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7 January 1954

The Honorable Lewis Strauss
Chairman, U. S. Atomic Energy Commission
1901 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Admiral Strauss:

I have noted the text of an interesting speech delivered by Commissioner Thomas E. Murray at Marquette University, under date of December 5, 1953, entitled: "Don't Leave Atomic Energy to the Experts". In one section of his speech, Mr. Murray refers to the apparent "failure on the part of the experts to really get across" to the then Chief Executive the full import of the facts with regard to the Soviet atomic program and the Soviet atomic tests prior to 1953.

As I conceive it, this "briefing" responsibility devolves largely upon this Agency, based on a coordination of the intelligence available to us, to your Commission and other intelligence agencies of the Government, as assembled by the JAEIC. I cannot speak personally of the procedures followed with respect to the first Soviet atomic test in 1949 but the record indicates that there was a full and complete briefing of the Chief Executive at this time. I myself worked on the statements issued with respect to the second and third Soviet tests and it is my clear understanding that the Chief Executive was fully briefed on these developments and approved the form of the announcements made to the American public with respect thereto.

It has been the practice, certainly during the last three years since I have been associated with the Agency, to give full briefings to the Chief Executive and to key Government officials with regard to available intelligence on the Soviet atomic program and I have myself briefed the National Security Council on this subject on numerous occasions since I became Director in February of last year.

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I appreciate the interest of the AEC in this matter, and if the Commission feels that there are any deficiencies in the procedures presently followed by this Agency with respect to briefings on the Soviet atomic energy program, I would greatly appreciate it if you would advise me as I am most anxious to see that my responsibilities are fully carried out in this important matter.

Faithfully yours,

~~AWD~~

Allen W. Dulles
Director

AWD/c (rewritten DCI/AWD/leb 7 Jan 54)
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