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Box 2, Folder 1 NSEC 176B/1

January 9, 1962

MEMORANDUM OF BRIEFING OF SENATORS FOLLOWING PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S BREAKFAST ON MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 1962.

McCone led off the briefings and there were the following subjects, following the attached briefing papers which he had revised prior to meeting, and in the briefings DCI followed the revisions indicated in ink on the attached memoranda.

The subjects were:

1. Cuba and the military build-up in Cuba.
2. Vietnam.
3. Soviet nuclear ICBM and MRBM capabilities, (a) the comments on recent Soviet weapons tests; (b) summary of the Middle East situation as outlined in the memorandum prepared for the Kennedy briefing, and added comments similar to those included in the memorandum of the Kennedy briefing.

There followed briefings by Secretary McNamara on the defense budget, General Lemnitzer on the South Vietnam planning, Secretary Rusk on Laotian negotiations and the Thompson-Gromyko talks, and Mr. Robertson of the White House staff on the proposed tariff and trade legislation.

There were no questions except a few directed to the President himself. The DCI was not involved in the answering of any questions, however, statements in his briefing were repeatedly referred to by both the Senators in their questions and the President in his replies.

*John*

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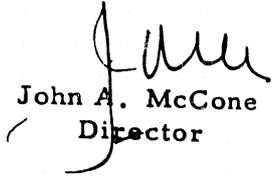
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In connection with nuclear testing, the President explained his plans for preparing to proceed with atmospheric testing and emphasized decision had not been made, and would not be made until mid-March because preparations for testing would not be completed until 1 April. He did state, however, that he felt no persuasive argument had been presented for further atmospheric testing except for the purpose of testing weapons systems and ballistic missile systems, and environmental and effects testing. The President seemed to draw a sharp line between tests of this type and those conducted for further improvement in the efficiency, yield, weight, etc., of weapons. He specifically stated that he was not impressed with the need for an improvement in the weight yield ratio or an increase in the yield and constant weight, etc.

  
John A. McCone  
Director

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LIST OF PERSONS ATTENDING CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING ON  
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 1962.

The President  
The Vice President  
Senator Carl Hayden  
Senator Mike Mansfield  
Senator Everett Dirksen  
Senator John W. Fulbright  
Senator Hubert Humphrey  
Senator Leverett Saltonstall  
Senator George Smathers  
Representative John W. McCormack  
Representative Carl Albert  
Representative Leslie Arends  
Representative John W. Byrnes  
Representative Charles Halleck  
Dr. Thomas E. Morgan (Representative)  
Representative Francis E. Walter  
Mr. O'Brien of the White House Staff  
Secretary McNamara  
Mr. John A. McCone  
Mr. Howard C. Peterson of the White House Staff  
General Lemnitzer  
Secretary Rusk

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NSEC 176B/4  
8 January 1962

SOVIET LONG-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES

I. New information in the past year, providing a much firmer base for estimates on Soviet long-range ballistic missiles, has caused a sharp downward revision in our estimate of present Soviet ICBM strength but strongly supports our estimate of medium range missile strength.

II. We now estimate that the present Soviet ICBM strength is in the range of <sup>some</sup> ~~10 to~~ 25 <sup>operational ICBMs on</sup> launchers from which <sup>new</sup> missiles can be fired against the US, and that ~~this force level will not~~ <sup>The</sup> increase <sup>will be controlled by site construction</sup> markedly during the months immediately ahead. (US Air Force Intelligence, however, estimates the present number of Soviet ICBM launchers at about 75.)

III. The present ~~low~~ ICBM force level probably results chiefly from a Soviet decision to deploy only a small force of the cumbersome, first generation ICBMs, and to press the development of a second generation system. ~~Soviet ICBM strength will probably not increase substantially until the new missile is ready for operational use, probably within the next few months.~~ (IV)

A. ~~This new missile~~ <sup>ICBM's second generation ICBM was</sup> intensively test-fired during 1961 <sup>51 - 1961 vs 11 to 20 per year about 50, 40, 60.</sup> the ~~latter half of 1961~~ (including several firings to about 6,500 n.m.), <sup>The second generation ICBM (about 20 firings)</sup> is believed to be smaller than the first and could have a launch weight of about 300,000 pounds. Based on the launch pads at the test range, it appears that the new missile is launched from a relatively simple flat pad, with missile assembly and checkout facilities nearby.

and will not be significant

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~~B. A third type of ballistic booster also was test-fired at Tyuratam in 1961. The purpose and characteristics of this booster have not as yet been determined, but it does not appear to be as far along in its test program as the second generation ICBM.~~

However, a little later,  
IV. After the second generation ICBM becomes operational we anticipate that the number of operational ICBM launchers will begin to increase significantly, and in mid 1963 will be about 75 to 125 (US Air Force Intelligence estimates about 250).

V. We also estimate that the USSR now has about 250 to 300 operational launchers equipped with 700 and 1,100 n.m. ballistic missiles.

A. Most of these are in western USSR, within range of NATO targets in Europe; others are in southern USSR and in the Soviet Far East.

B. In addition, the USSR will probably have a 2,500 n.m. system ready for operational use by early 1962.

C. The USSR's combined strength in these <sup>Medium range</sup> missile categories will probably reach 350 to 450 operational launchers in the 1962-1963 period, and then level off.

VI. Soviet ICBM and MRBM launchers probably have sufficient missiles to provide a reload capability and to fire additional missiles after a period of some hours, assuming that the launching facilities are not damaged by accident or attack.

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## SOVIET NUCLEAR TESTING

I. The 1961 Soviet nuclear test series <sup>during which</sup> (45 tests detected) <sup>were</sup> proof-tested complete weapons systems, advanced Soviet understanding of thermonuclear weapons technology, and contributed vital weapons effects knowledge. Soviet thermonuclear weapon technology, in particular, appears sophisticated, advanced, and different from that of the West. The 1961 series will permit the Soviets to fabricate and stockpile, during the next year or so, new weapons of higher yields in the weight classes presently available.

II. The weapons systems tests probably included short- or medium-range ground-launched and short-range submarine-launched ballistic missiles with yields up to 3 MT. ~~In most cases the devices in the systems tests were representative of 1958 Soviet weapons technology, but one systems test used a device similar to one of the most advanced developmental devices tested earlier in the 1961 series.~~

III. Weapons effects tests were apparently conducted under ground, under water, and at altitudes up to 160 n.m. Those at high altitudes will contribute valuable effects information for the Soviet anti-ballistic missile program.

A. <sup>In two tests on Oct</sup> ~~In the 21 and 27 October tests,~~ the nuclear devices were carried aloft by surface-to-surface missiles launched from Kapustin Yar and detonated at altitudes of <sup>90</sup> 160 and <sup>160</sup> 80 n.m., ~~re-~~ spectively. In both cases, at a time appropriate for interception

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an anti-missile missile was probably fired from Sary Shagan, the Soviet anti-ballistic missile test center.

B. The purposes of these two tests appears to have been the determination of the ability of radars in the anti-missile system to function in the environment resulting from the nuclear bursts. <sup>However</sup> It is believed that these tests were not complete anti-ballistic missile system tests.

IV. The developmental tests show a concentration on weapons with yields of about 1.5 to 5 MT and suitable for delivery by all Soviet bombers and offensive missiles. Preliminary analysis indicates that in several cases, through a combination of high thermonuclear efficiency, low weapon weight, and economy in fissionable materials, significant progress in thermonuclear weapons design was achieved.

V. The two very large yield tests in the series are particularly significant in that they indicate a high degree of sophistication in weapon design.

A. The 25-MT device which the Soviets detonated had an extremely high thermonuclear efficiency.

B. The 58-MT device probably was actually a 100-MT weapon tested at reduced yield. As tested the device obtained only a few percent of its yield from fission. Weapons of this size and weight could be delivered by the Soviet <sup>large</sup> ~~BEAR~~ bomber, or could be emplaced offshore, but probably could not be delivered against most US targets by any currently operational Soviet ICBM.

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