

Document Title: "John Foster, Dulles to James C. Hagerty, October 8, 1957, with attached: "Draft Statements on the Soviet Satellite," October 5, 1957.

Source: John Foster Dulles Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas.

The Eisenhower Administration had anticipated the imminent launch of the first Soviet satellite, and had given some thought to potential public reaction to such an event. But when the launch occurred on October 4, 1957, the administration was surprised by the amount of public concern. Four days after the event, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles sent White House Press Secretary James Hagerty his suggestions for the text of a press release which would place the Sputnik launch in its proper context and reassure the public. Although Dulles' comments did not result in a press release, they did form the basis for much of the administration's "official" comment about the Soviet achievement as well as the core of President Eisenhower's comments at a press conference on October 9th. This document does not contain the draft statement prepared by Allen Dulles, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and brother of the Secretary of State, which is mentioned in the cover letter.

Dear Jim:

Here is a draft which I made. Also I enclose a draft which AWD made for me which now might be considered by the President.

Sincerely yours,

John Foster Dulles

Attachments

Draft Statements on the Soviet satellite

The Honorable

James C. Hagerty

The White House

[1] Draft by JFD

10/5/57

The launching by the Soviet Union of the first earth satellite is an event of considerable technical and scientific importance. However, that importance should not be exaggerated. What has happened involves no basic discovery and the value of a satellite to mankind will for a long time be highly problematical.

That the Soviet Union was first in this project is due to the high priority which the Soviet Union gives to scientific training and to the fact that since 1945 the Soviet Union has particularly emphasized developments in the fields of missiles and of outer space. The Germans had made a major advance in this field and the results of their effort were largely taken over by the Russians when they took over the German assets, human and material, at Peenemunde (X>?), the principal German base for research and experiment in the use of outer space. This encouraged the Soviets to

concentrate upon developments in this field with a use of [2] resources and effort not possible in time of peace to societies where the people are free to engage in pursuits of their own choosing and where public monies are limited by representatives of the people. Despotic societies which can command the activities and resources of all their people can often produce spectacular accomplishments. These, however, do not prove that freedom is not the best way.

While the United States has not given the same priority to outer space developments as has the Soviet Union, it has not neglected this field. It already has a capability to utilize outer space for missiles and it is expected to launch an earth satellite during the present geophysical year in accordance with a program which has been under orderly development over the past two years.

The United States welcomes the peaceful achievement of the Soviet scientists. It hopes that the acclaim which has resulted from [3] their efforts will encourage the Soviet Union to seek development along peaceful lines and seek to enrich the spiritual and material welfare of their people.

What is happening with reference to outer space makes more than ever important the proposal made by the United States and the other free world members of the Disarmament Subcommittee. I recall my White House statement of August 28 which emphasized the proposal of the Western Powers at London to establish a study group to the end that "outer space shall be used only for peaceful, not military, purposes."

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