

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:

On 12 August 1953, there appeared in the Washington Post an article by Joseph Alsop containing information possibly derived from a COMINT source.

On 25 August 1953, the Assistant Director, Current Intelligence, of CIA sent a Memorandum to the Executive Secretary, USCIB, stating that an item in the subject Alsop column was traceable only to COMINT

On 26 August 1953, the Executive Secretary, USCIB, requested that people having access to certain information published by Mr. Alsop be queried as to their knowledge of how Mr. Alsop had access to, or received, this information. (CIB #000134, 26 August 1953)

In a Memorandum for the Executive Secretary, USCIB, dated 17 September 1953, the Chief of Staff, NSA, stated that distribution of this sort of information is extremely limited and that an investigation was under way. (Ser. 039S)

On 23 September 1953, the Acting Chief, Security Division, NSA; in a DF to AG stated that hundreds of NSA personnel could have had access to the information and that further investigation should be abandoned as impracticable.

On 12 October 1953, in a Memorandum for the Executive Secretary, USCIB, the Chief of Staff, NSA, supported the recommendations of NSA's Security Division.

For subsequent developments see USCIB papers:

13.5/33

13.5/41

Matter Of Interest REF. ID: A66443 • B Joseph Alsop

Malenkov's Power Machine

The sure way to understand Malenkov's claim to know the extent of the hydrogen bomb is as part of a great power whole. Even a Soviet hydrogen bomb would not be a danger to this country, all by itself. But it is a very great danger indeed, as one part of a gigantic machine of Soviet power which is now nearing completion.

As to the specific problem of the bomb, it now seems to be fairly well established that no Soviet test explosion has occurred as yet. According to reliable report, at any rate, no sign of an explosion has yet been picked up by the American long range detection system.

What is now expected, therefore, is a Soviet repetition of our own Eniwetok test of 1951. Before very long, if the forecasters are correct, they will try out a weapon like the chief bomb of our 1951 Eniwetok series. This bomb had a power of more than 200 kilotons—more than the explosive force of 200,000 tons of TNT—and it contained a small quantity of the heavy hydrogen mixture which forms the core of a true hydrogen bomb.

Our Eniwetok tests had a double purpose—to experiment with one of the very powerful atomic bombs that are needed as triggers for hydrogen bombs, and to gain data on the hydrogen fusion reaction. A similar bomb test will justify Malenkov's boast. It is in order for the Soviets, whose biggest bomb to date had a power under 80 kilotons. And such a test will not delay the Soviet over-all atomic build-up, by requiring confession of plutonium reactors to produce large quantities of tritium, the fantastically costly very heavy hydrogen that is the most important component of a true hydrogen bomb.

IF THIS is the sort of thing Malenkov was talking about, there is no reason to adjust past estimates of the Soviet atomic progress, which placed the beginning of the time of real danger toward the end of next year. Unfortunately, however, there are excellent reasons to adjust past estimates

of a related Soviet effort—the buildup of the Soviet long range air army, which gives meaning to Soviet atomic power.

In brief, it is now confirmed that the Soviets have started quantity production of the TU-31—a big turbo-jet bomber comparable in range and other characteristics to our own B-36. The TU-31 will give the long range air army what it has heretofore lacked, the capability to make round-trip attacks on American targets from bases on Soviet territory.

In addition, there are good reasons to believe that the Soviets now have the prototype of a giant jet bomber comparable to our B-52—the most advanced bomber we possess. The new plane was expected to be shown, in fact, at the Moscow air show, that was canceled by bad weather. If weather permits, the showing may well have taken place before these words can be printed. In any case this new plane, if its existence is confirmed, will put Soviet strategic air development almost on a par with our own.

Finally, to complete this pattern of growing Soviet air-atomic strength, there are the marked peculiarities of the new Soviet budget, which Malenkov announced with such a flourish.

MALENKOV chiefly emphasized the larger share of the Russian national income that is now to be allocated to the consumer. In view of the extraordinary rise of Soviet national income and productivity since the end of the war, greater generosity to the mass of the population is certainly overdue. It should not be difficult to finance, either, since the Soviets have largely completed their most massive military program, the reequipping of their huge ground forces.

Meanwhile Malenkov made no mention whatever of two features of the budget which are deeply disquieting. On the one hand, all the grandiose capital projects of Stalin's old age have now been canceled. For instance, the dead dictator's heirs have stopped construction of the canal from the Aral Sea to the Caspian Sea, and the tunnel from Sakhalin, under the Straits of Tartary, to the Siberian mainland. By so doing, they have proportionally increased the already enormous capital funds available for more immediately useful purposes, such as the expansion of aircraft production.

On the other hand, "residual" expenditures have also been enormously increased,

72.9 billion rubles in this year's budget. This special category of outlays is never itemized in the Soviet budget. It is generally believed to provide most of the financing for the Soviet atomic effort, the guided missile development program, and the like. The meaning of such an increase, coming at this time, should not require further comment.

The likelihood is strong that the Soviet annual investment in the atomic program, guided missile development and other special weapon projects, now considerably exceeds our own investments. Add the progress of Soviet strategic air. Add, further, the Soviet buildup which our own Chiefs of Staff have held will reach a stage of acute danger in 1954. The sum of all the evidence is a future danger for which, at present, this country is making no adequate preparation.

Copyright, 1953 N Y Herald Tribune, Inc

THE WASHINGTON POST
12 August 1953

In Congress

TODAY

Senate

Adjourned.
No committee meetings scheduled.
House

Adjourned

Committee hearings were held