

SECURITY INFORMATION

29 December 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR:

SUBJECT: Views Concerning Presidential Statement on Rosenbergs

1. In connection with the matter discussed in Admiral Kirk's office on 24 December, the views of [redacted] are as follows:

a. We feel that unless the President is considering commutation of the death penalty no advance statement should be made by the White House concerning the Rosenbergs, because:

(1) Any statement issued prior to execution would indicate to the Communists that presidential clemency is not forthcoming and would thus trigger off a greater flurry of Commie propaganda and other activity;

(2) Presidential office should not be used to engage in defensive counterpropaganda. We should avoid presidential propaganda activity the pattern for which has been set by Communists.

b. If the President does not intend to commute the death sentence, we still recommend that no statement be made. However, if it is deemed necessary to make a pronouncement, then a statement issued immediately prior to the execution and generally along the lines of Attachment A should be sufficient.

2. We reiterate our previous recommendation that all of the pertinent information concerning the Rosenberg case and trial should be given to the world so that world public opinion can judge the gravity of the Rosenbergs' crime. The bulk of Communist charges on the Rosenberg case demonstrates certain sensitivity to Western propaganda aimed at Communist trials of Oatis, Mindzenty, Vogeler, Slansky and others. Rosenberg story must be presented

in such terms

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In such terms as to clearly demonstrate that it was a case involving nothing  
in common with such cases as in 1940, but one which was included in  
an atmosphere of greater or lesser freedom, according to the  
judicial practices of the free world.

SIGNED

attachment: no longer available

Attachments - 2  
With original only

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