

May 29, 1956

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
May 29, 1956

Others present: Admiral Strauss
Colonel Goodpaster

Admiral Strauss proposed to the President the re-appointment of Dr. Libby as AEC Commissioner, and the President indicated approval.

Admiral Strauss next spoke of the atomic peace ship, reporting recent discussions with the Congress. He said he told them that the Soviets, the British, and probably the Swedes, are at work on atomic powered ships. He thinks the Administration can get legislation for a ship, but it will have to be a merchant ship, not a "showboat" (as the Congressmen term it). If legislation for a merchant ship is passed, it will be possible to get started on the hull and the reactor, and go back again next year to try to get authority to place exhibits in it. The President indicated agreement to Admiral Strauss trying to carry the matter as far as he can on this basis.

Admiral Strauss suggested that the President consider including in any major speech he makes at Panama an offer to send a team of experts to each country to make a survey and report regarding use of atomic technology for power, and education in atomic science. The President said he foresaw no opportunity for a major speech in Panama, but thanked him for the suggestion.

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MR 80-111 #1
By DJH Date 2/9/81

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- 2 -

Admiral Strauss next referred to reports that the Soviets are ahead of us in atomic power. He said they are not true. While the Soviets will have an accelerator about two years from now larger than any we will have at that time, we will have one about three years from now larger than theirs. He added that we have about 800,000 kws. of atomic electric capacity in prospect. He sees no reason for accepting recent proposals for a \$1 billion public program.

He asked the President whether he had considered the appointment of a bi-partisan committee to report in ninety days on the various questions that are now causing such turbulence in the Department of Defense. The President said that while he found such committees to be of great value, the Congress tended to insist on making its own study of every subject.

The President concluded by saying that we are going to be pushed hard as to how long we continue to carry out atomic tests. He has been thinking of putting it on the basis "as long as the Soviets do." Admiral Strauss said he would suggest putting it on the basis of testing whenever an idea has been developed which is ready for test.


A. J. Goodpaster
Colonel, CE, U S Army

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