

PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD
WASHINGTON

File

January 7, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: ADMIRAL KIRK

SUBJECT: The Rosenberg Case

It now appears that the legal and other maneuvers of the defense counsel in this case could result in the following circumstances so far as Presidential action is concerned:

1. That President Truman may be placed in a position where he will be required to announce his decision on clemency appeal the day before inauguration or on inauguration day itself. The sentencing judge allowed time, until Saturday, January 10, for filing of the appeal with the President. Defense counsel yesterday signed a court order agreeing to make the clemency appeal by Saturday next. In normal, ordinary circumstances a clemency investigation is undertaken to evaluate the aggravating and mitigating circumstances of the case. This could run out the clock so that President Truman would be placed in an 11th hour position of decision.

2. That decision on clemency will be carried over into the first several days of the new administration. This could occur by virtue of the time element alone.

The Communist campaign on this case has left no stone unturned to keep the issue confused. It would be typical of them to try and make its climax coincide with the Inaugural period.



E. M. O'Connor
Edward M. O'Connor

cc: Mr. G. Morgan

PSB 383.4 (1 Jan 53)