

THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE,  
Washington 25, March 5, 1956.

Memorandum.

To: All employees.

From: The Secretary (Sinclair Weeks).

Subject: East-West trade-control hearings before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

On February 20, 1956, the Department of Commerce joined the Departments of State and Defense and the International Cooperation Administration in a statement to the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations relative to documents and information requested by the subcommittee in its inquiry on East-West trade controls. This statement was in the form of a letter from Herbert Hoover, Jr., Acting Secretary of State, to Senator McClellan, chairman of the subcommittee. A copy is attached.

The subcommittee was informed that the executive branch would be prepared, through responsible officials, to—

(1) Furnish the subcommittee in open session information as to items deleted from the 1952 International List in the 1954 revision; and

(2) Furnish the subcommittee in executive session on a classified basis information as to items downgraded or upgraded or added to the list in the 1954 revision.

Since the custody of all records and papers in and relative to the business of the Department is in the Secretary, any request, subpoena or other demand for documents relative to this inquiry to whomever addressed shall be referred to my office.

Any request, subpoena, or other demand to appear and testify before this subcommittee relative to the East-West trade control inquiry should be honored. However, in accord with the principles set out in the attached letter of February 20, 1956, from Mr. Hoover, you are instructed not to testify either in public or executive closed sessions with respect to any advice, recommendations, discussions, and communications within the executive branch respecting any course of action in regard to East-West trade controls or as to any information regarding international negotiations with the countries cooperating in East-West trade controls. You are further instructed not to testify in public hearings as to any matter which is classified for reasons of security or in any manner that may reveal information so classified. In the event that there is any doubt as to whether the particular requested testimony falls within the scope of these instructions, you are directed to inform the subcommittee that you must decline to testify until you have further consulted with the Department.

These instructions have the full force and effect of a Department regulation and should be observed without exception.

FEBRUARY 20, 1956.

HON. JOHN L. MCCLELLAN,  
*Chairman, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations,  
United States Senate.*

DEAR SENATOR MCCLELLAN: During the course of the current inquiry by the subcommittee into East-West trade controls, the subcommittee has made a number of requests for information and documents from the executive branch, some to the International Cooperation Administration, and others to the Departments of Defense and Commerce. The specific requests as to documents relate to the international lists, the Battle Act lists, and the working papers and minutes of the Joint Operating Committee which was set up as an advisory group in the executive branch with relation to the negotiations with our allies in 1954 concerning the international lists. In addition, the International Cooperation Administration has been specifically requested to supply information as to the certain recommendations of the Joint Operating Committee.

This letter relates to all such requests.

In relation to these requests, it should be stated what the agencies involved have supplied and have offered to supply to the subcommittee. The International Cooperation Administration has furnished to you the various Battle Act lists from 1952 to 1955 with a notation as to the items decontrolled or downgraded on or about August 25, 1954. As recognized by the subcommittee in its request, these documents and related information were supplied necessarily on a classified basis.