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February 16, 1954

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

I talked this morning with the President about the bill introduced by Congressman Cole to make the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission a member of the National Security Council, telling the President that this was not done with Admiral Strauss' wish or consent.

The President is opposed to the addition of further statutory members to the Council. It is his desire that the number of people at the Council Table and in the Council Chamber be kept to a strict minimum. Further enlargement of Council personnel might lead to the abandonment of the Council as a useful mechanism to the President and the substitution therefor of meetings of advisory groups composed of such persons as the President desires to assemble to give him advice.

After talking with the President and General Persons, I suggested to Admiral Strauss that when I got back from the South after March 1, Admiral Strauss and I (with General Persons, if possible) talk with Congressman Cole about this matter to see if the bill could not be withdrawn or modified in accordance with the views of the Bureau of the Budget.

It has always been the view of the Bureau of the Budget that the statute should be amended to provide a statutory membership of the Council composed of the President and Vice President and such other officials of the Executive Branch as the President may appoint. This view is certainly correct and constitutional.

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ROBERT CUTLER
Special Assistant
to the President

CC: Admiral Lewis Strauss
Major General W. B. Parsons

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