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*Question & Answer version
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1. Does this mean that the Russians have the bomb? ~~[Our best information leads us to believe that they have.]~~ *We know there was an atomic explosion. That is all we can say.*
2. How do we know that there was an atomic explosion? [It would not be compatible with national security to give further information on this subject.]
3. Do you know where and when it took place, and whether on the ground or water? [We have a pretty good idea.]
4. Is this the first atomic explosion in Russia? [So far as we know.]
5. Does our information indicate that the Russians may have a number of bombs? [No.]
6. Is there any way of telling how far advanced Russian technology is in this field as compared with our own? [It would not be compatible with national security to give any information on this subject at this time.]
7. Did the Russians steal the atomic secrets or did they work them out? [There is no reason to believe that this development is the result of anything that was stolen or copied from us. Nearly four years ago the President pointed out that "Scientific opinion appears to be practically unanimous that the essential theoretical knowledge upon which the discovery is based is already widely known. There is also substantial agreement that foreign research can come abreast of our present theoretical knowledge in time." And in the Three Nation Declaration of the President of the United States and the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and of Canada, dated November 15, 1945, it was emphasized that no single nation could in fact have a monopoly of this means of destruction.]
8. Will this cause any change in our policy toward the international control of atomic energy? [None at all. As early as November 15, 1945, in the Three Nation Declaration, this Government committed itself to seek the international control of atomic energy. Since that time we have made every effort to achieve an effective system of international control. We remain prepared to explore

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carefully and with good will any proposals for an effective and enforceable system for the international control of atomic energy and to enter into arrangements which embody the essential safeguards approved by the United Nations General Assembly.]

9. Will this cause any change in the domestic atomic energy program? [Although we shall naturally have to reexamine the domestic program in the light of this development, it is not probable that there will have to be any material modification of it.]

10. What is the state of our defense against atomic attack? [Within the limitations imposed by the budget, priorities have been established for all our military tasks in case we are involved in war. The defense of the United States is our primary basic undertaking and progress is being made in meeting our defense requirements as established by the Department of Defense. Concomitant with this task, of course, is the offensive task of retaliation. It would not be compatible with our national security interests to give further information on this matter.]

11. Does this increase the danger of war? [The danger of war does not spring from the policies of the United States and the other democracies. The United States will continue to make every effort to avoid war by observing faithfully the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations both in letter and in spirit. Everyone knows that the preparation for aggressive war is impossible in a democracy and even more so in a coalition of democracies. If there is danger of war, it stems from the attitudes and policies of others. We have no means of knowing what is in the minds of the men who control the Government of the Soviet Union. We should remember that the mere fact that a country might have the ability to make a bomb would not in itself be an assurance to that country of over-all military superiority. The belief of this Government is that war is not inevitable; and our policies continue to be directed to its avoidance.]

12. In what way has this development been taken into account in our basic policy? [As stated in the President's announcement, we have always known that efforts would be made to develop this weapon, and it has been no secret that such efforts were in progress in the Soviet Union.

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It has been for this reason, among others, that we have laid such great emphasis on the necessity for a firm and durable system of peaceful relationships between the nations of the world and that we have made such effort and such sacrifices to this end. We have consistently refrained from basing our own policies on a monopoly of the weapon and have endeavored to frame them throughout with a view to their validity in a period when that monopoly would no longer exist. We have tried to make our military posture one which would be an effective deterrent to aggression whether or not others had the atomic weapon. The atomic bomb must always be judged not as an isolated weapon but in the general framework of the relative military capabilities of countries. United States policies in helping strengthen the economies of European countries, in participating in the Atlantic Pact, and in considering a program of military assistance to other nations have all tended to increase the strength of this country.]

13. Are the present talks with the British and the Canadians on atomic energy connected with this development? [Obviously it has to be taken into account in our deliberations with the Canadians and the British, but the discussions were scheduled for another purpose.]

14. Does this mean that we will change our atomic energy policy with respect to the British and the Canadians? [Definitely not. This development accentuates the need for the most rational and economic utilization of the resources available to the three countries in the field of atomic energy; and we have this consideration prominently in mind in the present discussions.]

15. Did the British and the Canadians know about this too? [They have the same information we have.]

16. Does this affect the Atlantic Pact or our relationships with the Atlantic Pact countries? [Yes. It drives home harder than ever the need for the closest collaboration and mutual confidence among them. It is in no sense a problem for the United States alone. There could be nothing which could demonstrate more forcefully the need for true international collaboration, of which the Atlantic Pact is a living example. This also brings out as nothing else could the importance to the United States of strengthening these countries.]

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17. How will this affect the MAP? [It affects it only in so far as it increases the need for such a program. Our long-range military objectives will have been met only when our allies, strengthened through the Military Assistance Program, have improved to the maximum extent possible their ability to assist in maintaining peace and security.]

18. How can our allies in western Europe contribute to our defense now that the Russians have the atomic bomb? [The atomic bomb, like any other weapon, has to be used prudently and be backed up by adequate over-all military strength in order to assure final superiority in war and immunity against disastrous retaliation. But these things in turn depend upon the over-all relative military potential of the parties to a conflict, which is based on their economic and political health and well being. The stronger the members of the Atlantic Pact are individually and collectively, in over-all economic and military potential, which includes many factors besides the atomic bomb, the less the likelihood that this weapon will ever be used against any of them.]

19. Do you view this development with alarm? [No, not with alarm. We are naturally concerned that this weapon should come into the hands of a nation whose policies have been in many respects adverse to world stability, while there is as yet no effective system of international control. We have never thought that war is inevitable. We do not think that Soviet possession of this weapon necessarily makes war more probable. We must never forget that the atomic weapon, terrible as it is, is only one element in the complex pattern of political and military realities which determines the security of this country. In itself it neither confers on its possessor any guarantee of achieving victory nor provides insurance against retaliation. If we carry on firmly and calmly with our own policies directed to the prevention of war and to the deterring of aggression, the attendant risks, which are in any case unavoidable, are no greater than those which a nation must expect in striving to exercise leadership in the quest for peace and progress in the modern world. We must remember that there is no such thing as total security in this world, and never has been. Security is relative. The fact that we are no longer the sole possessors of the atomic weapon should be a source of renewed determination to make war unprofitable and therefore unlikely and to prove to the peoples of the world that there are better

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solutions to human problems than those of international violence.]

20. Do you expect any changes in Soviet policy as a result of this? [We do not know. You will recall that when we first developed this weapon, President Truman, in his address to the nation on August 9, 1945, acknowledged our responsibility to the rest of the world for the use which might be made of this weapon. He described this as "an awful responsibility which has come to us" and said that we had to "constitute ourselves trustees of this new force--to prevent its misuse and to turn it into the channels of service to mankind." We wait to see whether the consciousness of possessing this terrible and destructive weapon will bring to the Soviet leaders something of that same sense of responsibility to the peoples of the world and whether they will now join with us and other nations in a renewed search for ways of protecting humanity against the destructive power of this discovery.]

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