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30 SEP 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,  
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT : Joint Nuclear Energy Intelligence Committee

1. In accordance with your request there is attached hereto outline of background and method of operation of the Joint Nuclear Energy Intelligence Committee.

SIGNED

N. H. WHEELER  
RES. ADMIRAL, USN  
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Orig. & lcc w/encl Outline w/2encls to ES/NSC by hand 9/30/49

DOCUMENT NO. 52  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS   
 DECLASSIFIED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 0  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2011  
AUTH: HR, 78-2  
DATE 3/13/99 REVIEWER:

Encl: 1  
1. Outline re subject committee

OSI:WM/mtw

Distribution: Signer - 1 - w/encl w/o encls  
AD/OSI - 2 " " " " "  
Central Records - 1 - w/encl w/encls (the 60PS)

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ORIGIN AND OPERATION OF THE  
JOINT NUCLEAR ENERGY INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

1. Working level liaison was established between the nuclear energy group of CIA and the scientific staffs of the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Department of the Army in the spring and summer of 1947. This liaison was informal and, since it was based upon exploitation of Special Intelligence, was not widely known.
2. The establishment of what is now the JNEIC was first formally proposed by the Chairman, Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, in a letter dated 7 August 1947 to the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Attorney General. In this letter Senator Hickenlooper requested a combined estimate of the date by which the Soviets might be expected to have completed an atomic bomb and their rate of subsequent production.
3. On 21 August 1947, at a meeting of the Acting Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, it was agreed that the then Central Intelligence Group should coordinate such an interdepartmental study. The Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission was so advised and recommended to the Director of Central Intelligence that such a study be undertaken and offered full assistance. As a result of these actions, State, War, and the AEC had designated representatives by 17 September 1947 and a member of the Navy was working informally with the other members of the committee.
4. On 6 November 1947 the Director of Central Intelligence proposed that the ~~ad hoc~~ committee established to formulate a reply for the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy be formally designated as a permanent Joint Nuclear Energy Intelligence Committee. This proposal, (a copy of which is attached as Enclosure 1), included a statement of the need for such a committee and a detailed statement of functions of the committee.
5. The ultimate constitution of the JNEIC included representation by the CIA, the AEC, and the Departments of State, War, Navy, and the Air Force. The full committee first met to deal with the preparation of a semi-annual estimate of the status of the Soviet atomic bomb project which was completed on 1 July 1948. It has met at approximately two week intervals since that time.
6. For its own purposes, and to clarify the method of operation of the JNEIC, the attached memorandum was prepared and discussed informally by the Committee on 3 May 1949.

DOCUMENT NO. 53

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CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S 2

NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2/11

DATE 2/13/4

REVIEWER:

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