

January 13, 1961

MEMORANDUM

**SUBJECT:** Discussion at the 474th Meeting  
of the National Security Council,  
Thursday, January 12, 1961

Present at the 474th NSC Meeting were the President of the United States, presiding; the Vice President of the United States; the Secretary of State; the Secretary of Defense; and the Director, Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization. Also present at the Meeting and participating in the Council actions below were the Secretary of the Treasury; the Director, Bureau of the Budget; the Attorney General and the Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission (Items 2, 4 and 5); and the Administrator, Housing and Home Finance Agency (Item 5). Also attending the Meeting were the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Director of Central Intelligence; the Acting Director, U.S. Information Agency; the Assistant to the President; the Special Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs, for Science and Technology, and for Foreign Economic Policy; Assistant Secretary of State Gerard C. Smith; Assistant Secretary of Defense John N. Irwin, II; Mr. Robert Amory, CIA; the White House Staff Secretary; the Assistant White House Staff Secretary; the Naval Aide to the President; the Executive Secretary, NSC; and the Deputy Executive Secretary, NSC.

There follows a summary of the discussion at the Meeting and the main points taken.

1. SCOPE OF OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY OF THE POLARIS PROGRAM  
(Memo for Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs from Secretary of Defense, same subject, dated January 10, 1961)

Mr. Gray introduced this subject to the Council. (A copy of Mr. Gray's Briefing Note is filed in the Minutes of the Meeting and another copy is attached to this Memorandum).

Secretary Gates remarked that this was a controversial subject on which the Joint Chiefs of Staff had submitted "split papers". Some time ago a program involving the installation of POLARIS missiles on some six to eight cruisers had been evaluated in the Department of Defense. According to the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group (WSEG) studies, from the standpoint of cost, effectiveness and other

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Eisenhower: Papers, 1953-61  
(Ann Whitman file)

Recommendation 34 which would require that military agencies intelligence instructions to components of unified commands be transmitted through the JCS. Mr. Dulles said he concurred in this recommendation, subject to the proviso that it did not include NSA communications to the service cryptographic agencies in the field. General Lemnitzer said this recommendation involved a problem because of the vast volume of requirements in the technical intelligence field. The JCS were not organized for transmission of this vast volume of requirements. He felt there must be some middle ground; perhaps broad operational requirements as distinct from technical requirements could be transmitted through the JCS. The President pointed out that the recommendation referred to "instructions". Mr. Dulles suggested that the recommendation be amended to indicate that instructions be transmitted through the JCS or as the JCS may direct. General Lemnitzer and Secretary Gates and the President agreed with Mr. Dulles' suggestion.

Mr. Gray next took up Recommendation 37 which would continue the responsibility of CIA stations abroad to coordinate clandestine activities but would relieve CIA case officers of the authority to veto proposed clandestine operations of another agency. Mr. Dulles said he believed this recommendation unnecessary and distinguished between the final decision to approve and the final decision to veto. He said if a military service wishes to appeal the veto of a CIA case officer, the matter would be decided in Washington by the Director of Central Intelligence and the Chief of the Military Intelligence Service. He pointed out also that if a field commander considers an operation essential to the security of his command, he can go ahead with the operation pending Washington's decision regardless of the objection of the CIA case officer in the field. General Lemnitzer said the JCS agreed with this recommendation. Mr. Dulles said he had no further objection to the recommendation.

Mr. Gray then turned to a category of recommendations, two in number, on which there is disagreement but with respect to which the DCI recommends a decision at this time. The first recommendation in this category was No. 16 which called for the issuance of a new NSCID No. 8 establishing a National Photographic Intelligence Center. Mr. Gray pointed out that the Secretary of Defense and the DCI were in disagreement on this recommendation, each feeling that his agency should have responsibility for administering the proposed Center. General Lemnitzer believed the Center should operate under the general direction of the Defense Department because the vast amount of the in-put would be produced by the Military Services. Moreover, the Military Services would

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be required to provide <sup>training</sup> for and would be the principal customers of the Center, which would be especially important in time of war. He recognized the need of other agencies for photographic intelligence and such intelligence would be made available. He gave assurance that the Center would not be removed from Washington if it were placed under the Department of Defense. Vast quantities of photographic intelligence were now being acquired. No photographic center was available at the present time and the Joint Chiefs of Staff wished to avoid duplicate centers. The Chiefs feel that the center could most effectively be operated by the Department of Defense with the participation of CIA. Secretary Gates added that Mr. Dulles had agreed that the Center should be operated by Defense in time of war but he (Mr. Gates) felt the need of continuity in the quick transition from peace to war which might occur in the future. This problem was not one of intelligence interpretation but was one of management. Every user agency could interpret the intelligence. Secretary Gates added that the existing Center would have to be expanded in the near future.

Mr. Dulles said some misinterpretation appeared to exist on this subject. The present photographic Center was a joint enterprise consisting of 140 CIA officials, 100 Army officers, and a small but competent Navy contingent of 10 and 7-15 Air Force officers. The Center had been a joint operation for five years and had handled mostly U-2 photography under the management of CIA. The President asked whether the Defense suggestion was that the Center be under J-2. General Lemnitzer replied, no, under the Department of Defense. Secretary Gates added, directly under the Secretary of Defense just as NSA is. The President thought the three Military Services should <sup>not</sup> be separately involved in this Center. Since the basic danger to be detected by the Center is military, he believed it would be satisfactory for the military to give central direction to the operation.

Mr. Dulles said the information obtained through this Center was chiefly military only in the targeting field. Photographic intelligence had tremendous political significance and was a matter of common concern to the Washington agencies. The matter was one which fell within the field CIA was established to coordinate. In its five years of operation the Center had developed a group of career officials who intended to make photographic intelligence their life work. If the Center were placed in the hands of the military, rotation of personnel would be the principle followed, if past practice is any guide. The President felt rotation would be fatal to an operation of this kind. Secretary Gates said that

if the Center were placed under Defense, a career staff would be retained and developed. Mr. Dulles said abandonment of rotation was a new idea for the military. He added that the Center had been operated for five years without a leak. Preliminary analysis of photography is made by the Center and information is then disseminated to user agencies. Some of this information is vital to the Department of State. Mr. Dulles felt it would be very damaging to morale to disrupt this going concern at the present time. The President said he would like to inquire into the time element. While some of the information coming from the Center might be vital to the Department of State, he wondered whether it was not the military rather than the State Department which had an instant need for the information. Mr. Dulles said the information developed by the Center was important to the military but was also important to other agencies such as State because of its effect on policy. The President said the information was important but need not reach State as soon as it reached the military. The information might be needed in a matter of seconds by the military.

Secretary Gates said the Center would be considerably expanded in the future and the operation would be different from the U-2 operation. The President believed that the Center must be operated by an expert career staff. This was a question of management which, perhaps, should be studied before being decided so quickly. If he had to decide at the present time, however, he would say, since the present Center is doing well, let it alone except for its enlargement. He understood that the Department of Defense and the JCS had no complaints about the operation of the Center.

Mr. Stans said one difficulty was that the Air Force was establishing its own Center. Secretary Herter said he understood that the film was processed by the Air Force before it went to the Center. Mr. Dulles said this understanding was erroneous. The film is developed by a private company, which has the greatest competence in this field. This company has been developing this film for five years in the greatest secrecy. The film goes to a special branch of the company and is then flown to Washington. The Air Force gets the film at the same time as the Center.

The President said there should be only one Center and that no Service should establish a separate center. Matters of this kind were placed under CIA by the National Security Act because of their common usefulness. Secretary Gates said Mr. Stans was correct in his statement that the Air Force intended to have its own center. When great masses of photographic data were involved,

there was a question of what should be looked at first and how soon. Mr. Gray said he felt the discussion was getting on to very sensitive grounds. The issue was whether there should be a single center or not. The President said there must be a single photographic center. Since CIA was the principal user and collector, he believed the center should be under CIA management as a principle of organization even though the time element still bothered him.

On being called on by the President, Dr. Kistiakowsky said that the existing photographic Center under CIA provided copies of its material without delay to all Services which concentrated on tactical intelligence. The Center does not retain the matter until it makes an exhaustive analysis; it passes it on immediately. Dr. Kistiakowsky felt the existing Center was a revolution in photographic techniques. In a year we would be able to obtain as much information from photographs taken 200 miles above the earth as we were able to get from our best reconnaissance plane in World War II. Operation of the Center required expertise. CIA had taken the lead in managing and developing this Center in the past. Dr. Kistiakowsky felt it would result in delay and loss of progress to disturb the Center at the present time. From the technical point of view, he would much prefer an expansion of the present Center to a transfer of the Center away from CIA management.

Mr. Stans raised the possibility of joint CIA/DOD management. The President said he disliked divided responsibility. He believed Defense had not shown any unhappiness with the existing Center. While he knew how important the time element was, he believed the present Center should be kept under CIA management and expanded. The DOD should state its requirements for photographic intelligence. There should be a single center and no Service should be allowed to set up its own center. Mr. Dulles pointed out that the draft NSCID No. 8 provided that the Director of the Center would be chosen by agreement between the DCI and the Secretary of Defense.

Mr. Gray then turned to Recommendation 29 which would provide the DCI with a Coordinating Staff. The sole dissent on this recommendation was that of the Secretary of Defense who feels that the DCI should be separated from the CIA without further delay. Mr. Gray also mentioned the views of the Hull Board on this matter (bottom of Page 3 of the Briefing Note). Secretary Gates said the Defense view mentioned by Mr. Gray was the view of the Defense representative on the Joint Study Group. He (Mr. Gates) did not feel that he should comment on the organization of CIA; accordingly, he would take no strong position on this recommendation. The President believed the