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Release of Redwing Statements

This concerns a draft of a statement by reason of the successful results at Redwing in producing weapons which minimize fallout. There has been general discussion in Administration circles of the advisability of issuing a statement to this effect. Within the Commission Libby has been zealous that the wording of the statement should in no way compromise information that might lead our friendly powers to a deduction as to the composition or geometry of weapons. At a meeting of the OCB a week ago there was a discussion of the almost disastrous effects of the release of testimony by General Gavin to the effect that in the event of a war with Russia in which strategic bombing took place on a large scale, we would be responsible for the deaths of several hundred million neutral or friendly persons, specifically in Japan and the Philippines. This had produced a bad effect that appeared to be growing in these areas and had evoked a scream of protests from General Gruenther.

At the OCB meeting on Wednesday, July 11, I was urged to delay no longer in issuing the statement or in persuading the President to issue it and I accordingly prepared a draft which was approved by Commissioners Libby and Vance. At the NSC meeting the following morning, July 12, Secretary Dulles crossed the room to me before the meeting started, leaned over and whispered, "I just heard about the statement and I hope you can arrange that it goes out not later than today." Because of the fact that it would have been impossible to send it around for individual clearance, I called on the telephone Allan Dulles, Dillon Anderson, William H. Jackson, Harold Stassen, and Gordon Gray, Assistant Secretary of Defense, and I may have left out a name or two.

In the late afternoon, Herbert Hoover, Jr., asked me if I would meet with Secretary Dulles on the subject and I spent about a half hour in Mr. Dulles' office and about an equal amount of time afterwards with Mr. Hoover discussing the wording and making some changes in the statement. Mr. Dulles expressed the earnest hope that it would not be deferred beyond Friday, July 13th. I embodied the statement in a letter to Mr. Hagerty and sent it up to the President at Gettysburg this morning. About noon Governor Adams called me and said that the President wished to make a few changes subject to Strauss' approval. The changes were generally good. One sentence, however, verged on what Libby was concerned about and I asked that it be omitted and it was stricken.

Strauss then goes on to explain how the statement was not released on Hagerty's direction. Apparently Dulles had not been aware that Operation Alert had just taken place. It was decided to delay the statement for three or four days.

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