

THIS IS THE BEST COPY AVAILABLE

~~SECRET~~  
February 2, 1950

~~SECRET~~  
Classified by 2355 JAB/ak 9/25/75  
Exempt from GDS, Category 1, 2, 3  
Date of Declassification Indefinite

11:25 AM

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON  
MR. LADD  
MR. NICHOLS

Honorable David Lilienthal, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, called me and advised that he had received the Bureau's letter regarding Fuchs and he wanted to be sure that they were doing everything possible throughout his organization to be of help to us. I told him I believed there would be a number of matters that we would like to have run out. I stated we would like to have him give us all the information they have on Fuchs, his admissions and access to these secret records and also his contacts if it is possible to identify them. I told him that I had instructed our Investigative Division to take steps along that line to contact Mr. Hornack to see whether we could have that material made available. Mr. Lilienthal stated that this material would be made available. I told him that Fuchs had extensive connections while he was here and some of those people are still in this country and we, of course, wanted to try to run down all angles on it before the story breaks publicly. (u)

Mr. Lilienthal then referred to the last line of my letter to him which stated, "In view of the highly confidential nature of the information no dissemination outside of the Commission was to be made", and said he wanted me to call the turn on this. He stated that this would be strictly followed but there was the question about the Joint Committee. He said this would be like publishing it but he believed in view of the crux of the matter and the fact that it involved another government and obviously another government's intelligence of some sort they should not in the way the Bureau wished. I suggested to Mr. Lilienthal in regard to the Joint Committee angle that it was perfectly proper for him, if he so desired, to speak to the Chairman of this Committee, emphasizing that this had not been publicly announced and that it was not known how soon it would be publicly announced. I stated there is bound to be some publicity in the very near future because Fuchs has been taken into custody by the British authorities and is being questioned by them and by our people, and while the proceedings will be in camera there will certainly be some reference to it in the press over there. I added that we are now trying to get as much information out of him as we can before this matter is publicly disclosed and I felt this was the angle that should be stressed in

speaking to the Chairman of the Joint Committee. I further added that I did not feel there was any objection to him talking to the Chairman and advising him, the Chairman, that I had advised Lilienthal of this situation, or if he desired I would inform the Chairman of this matter. I told him that I believed I would leave it to the Chairman's

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Harbo
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Pennington
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Tele. Room
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

~~SECRET~~

75  
[Handwritten signatures and stamps]

~~SECRET~~

judgment and discretion as to whether the other members of the Joint Committee should be advised. I stated we wanted to avoid any disclosure of this matter at the present and of course he had been advised. The Atomic Energy Commission has been advised and the three intelligence services of Army, Navy and Air have been advised as have Admiral Sowers and the President. Mr. Lilienthal suggested that he and I go together to see the Chairman of the Joint Committee and told him I felt there was no need for this; that he could show the Chairman the letter we had written him and in the meantime I would call the Chairman and let him know what has happened and advise him that he, Mr. Lilienthal, would probably be in touch with him and that of course the matter as to whether he should advise the Committee will be something that Mr. Lilienthal will probably discuss with him. Mr. Lilienthal stated he had thought it would be well for the three of us to discuss the matter together and thereby dispose of any questions that might arise and I told him I did not believe there were any questions. (S)(U)

I stressed again to Mr. Lilienthal that until this story breaks [in London] we are hoping there will be no publicity [on this side] for several reasons; that it would circumscribe our efforts to get information from this man and to proceed with the interrogations that we would like to. I stated we are interested not only in what he has gotten but also in his connections [over here]. Mr. Lilienthal stated he would get in touch with the Chairman. (S)(U)

Mr. Lilienthal told me that when he heard of this he was very much flabbergasted. I stated I felt it was very shocking to think this was able to happen and to happen as long ago as it did; that 1944 to 1945 was the period he got the information and gave it to the Russians. Mr. Lilienthal expressed surprise that he had been furnishing this information that long ago. I told him that Fuchs had been working for the Russians since 1941 and had obtained all this information at Los Alamos from 1944 to 1945 and he returned to Great Britain in June of 1946. I stated I wanted to check the angle that there were further plans to have him come back again in 1947 and we do not know whether he did or not, that his, Lilienthal's, office would have that record but we would not. I stated according to information from London there was authorization that the Atomic Energy Commission approved his return in 1947. I told him I was interested in running down this angle to find out who approved this and why and what the contacts were for the approval. I informed him that the British likewise approved this and there may be a security angle involved through the British Mission; that Fuchs admits he got his information from four sources, the Birmingham University at England, the British Diffusion Mission at New York, Los Alamos and the British establishment at Harwell. He told him that Fuchs came to this country in 1943 as a member of the British Atomic Energy Mission. (S)(U)

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Harbo
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Pennington
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Tele. Room
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

Mr. Lilienthal stated that in view of this additional information he thought he had better check with his colleagues about the Joint Committee angle and have them decide what should be done about the Hill and he asked that I defer any call to the Chairman of that Committee until he had talked to them. I stated I would do so. (u)

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover  
Director

cc-Mr. Nease

JAN 10 1950

Mr. Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. E. A. Tamm \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Clegg \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Glavin \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Ladd \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Nichols \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Tracy \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Carson \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Egan \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Gurnea \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Harbo \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Pennington \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Quinn Tamm \_\_\_\_\_  
Tele. Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Nease \_\_\_\_\_  
Miss Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

~~SECRET~~