

DIARYTRUMANMay 21, 1945Monday

(From notes filed in my safe)

9:00 p.m. Went to the White House to show the President Molotov's cable. (See correspondence) He was again in "shirt sleeves" working over his message. I read him my cable.

He commented on Molotov's cable and on its considerate tone.

He said he had been thinking this over and had decided to ask Hopkins to go to Moscow to discuss the meeting, etc. with Stalin, and ask me to see Churchill to secure agreement from Churchill that Truman and Stalin have an opportunity to size each other up before this meeting.

I urged that Harry stop on his way back; that he could do it better than I as he and Churchill were close friends. He said, "No," that he wanted Harry to go direct to Moscow and return direct to Washington. He cited Hull's refusal to meet with Eden in Cairo before going to Moscow. He wanted me to go to London because I was not unfriendly to Stalin, and wanted Hopkins, known not to be unfriendly to Churchill, to go to Moscow. He had been thinking it over and had made up his mind. He would explain it to Ed Stettinius.

He wanted me to explore matters of possible differences with Churchill and get his ideas, but specifically he wanted me to sell the idea that he, the President, and Stalin should have an opportunity to get to know each other before the meeting. He was perfectly straight-forward about it, and of course there would be no danger of his double-crossing either. What he wanted to do if possible was to preserve unity of the "Big Three" for clearly there would be no Peace unless the Allies could cooperate.

He did not want to meet until July. He had his budget (\*) on his hands. He also told me of another reason, etc. The test was set for June, but had been postponed until July.

Jim Byrnes, he told me again, was to be Secretary of State. He had told Madam Perkins that he had accepted her resignation. She was sincerely glad to be relieved and went away happy. "She was a fine woman."

In discussing his Cabinet, he again asked whether I would not take a job, and I regretfully said the doctors said, "No," that this \_\_\_\_\_ was not serious but it might develop into a serious matter if inflamed.

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FOOTNOTE (\*): The atomic bomb. He told me then of the atomic bomb experiment in Nevada. Charged me with utmost secrecy.

He was also accepting Biddle's and Wickard's resignations.

When Chairman of the Truman Committee, he had told Roosevelt that he was the greatest politician and statesman in the world, but the poorest administrator. He was going to straighten the Administration out. He was going to consolidate and coordinate functions to avoid duplication and promote efficiency so that they would serve the purposes of government. He was going to hold his appointees to the Cabinet personally responsible. There were going to be no "hatchet men" or squabbles among them. He had told his Cabinet that he was keeping an agenda of all and any interdepartmental complaints, and that a date would be set for settlement between the two, and settled by him if necessary. It was going to be a harmonious, working team, with no jealousies in the family.

He was going to keep Stimson, Forrestal, and Henry Wallace. He didn't mention the others. It was late when I got away. He said he would write a personal letter in his own hand to Churchill for me to carry and would cable him tomorrow.

He impresses me more and more. He is a strong character, and he knows where he is going and why.

He would advise the State Department tomorrow, and also tell Leahy to turn over all correspondence in the "Map Room. I should familiarize myself with them before I go.

He delegates! A complete and definite contrast to F.D.R.

I told him I would report Wednesday night and leave Thursday morning.