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## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : THE SECRETARY

DATE: JUL 2 1954

FROM : Mr. Rose *HCR*SUBJECT: Letter dated May 13, 1954, from Robert Cutler on the simulated introduction into the United States of "suitcase-type" atomic weapons.

Mr. Cutler enclosed with his letter to you of May 13, 1954, a newspaper account of how a newspaperman and photographer were able to smuggle into the United States at San Ysidro, California, ten simulated "suitcase-type" atomic weapons, and thereafter place them undetected in strategic locations in the greater Los Angeles, San Francisco and other California areas.

As you know, the problem of preventing the introduction into the country of this type of atomic weapon is a serious one, and it is virtually impossible to protect our thousands of miles of seacoast, as well as land borders, completely in this respect. Frankly, I am not particularly worried that this one newspaperman was able to bring ten metal pipes into the country unnoticed when he was not motivated to take the precautions which an unfriendly smuggler of such equipment would take, and had no fear of the consequences which might follow if he were detected. As it is virtually impossible to achieve 100 percent protection, we must work on the best assumptions we can develop. If "suitcase-type" atomic weapons are going to be introduced into the country, it is felt that this will be done only as a part of a large strike accompanied by air power. There would not be this type of isolated introduction of such weapons into the country, but there might be a number of coordinated introductions. A number of simultaneous or coordinated introductions would, of course, substantially raise the possibility of detection. Our precautions against this type of smuggling today are such that there is a substantial possibility of detection, as evidenced by the recent seizure by Customs at Miami of another newspaperman's equipment similar to this. The Soviets must know this. They must also know that the detection of the smuggling of such an atomic weapon would risk war, and it seems unlikely that they would take this risk to introduce one isolated weapon or group of weapons without it being part of a big strike.

This is all part of the larger general problem of the introduction of atomic weapons into the country other than by air strike which is now and has been for some time the subject of discussions and study by a committee on which we have representation together with Atomic Energy Commission, Central Intelligence Agency and Defense. This specific problem is also being studied by an advisory group to the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security on which both Customs and Coast Guard have representation. Among other things, this advisory group is making a survey of the installation at Customs ports of entry throughout the United States of experimental devices for the detection of "suitcase-type" atomic weapons.

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I am attaching for your information the memorandum Commissioner Kelly has given me on this question. When any new recommendations or factors are developed in connection with this problem, we will promptly advise the National Security Council.

I suggest that copies of your letter to Mr. Cutler and copies of this memorandum be sent to Allen Dulles and Lewis Strauss so that we may have the benefit of their comments.



Attachment

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