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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."