

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
MEMORANDUM

2 August 1946.

MEMO FOR: Gen. Vandenberg.

Attached is your copy of
the memo to the Secretary,
which was given to him yesterday.

*16 Aug 46
Our proposed
NIA #6 follows this
general talked to
about this. I have
Wright*

[Redacted]

25X1

25X1

[Redacted]

25X1

SECRET

1 August 1946.

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of War.

SUBJECT: Nuclear Intelligence.

There is need to re-evaluate the intelligence aspects of the Manhattan Engineering District, particularly in the light of the establishment of a National Intelligence Authority, and there is need for a firm intramilitary understanding before the enactment of control legislation on nuclear fission.

It would seem to me that our War Department Director of Intelligence, ONI, and the State Department should not be proscribed from active pursuit of intelligence leads in the field of nuclear fission, whether the information be of importance for military or civilian purposes. Not only should these agencies be free to pick up such intelligence in the normal course of their activities, but they should be directed to pursue such intelligence.

There is at the moment no field of foreign intelligence of more vital importance to our national security than that of nuclear developments. The intense foreign activity in this field, both for military and industrial purposes, is one which we must monitor with all the resources which we can muster. In order most effectively to marshal our intelligence resources for this task, there is need of competent and authoritative coordination between the various agencies. While the over-all responsibility for this task is vested, by Presidential directive, in the Director of Central Intelligence, who is charged with the "correlation and evaluation of intelligence relating to national security", the various national intelligence agencies, including those of the War, State and Navy Departments, should be most alert to those aspects of this problem falling in their spheres.

I understand the Manhattan Engineering District holds that a verbal directive from the President prohibits it from giving any information or intelligence on foreign activities in the field of nuclear fission to any outside agency, as for example, the Joint Intelligence Committee, the Director of Intelligence, or the Director of Central Intelligence. There has been under consideration for several months a recommendation to you from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS 1664 and JCS 1664/1) that you recommend to the President that he issue the following directive to the Director, Manhattan Engineering District:

SECRET

"1. I desire that you make available to the Joint Chiefs of Staff all intelligence and information relating to the capabilities and intentions of nations other than the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada regarding atomic warfare. I further desire that the Manhattan Engineering District assist the intelligence agency of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the fullest extent in the latter's evaluation of the capabilities and intentions of those nations.

"2. The arrangements for implementing this directive should be made directly with the Joint Intelligence Committee of the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

I take it that, because the officers of the Manhattan Engineering District state that the President's verbal directive gives complete authority in these matters to General Groves, it is felt that the only relief could come from Presidential directive. On the other hand, I understand from my recent conversation with you that you are able to direct such action without recourse to the President. If my understanding is correct, this course would certainly save valuable time and much unnecessary paper work.

It may interest you to know that this proposed directive has already had the approval of Admirals Nimitz and Leahy, and is presently under discussion in the War Department, preparatory to consideration by the Chief of Staff. It seems to me that not only is it highly desirable that you issue the above directive, or its equivalent, but also that it should be made clear through appropriate channels that our various normal intelligence agencies should be free to pick up nuclear fission intelligence, I have in mind foreign intelligence, exclusive of the United Kingdom and Canada.

This would not bar the Manhattan Engineering District from having its own intelligence agency in much the same way as the technical services have their own technical intelligence agencies, however it would serve to coordinate intelligence operations in this field by subjecting them to proper over-all administrative control. Without some such definite interrelationship the position of the Director of Central Intelligence, for example, is ambiguous.

For instance, in the NIA Directive No. 1 the Director of Central Intelligence operates in accordance with the following instructions:

* * * * *

"5. Such intelligence received by the intelligence agencies of your Departments as may be designated by the National Intelligence Authority shall be freely available to the Director of Central Intelligence for correlation, evaluation or dissemination. To the extent approved by the National Intelligence

SECRET

SECRET

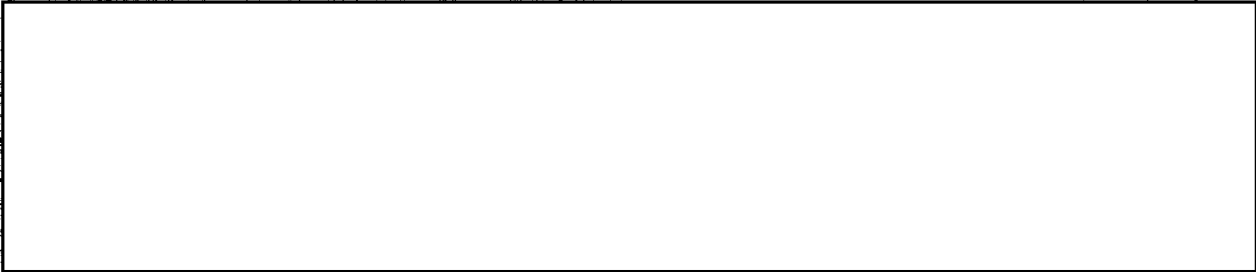
- 3 -

Authority, the operations of said intelligence agencies shall be open to inspection by the Director of Central Intelligence in connection with planning functions.

* * * * *

"8. Within the scope of existing law and Presidential directives, other departments and agencies of the executive branch of the Federal Government shall furnish such intelligence information relating to the national security as is in their possession, and as the Director of Central Intelligence may from time to time request pursuant to regulations of the National Intelligence Authority."

It would seem to me there should likewise be explicit instructions to the Manhattan Engineering District to make foreign intelligence on nuclear fission available to the Director of Central Intelligence in the same way that he is to have access to any other foreign intelligence. ✓



25X1

Only through some such clear understanding and express authority can the Central Intelligence Group be expected to give this country the assurance that the intelligence coverage is continuous and complete at all times. This responsibility surely can not be placed in the hands of the Manhattan Engineering District, as they deal with but one specialized area of intelligence. After all, competent evaluation of intelligence depends on broad familiarity with foreign intelligence, which must include all fields.

I am here mainly concerned with the foreign intelligence aspect of the field represented by Manhattan Engineering District, but there is a further aspect involving domestic information which is most germane to the general problem of national security. While I shall attempt to delineate this aspect in terms of the Manhattan project, it will be seen that it will apply with equal force to any military plans or developments affecting our security. ✓

Manifestly, information on our own most recent developments of techniques and war devices depending on nuclear fission should be confined to the minimum number of individuals consistent with effective War Department functioning. But among these should be included, as individuals, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Director of

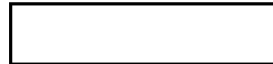
SECRET

SECRET

- 4 -

Intelligence, the Director of Plans and Operations, and the Director of Research and Development. Each of these individuals must have access to such information on our own developments as is requisite to carrying out their respective responsibilities. Thus, those responsible for intelligence should have access to such Manhattan facts as may have a bearing on their effectual evaluation of foreign intelligence in this field. The Director of Plans and Operations should have access to such information on our own nuclear developments as are relevant to strategic planning, to logistics, and to operational use. Corresponding considerations apply to the Director of Research and Development, with respect to his responsibility for directing our developmental efforts; either he is or he is not responsible for the over-all direction of our research program!

In each of these cases there is the difficult, but not insolvable, problem of deciding just how much each of these individuals must know in order to carry out their responsibilities, and of the extent to which they may call in experts from their own shops in making use of this information. Any case in which these decisions can not be arrived at by mutual give-and-take can and should be resolved by the Chief of Staff or, if necessary, by the Secretary of War.



25X1

SECRET