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13
14 September 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Thompson Committee Proceedings

This afternoon at 1500 hours I was called by Mr. Garthoff, State Department, and advised that there would be an emergency session of the Thompson Committee at 1700 hours in Mr. Thompson's office. I attempted to draw out Mr. Garthoff regarding the reasons for the meeting. He stated that the Defense Department and particularly the Joint Chiefs of Staff had objected strongly to the proposed DCI briefing. I immediately called Marshall Sanders to advise him of this meeting and found that he had not heard about it. As a matter of fact, Mr. McNaughton and Mr. Rowen were both out of their offices so it was clear that ASD/ISA had not gotten the word. Marshall Sanders ran some quick checks with acquaintances of his in the JCS, and these calls, together with some I made, began to give us a feeling for certain of today's events.

It appears that the Joint Chiefs of Staff became aware sometime today (and probably this morning) of Mr. McCone's briefing. It appears that the DIA became aware of the briefing a little later -- possibly this afternoon. By late afternoon General Carroll had in hand a memo signed by General Wheeler stating that General Wheeler viewed the DCI briefing with grave concern and believed the only justification for giving any portion of it would be to consolidate our position on Cuban aircraft overflight.

It is interesting to compare these developments with the notes which Colonel Sanders had prepared for Mr. Rowen (who represented Mr. McNaughton at the 14 September meeting) and noticed Sanders' recommendation that the JCS and DIA should be encouraged to review the DCI briefing (Atch 1). It is noteworthy that Mr. Rowen's memo for the Secretary of Defense (see Atch 2) failed to "call the shots." The last paragraph points out that Mr. Rowen (or Mr. McNaughton) had no objection to Mr. McCone giving the briefing as proposed. During the day Mr. McNamara developed strong objections to this briefing. I ran across numerous references to a luncheon meeting which appears to have been attended by Messrs McNamara, McCone,

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Bundy, and McNaughton. It also appears that Mr. McNamara came away from this luncheon feeling that he had killed the entire briefing operation, because when Mr. McNaughton was advised at about 1600 hours of the emergency session of the Thompson Committee, his first comment was "I guess we didn't kill the briefing after all."

In any event, the Thompson Committee meeting was held, with Mr. McNaughton and I representing the DOD and Mr. Ray Cline represented the CIA. Mr. McNaughton took over the meeting from its very beginning and never let go. General Carroll, who was present as Mr. McNaughton's guest, asked the purpose of the McCone briefing. Ambassador Thompson gave these four purposes:

- a. To gain acceptance of satellite overflight as a principle;
- b. To disclose Russian COSMOS activity;
- c. To explain our Cuban satellite aircraft problem; and
- d. To show the capabilities of satellites with regard to arms control.

Mr. McNaughton stated that the Secretary of Defense is willing to go along with the Cuban reason. The other reasons may be right and proper, but are not acceptable for employment at this time. The Secretary of Defense also desires that this briefing go to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. At this point Mr. Cline attempted to discuss the paper on the basis of broad policy and principles. Mr. McNaughton interrupted him to say "I think I can salvage a great deal of this briefing if you will just bear with me a few minutes. Shall we turn to page 1?"

Mr. McNaughton proposed very few changes in Part I. He was strongly opposed to Part II, asking "How does Part II contribute to the Cuban rationale?" Mr. Cline stated that Part II was a very subtle attempt to show the weaknesses of satellite reconnaissance and would be extremely useful in supporting the McNamara position. Mr. McNaughton said he had not had a chance to read it closely and asked General Carroll what he thought. General Carroll also said that he really had not had time to read Part II. I told them that I had read it

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and I could not find a single example of satellite "weakness;" rather, I found it a strong statement of satellite accomplishments. Mr. McNaughton took up the cry, and said that Part II should be omitted. Several people expressed the desire to review the photographs that were with all parts. After looking at these photographs Mr. McNaughton suggested that Mr. Cline select three photographs from Part II, identify them to McNaughton, and we would build those three exhibits into Part I, still cancelling Part II.

At this point, Mr. McCone entered the meeting room. Mr. McNaughton briefed Mr. McCone on "the murderous job I am doing on your presentation," and told him the reasons lying behind his actions, stating that he believed everything he was doing was in consonance with the decisions made at the "luncheon." Mr. McCone listened to the continuing discussion in silence for about 10 minutes, then in a series of mild exchanges with Mr. McNaughton he made the following points:

1. He couldn't understand why the Department of Defense was so exercised over the briefing material. The Thompson Committee had been in session for months, McNaughton was a principal on the committee, so how could he be surprised over the purpose and content of the briefing paper? Mr. McNaughton countered by stating that he had not attended the meetings regularly, that the CIA paper was an exact about-face from the position the Agency had taken at earlier meetings regarding disclosure, that he was perfectly willing to take the blame for any misunderstanding with the OSD, if it were indeed his fault, and he intended to start an investigation the following day as to why he had never heard of the paper or Mr. McCone's trip until Monday, 14 September.

2. Mr. McCone expressed his disagreement with the theme of Cuba as a dominant reason for the briefing, stating that if Cuba were the only reason for going to Europe he would handle the matter by letter or let General Wheeler give the briefing. Mr. McNaughton replied that there was indeed some question that any briefing should be given at all and he felt his position was to develop a paper acceptable to both sides if possible. He stated he was not at all sure how the Joint Chiefs of Staff would react to the paper.

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3. Mr. McCone then pointed out he had worked out this entire briefing arrangement with the President and with Mr. Rusk, and had had one of his staff members produce documents showing presidential concurrence as of the 23rd or 24th of August. Mr. McNaughton turned to Ambassador Thompson and asked whether State had known about these arrangements. Mr. Thompson's answer was not clear. Shortly after this exchange, Mr. McCone left the room and called out, one at a time, Ambassador Thompson, then McNaughton, then General Carroll and Mr. Keeney. I do not know the subject of this rump session, but speculate that it had to do with a threat on Mr. McCone's part to cancel the planned trip.

Upon reassembling the group, McNaughton raised the point that we should now consider what should be briefed to the North Atlantic Council. First, should there be a briefing; second, if there were a briefing, should we show pictures? (We have never shown pictures to the NAC.) At this point I raised the general problem

photographs throughout the briefing. We have never shown

General Carroll came in

against showing any pictures

Mr. McNaughton then asked Ambassador Thompson the effect of cancelling the NAC briefing. Mr. Thompson replied that this was the first briefing scheduled for Mr. McCone, the invitations had already been given out and it would be most embarrassing to attempt to cancel. Mr. McNaughton stated that it was his recommendation that Mr. McCone restrict his NAC briefing to Section 3 of the draft script. This is the section dealing exclusively with the Soviet program. Ambassador Thompson said he believed "we can get away with this approach." At this point the meeting broke up with Mr. McNaughton advising the CIA that the Joint Chiefs of Staff would require the Presentation Board's presence for deliberations on 16 September. He also advised

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the group that he would personally rewrite the CIA draft following the discussions of the afternoon.

Attachment 3 is the McNaughton personal rewrite. Attachment 4 is the hard copy produced during the night of 15 September at 0100 hrs on 16 September. We made arrangements for [redacted] of the SAO to deliver copies as follows:

1 Copy	Mr. McNamara	0705
1 Copy	Mr. Vance	0710
1 Copy	Mr. McNaughton	0715
10 Copies	General Carroll	0720

Mr. McNaughton, upon returning to the Pentagon, showed a good deal of interest in trying to find out how he had been made "the scape-goat," as he put it, for this entire operation. He did not seem angry about the turn of events. As a matter of fact, in a private conversation with Mr. Garthoff, he became convinced that even Garthoff did not know about the DCI briefing text until Monday, 14 September. It is my judgment that a number of people knew that Mr. McCone was going to go to Europe and intended to give briefings to the NAC and/or Heads of State. I raised this fact in our own staff meetings as early as 6 August, when I said "McCone met with Mr. Rusk last Friday and turned off the Thompson Committee's work. If bilaterals are required, he and Mrs. McCone will be going to Europe in September and will handle them." I reported the same thing to Dr. McMillan on/about the same date. I believe that the confusion arises from the fact that everyone presumed that the briefing material which Mr. McCone would use would be that developed by the Thompson Committee. The existence of a complete separate CIA briefing paper came as a great surprise and its extraordinarily liberal content was an even greater surprise.

I think it is also important to recognize that the Thompson Committee was never permitted to do its job. Its job is to prepare a paper, following certain guide lines, and to submit that paper to the principals (Rusk, McCone, McNamara, Bundy, etc.). The committee's progress in this direction has been pre-empted repeatedly by Mr. McCone's interventions with the Secretary of State.

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Finally, I believe that the Thompson Committee was enervated in large part by the desire of a number of its members to get some sort of disclosure started some way. I consider this to be the position of Dr. Scoville, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Rowen. In the ~~(S)~~ NRO, we have counted too heavily on the CIA's aggressive intervention to prevent disclosure (a prediction which I have always made with great confidence). The actions of the last month convinced me that the CIA, at the summit, is more interested in who makes the disclosure than in the preservation of security per se.


P. WORTHMAN
Colonel, USAF

4 Attachments
As indicated

For attachments see Tab 147 in BPLo Chron

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