

November 30, 1953 (BLACK MONDAY)



1. Staff meeting of White House staff called by Hagerty. Unfortunately neither Persons nor Adams present. Hagerty opened up by mentioning the recent Reston, Folliard and Harsch pieces each one of which contained anonymous attribution to White House personnel. He cautioned against talking, saying that it inevitably was embarrassing to the President, etc., etc. Incidentally, Hagerty was very low pitch and temperate about whole thing.

After moment of dead silence, I said that I had told Reston on the telephone the item he had in quotes, namely, that McCarthy had declared war on the President -- and that this gave me an opportunity to say some more on the subject.

I went into the matter completely, including going back to Campaign speech in Milwaukee when Marshall reference deleted. Warned them that this Three Little Monkeys act was not working and would not work, and that appeasing McCarthy in order to save his 7 votes for this year's legislative program was poor tactics, poor strategy, poor tactics, and poor arithmetic, and that unless the President stepped up to bat on this one soon, the Republicans would have neither a program, nor 1954, nor 1956.

Immediately Jerry Morgan, Homer Greunther, and to a lesser degree Jack Martin, jumped in on the opposite side. Only two to speak up on my side were Willis and Harlow.

Also I made proposition that the President substitute television appearance Wednesday for his scheduled press conference and face up before the nation to this declaration of war. Was appalled to discover that it had been planned to cancel the press conference and have the President go to Bermuda having said nothing. Big rhubarb. Finally agreed to have press conference. The men have really separated out from the boys.

2. OCB special staff on exploitation of Wheaties.
3. Ted Streibert on various matters, including John Begg. Didn't get much of anywhere on Begg situation. Streibert apparently just doesn't like him, and has no confidence in him.
4. Seydoux brought in Senator Dulin and Deputy Faure. Both pro-EDC but both rather pessimistic and feeling that recent debate and phony vote of confidence had lost ground for EDC. Most emphatic that some new element had to be introduced, and they suggested British