

PSF - National Defense Research Committee

1 item

Subject File

Box ~~157~~ 158

PROPOSAL FOR SUPPLEMENTING NDRC PROGRAM

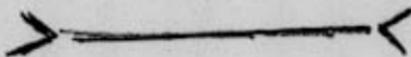
This plan has been informally approved at a meeting on April 16, 1941, after a report by Dr. Conant. The British have signified their enthusiastic approval of such a scheme.

There are certain immediate battle problems involving development of devices and weapons which are in active use by the British against the enemy. User trials against the enemy are essential to effective development of such devices.

On each such problem teams should be sent to England comprising scientists and engineers from N.D.R.C. They should remain for six months or more and work directly on these problems in British Research Establishments.

A Military and Naval Attache should be detailed to act as a part of each team. Frequent meetings of each team should be held and someone from Mr. Harriman's office should maintain close contact with each team and attend all meetings.

One or two members of each team should make frequent visits to U.S.A. to keep contact with development here and with production insofar as this may be needed. Such teams should handle all liaison on their particular problem.



Note added by J.B.C., April 24, 1941:

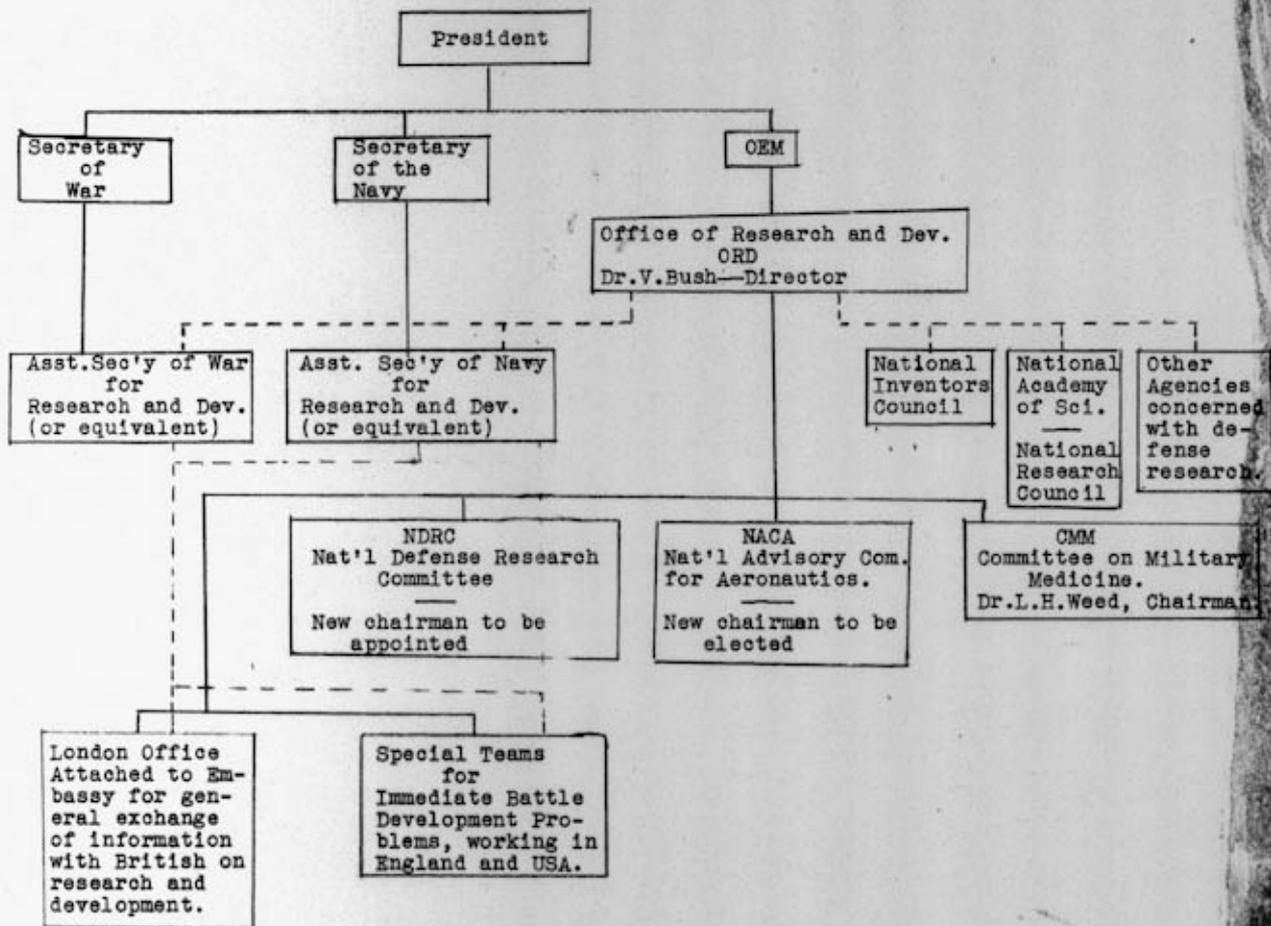
If a new Office of Research and Development were to be set up with Dr. V. Bush as Director, then these teams and the London office should report to the new Director of Research and Development. This would solve automatically the problem of tying in the Army and Navy into these teams, since the Office of Research and Development would be the coordinating agency for NDRC, Army and Navy research through the Chairman of NDRC, and through two new men acting as assistant secretaries for research and development for War and Navy or their equivalent.

Duties of the Director of the Office of
Research and Development:

(1) Advise the President on Research and Development aspects of Defense. To this end the Director may call for information from the War and Navy Departments through the Assistant Secretaries for Research (to be appointed) and the Chairmen of NDRC, NACA, and CMM, and other agencies. After consultation with the Assistant Secretaries, Chairmen of Defense Committees and other agencies, he may appoint temporary committees drawn from the services and research agencies to consider special problems and render a report for the President.

(2) Advise with the Chairmen of the NDRC, NACA, and CMM as to the conduct of their work.

(3) Direct the work of the London office and the special teams concerned with Immediate Battle Development Problems working in England or the U.S.A.



CLASS I
Information and Liaison only

CLASS II
Independent committees to be coordinated by ORD.

CLASS III
Directly responsible to ORD.

NATIONAL DEFENSE RESEARCH COMMITTEE
OF THE COUNCIL OF NATIONAL DEFENSE
1530 P STREET NW.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

VANNEVAR BUSH, CHAIRMAN
RICHARD C. TOLMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN
REAR ADMIRAL H. G. BOWEN
CONWAY P. COE
KARL T. COMPTON
JAMES S. CONANT
FRANK B. JEWETT
MAJ. GENERAL R. C. MOORE
IRVIN STEWART, SECRETARY

April 25, 1941

President of the United States
White House

Dear Mr. President:

I am enclosing herewith a memorandum and diagram which I discussed with you at luncheon today. May I venture to urge once again the importance of some such organization to insure coordination of research and development and to keep you informed. As I told you, I was particularly impressed in my visit to Great Britain with the need for having a group of scientists and engineers, including Army and Navy representatives, at work near the battlefield on a few special problems which can only be studied there.

Before leaving for Great Britain I called on the Secretary of War and the Secretary of Navy, and promised to see them on my return. I have not yet done so. If you should wish me to present my arguments to them for the need of (a) special teams to work in England on immediate battle problems, and (b) the need of an Office of Research and Development for liaison purposes with the War and Navy Department, I should be glad to do so.

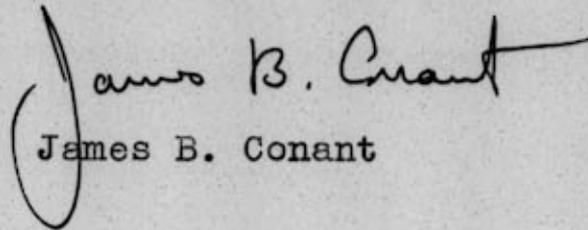
In the enclosed diagram I have put in Dr. Bush's ^{name} *see him* as Director, as all of us who have been in contact ^{feel} that he is the one man who could undertake this difficult task. In undertaking this work he would have to resign from his chairmanship of the NRC and NACA, and new Chairmen would have to be appointed or elected to these offices.

May I, in conclusion, express to you once again my deep appreciation of my assignment as head of a special mission to England to establish the London office. Your sending me on this mission enabled me to have a unique experience which I shall never forget. I believe that we

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have started important interchange of scientific information between the British and ourselves, and that if we can carry through the organization of the London office along the lines suggested in my memorandum and diagram, a matter of great importance to national defense will have been accomplished.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James B. Conant". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

James B. Conant

Enclosures

*PSF with Defense Research
Committee Folder*

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April 25, 1941

General Edwin H. Watson
White House

Dear General Watson:

I am enclosing a letter to the President, which I hope you may be able to place in his hands as soon as possible, since it contains some information which he and I discussed at lunch today and he is anxious to have before him.

Let me thank you again for your kindness.

Sincerely yours,

James B. Conant
James B. Conant

Enclosures

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 16, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR MISS TULLY:

ALL THE MATTERS RELATING
TO THIS LETTER HAVE BEEN REFERRED
TO THE OEM FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION
AND DO NOT REQUIRE THE PRESIDENT'S
FURTHER ATTENTION AT THIS TIME.