

Friday, August 10, 1945

9:30 a.m. Alfred Schindler and Bill Foster of War Production Board
11:00 a.m. Alfred Schindler, B. L. Gladieux and Dr. Philip M. Hauser
11:45 a.m. Tung Pi Wu of the Chinese delegation to the United Nations
Conference in San Francisco and the delegate of Yenan to
Chungking, and group (req. of Johannes Steel thru Harold Young)
12:00 noon Cyril C. Clifton of the Des Moines Register, Des Moines, Iowa
1:30 p.m. Colonel Harry Cooper of the Investigation Unit
2:00 p.m. Cabinet meeting
4:00 p.m. Left for New York (via Eastern Air Lines, National Airport)

Bill Foster, who comes from Scarsdale, New York, and who has a small business of his own, is a good prospect to be Assistant Secretary in Charge of Small Business if we finally get the Department reorganized. He is strongly recommended by the Business Advisory Council and makes a very favorable impression. The only drawback is that he is Republican. He is Al Schindler's candidate and I told Al that it would be essential to get him cleared with Bob Hannegan so there would be no kickbacks on the political front. Al said he thought he could do it.

Colonel Cooper said that our Army boys had been doing a lot of smuggling from India to China in the early days and the situation was so bad that some of the British officials said that there wasn't an honest American. Cooper finally got matters straightened out and when he began to press on the British with regard to their grafters he found that they wouldn't cooperate.

The President, who usually comes to Cabinet not later than 2:05, came in about 2:25 saying he was sorry to be late but that he and Jimmie had been busy working on a reply to Japanese proposals. Byrnes then read very slowly the Japanese proposal just as it was printed in the press late in the afternoon. It is as follows:

Note Containing Surrender Offer

Following is the note received by the United States from the Swiss Government Friday relative to the Japanese surrender proposal. It was addressed to Secretary of State Byrnes and signed by the Chargé d'Affaires of the Swiss Legation in Washington:

Sir:

I have the honor to inform you that the Japanese Minister to Switzerland, upon instructions received from his Government, has requested the Swiss Political Department to advise the Government of the United States of America of the following:

"In obedience to the gracious command of His Majesty the Emperor who, ever-anxious to enhance the cause of world peace, desires earnestly to bring about a speedy termination of hostilities with a view to saving mankind from the calamities to be imposed upon them by further continuation of the war, the Japanese Government several weeks ago asked the Soviet Government, with which neutral relations then prevailed to render good offices in restoring peace vis-a-vis the enemy powers. Unfortunately, these efforts in the interest of peace having failed, the Japanese Government in conformity with the august wish of His Majesty to restore the general peace and desiring to put an end to the untold sufferings entailed by war as quickly as possible, have decided upon the following:

The Japanese Government are ready to accept the terms enumerated in the joint declaration which was issued at Potsdam on July 26, 1945, by the heads of the Government of the United States, Great Britain and China, and later subscribed by the Soviet Government, with the understanding that the said declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as a sovereign ruler.

"The Japanese Government sincerely hope that their understanding is warranted and desire keenly that an explicit indication to that effect will be speedily forthcoming."

In transmitting the above message the Japanese Minister added that his Government begs the Government of the United States to forward its answer through the intermediary of Switzerland. Similar requests are being transmitted to the Governments of Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics through the intermediary of Sweden, as well as to the Government of China through the intermediary of Switzerland. The Chinese Minister at Berne has already been informed of the foregoing through the channel of the Swiss Political Department.

Please be assured that I am at your disposal at any time to accept for and forward to my Government the reply of the Government of the United States.

Accept, sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

GRASSLI,
Chargé d'Affaires ad Interim of Switzerland.

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He then read the reply which Truman indicated had been worked out by Byrnes, assisted by Stimson, Leahy, and Forrestal that morning. These are the proposals that were made public property August 11.

Byrnes stopped while reading the proposal and laid special emphasis on the top dog commander over Hirohito being an American. They were not going to have any chance for misunderstanding as in Europe. They said the proposal had been transmitted to the other Allies and that they had already heard from Bevin and Bevin was in accord. Truman then interjected almost fiercely that he didn't think we would hear from the Russians but that we would go ahead without them anyway. Stimson said the Russians were in favor of delay so they could push as far into Manchuria as possible. Truman said it was to our interest that the Russians not push too far into Manchuria. He said there was no agreement with Russia about Manchuria. This surprised me because I remember what Roosevelt used to say in the spring of 1944 about his agreement with Stalin on access to Dairen.

Truman said he had given orders to stop atomic bombing. He said the thought of wiping out another 100,000 people was too horrible. He didn't like the idea of killing, as he said, "all those kids."

Referring to hard and soft terms for Japan, Truman referred to 170 telegrams precipitated by the peace rumor of August 9. 153 of the 170 were for hard terms - unconditional surrender. They were free-will telegrams - not inspired - and were mostly from parents of service men.

Abe Fortas, the friend of Tom Corcoran who sat next to me in Ickes' chair, said they were getting together a report on the uranium supply. Also

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they were drafting legislation. Vinson said the legislation ought to be cleared with Justice. Tom Clark said they also were drafting legislation.

Clint Anderson said the agricultural problem would be very great the moment VJ Day came and that it would cost the government a lot of money to carry out its commitments to the farmers.

I suggested that the government should make a survey of thorium as well as uranium, not only in the United States but also in the whole world. Fortas, Truman, and Stimson then spoke up in a chorus saying they were doing that.

At the close of Cabinet the President called me by my first name and came around the table to see me. I complimented him on how well he looked. He said he had bad headaches every day. I ~~grieved~~, "Physical or figurative?" He said "Both," - that he had had to read a million words. (His eyes have always been weak.) I asked him if he was taking complete vitamins and he said "Yes." I said I would like to see him soon after VJ Day. He said, "Come in early next week." He said it would be good to have in Schwellenbach also. I suggested then the addition of Anderson and Snyder.

Abe Fortas told Crowley and me he had engineered in some measure the entry of Newbold Morris into the New York race. (This really means Corcoran is the originator.) Crowley grinned and said to me, "Do you remember when they said here in Cabinet that there would be no unemployment?" This was when Snyder told about 80% of the war contracts stopping automatically. I said the unemployed can be determined by dividing the amount of the cancellations by \$3,000.~~00~~.

One very amusing incident: Truman said to Byrnes - "Tell them what it was Stalin called you." Jimmie smiled in a wry way and said, "The most honest horse thief he had ever met."

It is obvious to me that the cornerstone of the peace of the future consists in strengthening our ties of friendship with Russia. It is also obvious that the attitude of Truman, Byrnes and both the War and Navy Departments is not moving in this direction. Their attitude will make for war eventually.

Matt Connelly called at 9:45 Friday morning, saying that he was calling all the Cabinet members asking them not to make any comment on V-J Day until after the President had spoken on the subject.