December 2, 1953 (Wednesday)

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

1. Got to office 7:45 in order rework Pesident's statement. 8 o'clocktelephone -- no staff meeting. Conclusion: "They are trying to freeze me out". Rushed over and found them all assembled unofficially in Snyder's office, and we went at it again.

Morgan had moved up considerably. Shanley tried to see Pesident alone with Snyder, but we all trooped in with Tom Stephens' assistance, and the fight was on.

Prexy read their current draft with visible irritation, and made some mumbling comments. Jack Martin then pitched in with great courage and said that a vacuum existed in this country, and it was a political vacuum, and unless the President filled it somebody else would fill it. The President twisted and squirmed, but Martin stuck to his point. I pitched in as strongly as I could by telling him that so long as Taft was alive he might have been able to get out of the responsibility of leading the Party, but now he could no longer get out of it, and that the people were waiting for a sign, and a simple sign -- and now was the time.

Big hassle over text started. President read my text with great irritation, slammed it back at me and said he would not refer to McCarthy personally -- "I will not get in the gutter with that guy".

But gradually an interesting thing developed. The needling and the goosing began to take effect, and the President himself began very ably to firm up the text as he re-read it again, this time very carefully.

Everyone's mood began to change from divided snarling into united helping him along, and when Prexy dictated the last paragraph exactly as it finally appeared, which contained the real Republican leadership gimmick, the group almost cheered.

So what started as a ghastly mess turned out fine. Problem now is, having zippered the toga of Republican political leadership on the President's shoulders, how to keep that zipper shut.

2. OCB lunch

3. Mallory Brown on OCB matters.

4. Robert Taylor (Collier's) on the President's day.

5. Bill Hale -- to say hello.