

UNCLASSIFIED TOP SECRET

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October 14, 1955

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Discussion at 261st Meeting of the
National Security Council
Thursday, October 13, 1955

Present at the 261st Council meeting were the Vice President of the United States, presiding; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of Defense; and the Director, Office of Defense Mobilization. Also present were the Secretary of the Treasury; the Attorney General; the Acting Director, Bureau of the Budget; Mr. Harold E. Stassen, Special Assistant to the President; the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission; the Director, U.S. Information Agency; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; the Under Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. Robert Bowie, Assistant Secretary of State; the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director of Central Intelligence; Mr. Dillon Anderson, Special Assistant to the President; Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, Special Assistant to the President; the Deputy Assistant to the President; the White House Staff Secretary; the Executive Secretary, NSC; and the Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC.

There follows a summary of the discussion at the meeting and the main points taken:

1. CIA SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
(NSC Action No. 1379)

Noted and discussed the semi-annual report by the Director of Central Intelligence on the actions taken by the CIA, under NSC 5412/1.

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E.O. 12356, SEC. 3.4(b)	
Agency Case	NSC F 86-690A
NLE Case	80-15821
By	AS NLE Date 12/8/89

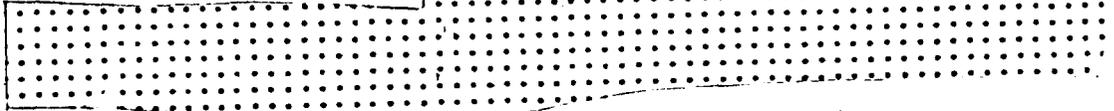
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2. GENEVA CONFERENCE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY

At the outset of his remarks the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission indicated that he had brought with him colored photographs of the highlights of the exhibition at Geneva which he would show to the Council at the end of his statement.

After pointing out that the Geneva Conference on Peaceful Uses had been initiated by the United States at the Bermuda Conference in 1953, and had been "adopted" by the United Nations in 1954, Admiral Strauss said he believed that the success of the Conference had resulted largely from the new climate of opinion which had emerged from the preceding Heads-of-Government Conference in July at Geneva.

Admiral Strauss went on to point out that the Geneva Conference on Peaceful Uses was probably the largest scientific gathering that the world had ever seen and was certainly the largest conference ever sponsored by the United Nations. Eleven hundred ten (1110) scientific papers had been presented during the fourteen days in which the Conference was in session. The U.S. Delegation, consisting of 287 scientists, had been carefully selected not only for scientific competence but also with an eye to the suitability of the members to obtain security clearances. The dropping of [REDACTED] had been necessitated by his inability to secure a "Q" clearance.



While making it clear that the U.S. Delegation had not gone to Geneva in order to win prizes, Admiral Strauss said that our United States exhibit was certainly the largest and most impressive. Next in order was the Russian exhibit which Admiral Strauss found more interesting than the British exhibit. The French, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the Belgians, and Canadians all had exhibits which would be shown in the subsequent photographs.

Admiral Strauss indicated that the development of atomic energy in order to provide power was by all odds the subject of greatest interest and importance at the Conference. The exhibits indicated a wide variety of approaches by the several nations to the problem of providing atomic power. The United States, of course, was in the process of trying to explore all possible approaches to the attainment of atomic power at economically suitable cost. We are building as many different kinds of atomic power plants as our scientists, technicians and engineers can think of. The British, on

the other hand, worried as they are over the prospective loss of many of their sources of conventional power, are putting their money on a single approach to the development of atomic power.

As for the Russians, it was now perfectly clear that they could be described in no sense as technically backward. The Soviet equipment exhibited at the Geneva Conference was, for the most part, mass produced - not in laboratories but in manufacturing plants.

Admiral Strauss said that he would summarize the significance for the United States of the Conference in the following terms:

In the first place, the Conference had provided the United States a handsome dividend in the shape of a victory for our fundamental national policy. The Conference had done much to counter Soviet propaganda that the United States was interested in atomic energy for warlike purposes only. Scientists and visitors from other countries were perfectly astonished to see how true was the reverse of the Soviet charge. They could be counted upon to carry back to their own countries the undoubted evidence of United States progress in the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

Secondly, in the realm of pure science, the Soviets had astonished us by their achievements, notably with the photographs they exhibited of their new cyclotron. While this was a copy of our cyclotron at Berkeley, California, it was twice as big. It must have cost approximately forty million dollars to build and it had required a vast amount of steel and of copper for its construction. Admiral Strauss felt that it was still something of a mystery as to why the Soviets had built it. It could have no military significance and was only useful for developments in the realm of pure basic science.

A third by-product of the Geneva Conference was the creation of a situation in which there were no nations who could be described as "have not" nations with respect to information on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The United States had additionally supplied a number of research reactors.

Lastly, the Conference had clearly revealed that the Soviet scientists were, in the main, young men. This reflects the correctness of our earlier estimates on the extraordinary number of young engineers and scientists being turned out by the Soviet Union. It was also a strong warning to us that we must step up the number of scientists, engineers, and technicians graduating from our own schools. Expressing great concern at the comparatively small number of scientists and engineers being trained in the United States, Admiral Strauss said that the root of the trouble was to be found, not in the universities and institutions of higher learning, but in our high schools. After citing statistics to illustrate the problem, Admiral Strauss said that he had no clear idea of how to solve the problem and that he was not really the man to try. However, he had picked up the ball and would run with it until he could give it to somebody else.

The Vice President inquired of Admiral Strauss as to the reasons for the shrinking in the number of courses in mathematics and the basic sciences in American secondary schools. After citing statistics on this matter, Admiral Strauss said that he would gather these statistics together and present the results to the National Security Council at an early date.

Secretary Wilson said he was inclined to believe that there was too much of the "pursuit of happiness" by young people in our secondary schools. Our young people were allergic to the hard work required by courses in mathematics and the sciences. Governor Stassen was more inclined, he said, to attribute the source of the difficulty to the lack of competent teachers in the scientific field. Teachers of science and potential teachers in this field had been lured into industry by the prospect of much higher wages.

Agreeing with Governor Stassen's point, the Vice President suggested that the problem raised by Admiral Strauss could presumably be placed on the agenda of the White House Conference on Education to be held in December. Mr. Dillon Anderson reminded the Council that a Subcommittee of the National Security Council Planning Board, consisting of representatives of the Department of Defense and of the Office of Defense Mobilization, were engaged in a study of scientific manpower in connection with the Planning Board's review of basic national security policy.

Dr. Flemming pointed out that President Sproul of the University of California had recently been invited to be head of a committee appointed by the President to investigate this problem. Admiral Strauss said he was delighted to have this news and would be more than pleased to give to President Sproul and his committee the task which had fallen upon him. Mr. Allen Dulles emphasized the importance of giving the President's committee a clear idea of the great progress which the Soviet Union had made in producing large numbers of young scientists and engineers.

At the conclusion of his report Admiral Strauss showed colored photographs of the most interesting and significant exhibits at the Conference and paid tribute to the work of Mr. Streibert and his agency for the success of the U.S. effort at the Geneva Conference.

The National Security Council:

Noted and discussed the oral report on the subject by the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission.

3. REPORT BY THE SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT ON DISARMAMENT

Governor Stassen asked Mr. Lay to distribute to the members of the Council a written report on disarmament problems which took the form of a preliminary draft memorandum from Governor Stassen to the Secretary of State on the subject, "The Big-Four Foreign Ministers' Meeting at Geneva in Relationship to the Agenda Item of Disarmament". (A copy of the memorandum is included in the Minutes of this Meeting).

Governor Stassen then stressed that his memorandum report was purely informational in character. It would, accordingly, require no decisions by the National Security Council at this meeting. Under the aegis of the Secretary of State, preparations had been going forward as to how to deal with the disarmament item at the Geneva Conference. The present report was a contribution to these preparations. Meanwhile, said Governor Stassen, the United Nations Subcommittee on Disarmament was in recess. While Governor Stassen stressed the purely informational character of the present report, he said he believed that it might prove necessary to obtain a few decisions or a consensus by the National Security Council on various aspects of the disarmament problem before Secretary Dulles left for the Geneva Foreign Ministers' meeting.

After a brief description of the work of his own staff and of the President's Special Committee on Disarmament Problems, Governor Stassen said that he would summarize briefly the contents of the present report.

The first section of the report constituted an effort to estimate the aims of the U.S.S.R. in relation to the disarmament issue at the Foreign Ministers' meeting. These aims were set forth on Pages 1 and 2 of the memorandum and there seemed to be pretty general agreement among the departmental representatives as to the nature of Soviet aims.

Section II of the memorandum on Pages 3 and 4 set down suggested goals for the United States, the United Kingdom and France on the disarmament item at the Foreign Ministers' meeting. This section, said Governor Stassen, was still under very active consideration although there was approaching agreement at the staff level on its content.

Section III of the memorandum on Pages 5 through 9 consisted of specific suggestions for the position of the Western Big Three in view of the preceding sections on Western goals and on estimated Soviet aims. These specific suggestions all pointed to obtaining the passage of a resolution on disarmament in the United Nations General Assembly. It was obviously in our interest, said Governor Stassen, to seize the initiative in this matter rather than leaving it to the Soviet Union. A preliminary draft of such a United Nations resolution was set forth in Annex I of the memorandum. Governor Stassen then said he would run through this annex briefly and in so doing would touch upon some of the issues which might have to come before the National Security Council for resolution. For example, on Page 2 of the annex, we confronted the serious questions which arose around the issue of the elimination and prohibition of stocks of nuclear weapons. In this area the representatives of the Department of Defense and of the Atomic Energy Commission had raised very serious questions in the course of the drafting of the resolution.

Further questions were bound to come up on this as well as other important issues. Accordingly, Governor Stassen said that he believed that when the Secretary of State went to the Foreign Ministers' Conference, he should have in his brief case a certain number of thoroughly-staffed new positions which he might, if he chose, put forward at the Geneva discussions on disarmament. If the Secretary of State so desired, agreement on these positions could be secured in advance of the meeting. Indeed, the present memorandum offered an instance of an attempt to set forth such new positions for the Secretary of State. An attempt had been made to test whether or not we could induce the Soviets to open the door for acceptance of the full proposal on disarmament made by President Eisenhower at the Geneva Heads-of-Government Conference, by getting their preliminary agreement to a much more modest aerial inspection and exchange of military information in an area of perhaps a hundred or two hundred miles in breadth. This suggestion was designed to rally world public opinion

to his side and to provide the Secretary of State with a negotiating point vis-a-vis the Soviets.

Another suggestion concerned a matter about which the Secretary of State had already expressed great concern. Namely, if things were allowed simply to drift along as they were now doing, it was inevitable that other nations than the three now possessing them, would in due course learn how to make and stockpile atomic weapons. The problem was how to prevent this development and the President's Special Committee had been studying the problem. Was it possible, for example, that we could extend President Eisenhower's inspection proposal beyond the United States and the U.S.S.R. to include all nations potentially capable of manufacturing nuclear weapons? While this problem was being studied, Governor Stassen said that the results of the study had not yet been put down on paper.

In conclusion, Governor Stassen said that this was where the matter now rested. He said that he had brought it before the National Security Council because it had been agreed that in the absence of the President, it was desirable for all the members of the Council to know about and to discuss such matters.

The Vice President inquired of the Secretary of State as to the place on the Geneva Agenda to which the disarmament item had been assigned. Secretary Dulles replied that it was Agenda Item 2, although the third item, that is, increased contacts between the East and the West, would be dealt with by the experts concurrently with the Foreign Ministers deliberations on the first two items on the Geneva Agenda. Secretary Dulles stressed his hope of confining the Conference to a period of not much more than three weeks.

With respect to the draft resolution which had been outlined by Governor Stassen, as well as Governor Stassen's suggestions, Secretary Dulles said it was important for the Council to realize that all these things were still in an embryonic stage as far as we in the State Department are concerned. However, since these matters must soon be discussed by the U.S. authorities with the British and the French, Secretary Dulles said that he would welcome any ideas or suggestions which came from those around the table.

Secretary Wilson commented that he thought rather well of the British suggestion (referred to earlier by Governor Stassen) for the setting up of an international group of scientists to study intensively ways and means of detecting past, present, and future production of fissionable materials and nuclear weapons.

Admiral Strauss said that he took the completely opposite view and hoped that we would do our best to get the British to

call off their proposal. We in the United States, said Admiral Strauss, were extremely apprehensive over the creation of such an international scientific group although we did favor the creation by each nation of a group of its own scientists who would study the difficult question of detecting the production of fissionable materials. Admiral Strauss explained that our worry over such an international group arose from the impossibility of being able to agree to furnish to such an international group of scientists certain information in our possession. On the other hand, of course, we did not want the United States to seem to be placed in the position of being opposed to seeking a means of detecting the past and present production of fissionable materials and of nuclear weapons. As yet, of course, as all of the Council members were aware, our American scientists have been unable to discern any means whatsoever of detecting past production of fissionable materials.

Mr. Nelson Rockefeller warmly endorsed the alternative suggestion of setting up a series of national scientific groups to study the detection of the problem. He believed that public opinion would find this solution just as acceptable as the solution represented by a single international committee. Secretary Dulles thought a solution to the problem might be found along the lines of the study now being conducted to investigate the genetics effects of nuclear fall-out.

Secretary Dulles then explained that there were a good many pros and cons on the issue (outlined by Governor Stassen) of whether or not to try an aerial arms inspection in a quite small area by way of finding an entering wedge to induce Soviet acceptance of the full inspection plan outlined by President Eisenhower at Geneva. On the negative side of the argument for such a small inspection plan was the possibility that if we propose such a plan, the Soviets might willingly accept it because it would enable them to avoid accepting anything more of the President's much more sweeping inspection plan. In short, said Secretary Dulles, he was inclined to doubt whether the President's Geneva proposal was "divisible".

Secretary Dulles then alluded to the immense technical problem raised by the President's Geneva proposal. It was obvious that if we ever arrived at some kind of world-wide system for the inspection and control of armaments and the exchange of blueprints and military information, vast technical problems would be involved. As it seemed to him, continued Secretary Dulles, the President's Geneva proposal on inspection was not really offered so much as a technical proposal or a cure-all as it was a means designed primarily to change the atmosphere of the world. In this respect it resembled the President's earlier "Atoms for Peace" proposal made

to the United Nations. If this were actually the case, it would be rather foolish to cut down the dimensions of the President's Geneva proposal. The President had, in essence, said at Geneva to the Russians, "Come into my house and see for yourself whatever there is in it." If we now follow the suggestion made in the memorandum, we would be saying to the Russians, "Come into my house and see whatever there is in one room in that house". Over and above this argument against accepting such a modification of the President's original proposal, Secretary Dulles pointed out that the President's Geneva offer on inspection had put the Russians on the hook. They were plainly in a quandary. It was not easy either to accept or to reject the President's idea. Certainly, we do not now wish to let them off this hook. While perhaps something like the more modest inspection area might have to be offered to the Russians at some later stage in the disarmament negotiations, it seemed highly doubtful to Secretary Dulles that any such offer should be made while the exchange of correspondence between the President and Premier Bulganin is still going on. At least no such modified offer should be made until the President is in the position of being able clearly to indicate his views.

In reply to Secretary Dulles, Governor Stassen pointed out another possibility. It was at least possible that if the Soviets were induced to try the experiment of arms inspection in a very limited area, far from being able to stop at this point, their acceptance might have the effect of forcing them into ultimate acceptance of the entire widespread inspection program proposed by the President. (An outline of such a small pilot test of aerial inspection and exchange of blueprints is set forth in Annex II of Governor Stassen's memorandum to the Secretary of State)

Thereafter, at the instance of Secretary Wilson, Council discussion centered on the last paragraph of the draft United Nations resolution (Page 3 of Annex I of the draft memorandum). Secretary Wilson noted that this program called for the prompt implementation of the President's proposal on an aerial inspection and exchange of blueprints. Secretary Wilson said that he understood that if the Soviets accepted the President's proposal on aerial inspection, the United States would be willing to accept the Soviet proposal for ground inspection as set forth in their May 10, 1955 restatement. Accordingly, Secretary Wilson wondered why this last paragraph of the United Nations resolution was still confined to acceptance by the Soviets of the President's aerial inspection proposal and indicated nothing about United States readiness to accept the Soviet proposal for ground inspection. Should not the paragraph, asked Secretary Wilson, marry the two proposals?

In reply to Secretary Wilson's point, Secretary Dulles confessed that he was not very happy over this last paragraph in the

proposed United Nations disarmament resolution. It had been added in point of fact as a result of his conference with President Eisenhower at Denver last Tuesday. In further answer to Secretary Wilson, Secretary Dulles emphasized that the Soviet's May 10 proposal for ground inspection was in a sense the price that the United States was willing to pay in order to induce the Soviets to buy the President's entire proposal of July 21, 1955. Therefore, it would be desirable not to indicate in advance our acceptance of the Soviet proposal by including it in the United Nations resolution but instead to await a Soviet request for inclusion of their May 10 proposal and predicate our acceptance of their proposal on Soviet agreement to accept all of the President's July 21 proposal.

Secretary Wilson said that Defense Department authorities thought it desirable to insure ground inspection and in this sense they favored the Soviet proposal.

At this point the Vice President called attention to the lateness of the hour and suggested that the discussion of this whole problem be carried over to next week's meeting of the National Security Council. The other members of the Council agreed with the Vice President and Governor Stassen pointed out that at next week's meeting it might be necessary to solve some of the differences which had emerged in the present discussion.

The Vice President then said that before concluding this morning's discussion of the disarmament item, the Council should hear the views of Admiral Radford.

Admiral Radford stated that unfortunately this was the first time he had seen a copy of the memorandum from Governor Stassen to Secretary Dulles. Governor Stassen interrupted to point out that a representative of Admiral Radford had been present at all meetings of the special committee which had been working on the memorandum.

Admiral Radford stated to the Council that ten years ago he personally had believed in the possibility and practicability of banning all nuclear weapons. He no longer thought so. It was certain that atomic and nuclear weapons would be used eventually in future wars. Moreover, he had believed that the National Security Council itself had in effect agreed that the attempt to ban nuclear weapons was essentially unrealistic. We must, accordingly, be extremely careful not to get ourselves in a maneuver which might be contrary to this consensus.

Secretary Dulles interrupted Admiral Radford to say that of course we were admittedly in something of a dilemma. We have invoked in recent years the inability to devise any sure scientific means of detecting the production of fissionable materials as the chief reason why we can no longer agree to the reduction or banning of nuclear weapons. Now the British have come along and said that, at the very least, we should continue to try to find a scientific means of detecting the production of fissionable materials. If success should attend this effort, the entire U.S. position would be exposed. On the other hand, Secretary Dulles said, he simply did not feel able, from the standpoint of public relations, to stand up and say to the entire world that nuclear weapons are here to stay forever.

Governor Stassen emphasized strongly against either the President or the Secretary of State getting up and saying publicly that nuclear weapons should not be banned. After all, we are gradually bringing the public of the free world along the path of recognizing that in point of fact nuclear bombs cannot be banned, but we should not make a positive declaration to that effect. As evidence of the educational process, Governor Stassen cited the fact that at its Margate Conference, the British Labour Party had refused to endorse a resolution offered by Leftist elements in favor of banning the atomic bomb.

Admiral Radford stated with considerable emphasis that the national security of the United States today depended on these weapons and would continue to depend on these weapons for the indefinite future. He believed that the British and the French also now understand that their national security depends upon the existence of these weapons in the hands of the United States. Accordingly, he agreed with Governor Stassen that we were making progress.

Secretary Wilson said that he could confirm the general accuracy of Admiral Radford's position as a result of the points of view raised at the meeting of the NATO Defense Ministers from which he had just returned.

The National Security Council:

- a. Noted and discussed a preliminary draft of a memorandum to the Secretary of State from the Special Assistant to the President on Disarmament dealing with the agenda item on disarmament for the forthcoming Foreign Ministers' meeting, copies of which were distributed at the meeting.
- b. Agreed to continue discussion on this subject at next week's Council meeting.

