremony, n.d. (6 reels)
1	13	B: General Correspondence, 1956-1966
1	14	Bacher, Robert, 1956-1969
1	15	Beadle, George, 1961-1962
1	16	Becker, Herr, 1955-1956

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1	21	Bohr, Niels, 1957-1963
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1	24	British Embassy: 1956-1961
1	25	Bronk, Detlev, 1955-1969
1	26	Bunche, Ralph, 1955-1970
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1	28	C: General Correspondence, 1955-1971
1	29	Charter and By-laws: 1954-1955
1	30	Chinese Association for the Advancement of Science, 1958-1959
12		Chicago proposal to host 1957 World Atoms for Peace conference
12		Chicago proposal to host 1958 World Atoms for Peace conference
1	31-32	Choate, Hall and Stewart, 1956-1972
1	33	Clippings, 1955-1969
1	34	Cockroft, John, 1956-1962
1	35	Compton, Arthur, 1955-1961
2	44	Crank Letters, 1955-1967
2	45	Culler, Floyd, 1969
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2	52	Eisenhower, Dwight D., 1956-1969
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2	54	Emel'Yanov, Vasilii Semenovich, n.d.
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2	63	Hokanson, Walcott, 1956-1970
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2	65	I: General Correspondence, 1957-1969
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2	67	Interim Report, 1956
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2	87	Medal, Atoms for Peace: 1955-1969
2	88	Mottelson, Ben, 1969
2	89	N: General Corerrespondence, 1956-1969
2	90-91	National Academy of Sciences: National Research Council, 1956-1969
2	92	Nichols, Osgood, 1967-1969

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3	94-95	Organization and Planning Committee Notebook, 1955-1956
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5	262	Zinn, Walter, 1955-1958
6		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, 1959 (4 reels)
		Received in 1988:
7		Presentation of the Atoms for Peace Award to Sir John Cockcroft, April 6, 1961; speakers: George W. Beadle, John Cockcroft, and Norman Ramsey (sound reel tape 7 1/2 ips, 10 1/2 in.)
8		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, presentation, 1963 (4 reels)
9		Award Ceremony, Audiotape, 1967 (3 reels)
10		Award Ceremony, n.d. (4 reels)
11		Award Ceremony, n.d. (6 reels)
12		Photographs