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Authority MND 989528By AK NARA Date 6/8/05**TOP SECRET**  
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Copy No. 1 of 1 Series 3/A/E

June 30, 1952

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

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Mr. B. A. B. Burrows, Counselor of the British Embassy, called me the evening of June 28. He stated that Mr. Steel was absent from the Embassy and that he, Mr. Burrows, was acting in his absence. He stated that the Embassy had just received a "most highly classified and most urgent" personal message from Prime Minister Churchill to the President and asked for my assistance in effecting its immediate delivery. I suggested that he deliver the message to me and that I would undertake to see that it was delivered to the President. Mr. Burrows shortly thereafter called at my home with the attached message in duplicate, an original for delivery to the President and a copy for the Department. After reading the message I informed Mr. Burrows that I was entirely satisfied that no atomic attack upon the Yalu River dam was contemplated and that, pending receipt of a reply from the President, who in any event would have to authorize such an attack, the Prime Minister could be so assured. I went on to state that the destruction of the power plant at Suiho had very successfully accomplished the immediate military objective and that I was satisfied that our military authorities did not now contemplate attacking the dam itself with either atomic or conventional weapons. I informed Mr. Burrows that I did not feel that the message justified bringing it to the President's attention that night, but that I would effect delivery as quickly as possible and inform him when it had been done.

I informed Mr. Matthews of the action that I had taken.

The morning of June 29 I discussed the matter with Mr. Bruce who approved and signed a letter to the President transmitting the message from the Prime Minister. I immediately delivered the letter by hand to the White House.

On June 30 a draft reply for recommendation to the President was discussed with Mr. Matthews, Mr. Bonbright and Mr. Arneson. Subsequently this draft was incorporated into a draft prepared by Mr. Lovett and General Bradley and the final draft discussed with Mr. Bruce, Mr. Lovett and General Bradley. The draft was then personally discussed by Mr. Bruce with the President, who approved its transmission.

Subsequently, at about 6:15 p.m., June 30, I called in Mr. Burrows of the British Embassy and handed to him the President's reply, a copy of which is attached. I requested that he transmit it to the Prime Minister as quickly as possible. Mr. Burrows agreed and, after reading the reply, stated that he felt the Prime Minister would consider it most satisfactory. With respect to the last substantive paragraph of the reply on public discussion, Mr. Burrows commented that this might

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be very difficult as Parliamentary debate on Korea was scheduled for tomorrow. I stated that I thought it necessary to emphasize the importance of the last paragraph and to note that there were not only the questions of aid and comfort to the enemy and UK domestic public opinion involved. I informed Mr. Burrows that discussion of the Prime Minister's message and the President's reply had been confined to only a very few top officials in State and Defense and suggested that the exchange of messages be handled accordingly within the Embassy.

## Attachments:

Copy of message from  
Prime Minister Churchill  
to President Truman, June 28, 1952.

Copy of message from  
President Truman to  
Prime Minister Churchill, June 30, 1952.

CC: DC/R  
S/S  
G  
FE:UAJ

FE:UAJohnson/pmh

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The following is the text of a message from the Prime Minister to President Truman.

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"URGENT, MOST SECRET.

Personal and Private.

Prime Minister to President.

"I have not troubled you lately in your many toils but I have heard rumours about the possible use of the atomic bomb on Yalu Dams. There may be no truth in this. I am sure, however, you will not mind my saying that such a step would be out of all proportion to Korean events and would upset the world in a way I cannot measure."

"Anthony and I do not see why so much importance should be attached by the United Nations Command to the Suiho Dam.

"We have hitherto thought so much alike on all these issues that I feel sure you will not mind my sending you this message which I do with all my good wishes.

Winston."

British Embassy,

Washington, D. C.

28th June, 1952.

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My dear Mr. President:

There is enclosed a copy of a personal message to you from Prime Minister Churchill which the British Embassy delivered to a representative of the Department of State late yesterday evening.

The Embassy was assured that the message would be delivered to you as quickly as possible. However, the Embassy was informed that such a decision as the Prime Minister apprehended could only be made by you, and that pending your reply the Prime Minister could rest assured that the rumor was baseless.

It is not believed that you need answer the Prime Minister, unless you desire otherwise, until Monday or Tuesday. It might be that you would wish to discuss this matter with Secretary Lovett, General Bradley and myself.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ David K. Bruce

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL

June 30, 1952

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"I have your message of June 28 and can assure you that the rumors are unfounded. We have not had, and do not now have, any intentions of bombing the Yalu River dams, either with atomic or conventional bombs.

"Our recent bombing was directed at several power plants in North Korea, one of which happened to be on the Yalu River. These plants had become increasingly important military targets. They were furnishing power to many war industry plants in North Korea and to enemy airfields and electronic equipment.

"These war plants were making war materials with which to kill our men and furnishing power to the electronic equipment with which they detected our planes, directed artillery fire and controlled their interceptors. The power also was used on the airfields from which they took off and attacked our planes.

"My approval of these military targets was given for the protection of the greatly outnumbered United Nations troops and to make more difficult a sustained major attack upon them. Their safety continues to be one of my major concerns.

"I know you appreciate that the attack against the power plant at Suiho was consistent with our policy of restricting hostilities to the maximum extent possible to Korea itself. I am sure that there is no difference between us on this policy which the United Nations Command has scrupulously applied. We have no intent of departing from that policy and, in any event, would not do so without opportunity for you to express your views.

"I know you will agree that public discussion of what the United Nations Command will or will not do regarding this or other military targets in Korea can be helpful only to the enemy.