

November 27, 1953 (Friday)



1. Reprise in Foster's office. Some ground gained, some lost. Ground gained in that Foster made smart proposal on atomic section; ground lost in that Kyes, Radford had crystallized their negative approach. Through all of this, Lewis Strauss only real ally.

Broke up on note that I would re-do last section in line with Foster's suggestion, would report by phone to the President, and would try to get what may be showdown session when President returns.

Real problem is very deep and goes beyond any disagreement on wording or technical details. Real problem is basic philosophy -- are we or are we not prepared to embark on a course which may in fact lead to atomic disarmament? Soldier boys and their civilian governesses say no. Foster Dulles doesn't say yes or no, but says any atomic offer which does not recognize ultimate possibility is a phoney and should not be made. Strauss and I say we won't be out of the trenches by Christmas, or next Christmas or the next one, but let's try to make a start and see what happens. Foster considers this mentally dishonest (he should talk!)

Russian note has further complicated matters. I maintain all the more reason for moving ahead on all fronts, hard, as Russian note indicates retreat from previous positions. Even if clever retreat designed to influence French elections, nevertheless retreat. And our diplomacy should get over its congenital timidity whenever Russians suggest a meeting.

Told Bowie after meeting that entirely aside from my job, as an American I refused to admit or accept that our diplomacy was not adequate to sit down with Russians and do them in the eye for a change.

2. Folliard of Post -- on Julius Amos series, and asking me about McCarthy. Told him not my department.

Tuesday night McCarthy made sensational radio and television talk. My impression was aside from open season on lambasting Truman, that McCarthy had (a) declared war on Eisenhower; (b) by subtle innuendo had accused Eisenhower of the same thing that Brownell had accused Truman of; (c) had attempted to establish McCarthy as Mr. Republican; (d) had attempted to establish McCarthyism as Republicanism, and anybody who didn't agree was either a fool or a protector of Communism.



Wonderful syllogism -- I am the only effective rooter-outer of Communists; there are still Communists in Government (Davies); this Government headed by Eisenhower; therefore unless Eisenhower roots them out my way, he is a harbinger of Communists.

Wednesday, James Reston phoned to talk about this, and I told him I knew nothing about it, as Pres. out of town and I had had no discussions on the subject. He asked me personally what I thought, and I replied that I thought McCarthy had declared war on the President.

Sent memorandum to Sherman Adams to that effect, suggesting President be prepared with right question and answer for next press conference.

Thursday, Reston's piece included reference to one White House official who felt that this was declaration of war on President.

Friday, Hauge reported that at Jerry Persons session on this subject, Persons very upset by all this because declaration of war "would make it more difficult to get McCarthy and his allies to vote for Presidential program", and I was identified with statement, probably because I had sent Persons copy my memo to Sherman Adams which contained same thought.

Can't understand his line of argument. Consider it disastrous appeasement which began September 1952, when the campaign train crossed Wisconsin border and the boys persuaded Eisenhower take out reference to General Marshall in his Milwaukee speech. That was the beginning.

This has been Milestone Week for more than one reason.

All the vague feelings of unhappiness I have had regarding "lack of leadership" over the past many months, which I have always put down, really bounced up this week, and I am very frightened.