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FRIDAY, MAY 28, 1954

In at 8:15.

Staff Meeting - Burns gave economic briefing for staff similar to that he gave to Cabinet meeting last week.

Following staff meeting drafted statement designed for President to issue regarding McCarthy's appeal at hearing yesterday to Federal employees to disregard Presidential orders and laws and report to him on "graft, corruption, Communism and treason." Discussed the statement with the Attorney General and he was all in favor of us putting one out. Prior to seeing the President also checked it with Stephens, Shanley, Carroll, Cutler. Went in to see the President about quarter of eleven, and he approved statement with a good modification -- "Why don't we get permission from the Attorney General, who after all is the first law enforcement officer in the country, to issue the statement in his name from the White House with my approval. In that way we will show that not only myself but my Administration condemns McCarthy's statement." Called the Attorney General, and he readily agreed to this procedure. I gave out the statement at 11:00. A few minutes later the President called me in to his office and said he wanted to discuss this further. He was really mad at what he termed "the complete arrogance of McCarthy" -- Walking up and down behind his desk and speaking in rapid fire order he said the following:

"This amounts to nothing but a wholesale subversion of public service. McCarthy is making exactly the same plea of loyalty to him that Hitler made to the German people. Both tried to set up personal loyalty within the Government while both were using the pretense of fighting Communism. McCarthy is trying deliberately to subvert the people we have in Government, people who are sworn to obey the law, the Constitution and their superior officers. I think this is the most disloyal act we have ever had by anyone in the Government of the United States."

The President then sat down at his desk and said that he supposed he will be asked this question at his press conference. He said I was sure it would come up. He said, "Make sure it does because I'll tell you now what I'm going to say -- I am going to tell the newsmen that in my opinion this is the most arrogant invitation to subversion and disloyalty that I have ever heard of. I am going to also say that if such an invitation is accepted by any employee of the Government and we find out who that employee is, he will be fired on the spot if a civilian and court martialled on the spot if a military man. I won't stand for it for one minute."



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The President then asked if it would not be possible to feed a speech to Senator Potter to be delivered on the floor of the Senate on this subject. I countered with the suggestion that maybe the best way to do would be to build up public opinion first. The President thought that was a good idea and after discussion we decided that it would be best for me on my own to call certain key people that I knew in radio, television and the newspapers to get this point of view over. I did that in the afternoon. The President also told me that I should do this on my own and should not let anyone even in the White House know what I was doing. Later in the afternoon while he was hitting golf balls on the back lawn I reported that I had accomplished my mission and suggested that he listen particularly to Ed Murrow's program at 7:45 tonight. He is going to the Ethiopian dinner this evening but will try to listen to Murrow before leaving. This is a fundamental fight and one which I am sure we can win, but one to which I am also sure we will have to give a lot of attention to see that our point of view is accurately reflected in radio, television and the papers throughout the country.

Talked to Lewis Strauss four or five times during the day on Oppenheimer case. The situation is this: The panel on Oppenheimer has completed its report of 39 or 40 pages and sent it to the Atomic Energy Commission general manager. By a vote of two to one the panel is in favor of restricting Oppenheimer's clearances. Under the procedure of the Atomic Energy Commission Oppenheimer must be notified of the decision of the panel and has five days to appeal. If he does appeal, a new board must be constituted, cleared by the FBI and all the others to hear that appeal. Lewis is afraid that the panel decision will leak or that Oppenheimer will give it out in part. The panel insists that its report be made public in its entirety and Strauss has grave doubts as to the wisdom of sitting on it. Strauss is having trouble with the Democratic members of the Commission, particularly Murray, and when he gives it to the Commission, they will probably leak it anyway. Strauss and I will see the President tomorrow morning on this matter.

The President held a secret meeting this morning for an hour and a half with Dulles, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doug MacArthur, and Bowie. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss in advance the American position at the military conference starting in Washington.



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Jack Martin gave me a fill-in today on his talk with Senator Dirksen.

The Senator said that he had told Senator Dworshak at the Committee table that he did not think the President would disapprove the idea of taking Hensel and Carr off as principals of Committee witnesses. According to Martin, Dirksen expressed regret because he was incorrectly presenting the President's point of view and recognized that if we were queried we would have to point to our press conference statements. Martin also told Potter that the President had not supported such a plan. Think it is a good thing that those Senators on the Committee realize we are checking closely on everything concerning the Committee. It will also serve to warn them that they can't pull fast ones without our hearing about it.