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Dr. Rabi said that many of the policy matters that come up to the President have a strong scientific component. He pointed out that the President lacks a scientific advisor, or someone who can provide him with a scientific point of view. The President said that it might be well to have such an advisor, or even a small section, to support him. He said the group would have to recognize, however, that every such individual added simply adds to the burdens of the Presidency -- but perhaps the individual could be a great help in getting the right point of view across. He said he would like to hear something more specific as to their ideas. Dr. Rabi said the first essential is to get someone whom the President can live with easily (in the sense of working with him agreeably); this individual should be completely sound scientifically as well. Dr. Killian added that a committee to back up the individual would also have great value, and the President agreed, using the analogy of the Council of Economic Advisors. The President said that such an individual could be most helpful. For example, he could keep a record of decisions and actions affecting scientific matters. He referred to his decision to give top priority to the development of operational ballistic missiles at the earliest possible date. Subsequently secondary considerations were introduced which tended to delay this overriding objective. One of the group suggested that the scientific advisor could help the President not to forget such policy decisions. The President interjected with vehemence that he had not forgotten this view but that those charged with the program had.

Dr. Killian said that these comments had great value in the long term for the creation of a more fertile climate for scientific activity. In the short term, there is missing a sense of urgency and mission in the scientific community. Certain subjects need to be attacked that are not now being investigated. He thought that if we continue to go as we are now the Russians will surpass us, and it will not take them long to do so. The question is how to get the research and development programs in Defense into focus. The need is more for leadership than for money. The President said he thought he had a fine man in Mr. McElroy. Already he has been impressed with McElroy's approach. He thought it might be well for the group to meet with McElroy. (At this point I left the meeting and called Secretary McElroy, and on rejoining the meeting arranged an appointment for the group with the Secretary at 1:30 this afternoon.)

As I returned Dr. Wiesner was telling the President that much of the problem relating to the timing on missiles and the satellite came from

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