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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY
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MEMORANDUM

MAR 18 1954

To: The Under Secretary
Via: S/S
Subject: Soviet Manual on Conduct of Atomic Combat Operations

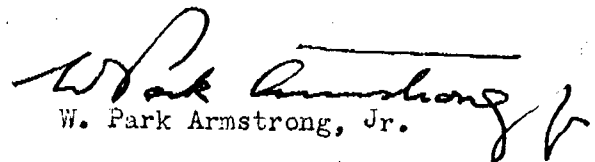
Attached for your information is a CIA report describing a Soviet "Manual on the Organization and Conduct of Combat Operations under Conditions in which Atomic Weapons are Employed", issued by the USSR Ministry of Defense in 1953. The Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee (JAEIC) is preparing an evaluation of the report and developing further questions to be put to the source, about whom I can give you some additional information orally.

By way of interim comment, it seems quite likely that the Russians have issued a field manual on this subject. This appears to be confirmed by a report from a recent defector that his regiment in Austria received such a manual last November. The content of the manual is something else again. It is certainly a provocative report and much of the information which it contains is quite plausible. On the other hand, some of the scientific information, notably the section on radiological warfare, does not make scientific sense. This may, however, result from distortions which have developed in the course of transmission--the information was obtained through a clandestine operation--and it may be possible to clarify the questionable points through further questions to the source. Until this has been done, we do not believe that any conclusions should be drawn with respect to Soviet progress in the development of atomic weapons.

Mr. Dulles circulated the report in executive session after the IAC meeting this week and asked that it be given limited distribution, although a brief summary had previously been circulated fairly widely. Besides Mr. Arneson and yourself, I would propose to show the report only to Messrs. Murphy, MacArthur, Bowie, Merchant, Bonbright and Barbour.

Concurrence:

S/AFM Mr. Arneson


W. Park Armstrong, Jr.

Attachment:

As stated.

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