

MEETING OF THE PRESIDENT WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS IN THE CABINET ROOM, 10:00 A.M., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1950

At the invitation of the President, the following Members of Congress were present:

- The Vice President
- The Speaker
- Senator Lucas, Majority Leader
- Senator Wherry, Minority Leader
- Senator Taft, Chairman, Republican Policy Committee
- Senator Connally, Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee
- Senator Wiley, ranking Republican, Foreign Relations Committee
- Senator Tydings, Chairman, Armed Services Committee
- Senator Bridges, ranking Republican, Armed Services Committee
- Senator McKellar, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee
- Senator Millikin, Chairman, Republican Conference Committee
- Senator George, Chairman, Finance Committee
- Congressman McCormack, Majority Leader
- Congressman Martin, Minority Leader
- Congressman Richards, Acting Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee
- Congressman Eaton, ranking Republican, Foreign Affairs Committee
- Congressman Vinson, Chairman, Armed Services Committee
- Congressman Short, ranking Republican, Armed Services Committee
- Congressman Cannon, Chairman, Appropriations Committee
- Congressman Taber, ranking Minority Member, Appropriations Committee.

In addition to the above Members of Congress, the following officials of the Executive Branch were present:

- The Secretary of State
- The Secretary of the Treasury
- The Secretary of Defense
- Honorable Stuart Symington, Chairman, National Security Resources Board,
- Honorable John Foster Dulles, Consultant to the Secretary of State.

The following members of the White House Staff were present:

- Honorable W. Averell Harriman, Special Assistant to the President
- Mr. Charles Murphy, Special Counsel to the President
- Mr. Stephen Early, Acting Press Secretary to the President

The President entered the Cabinet Room at 10:05 A. M., and circled the room shaking hands and exchanging greetings with each of the Members of Congress.

The President opened the meeting by expressing his appreciation to the Members of Congress for having come to the White House to hear a briefing on the international situation, and so that the President could talk with them about his plans and programs. We are faced, the President said, with the necessity of a sharp step-up in our mobilization. It is essential to speed up our military preparedness at the fastest possible rate. The President continued that he had been considering issuing a proclamation of national emergency in order to help out in the present situation. So that the Members of Congress would understand the situation with which we are faced, the President said he would like to read to them a report prepared by the Central Intelligence Agency. "It is a 'top secret' document," the President went on, "and I hope you'll all treat it as confidential."

The President then read a summary of a Central Intelligence Agency Report entitled "Probable Soviet Moves to Exploit the Present

When he had finished reading, the President said that he wanted the men present to be completely briefed, and he was going to ask the Secretary of State to give them the same briefing he gave the Cabinet yesterday.

The Secretary of State said that his Department agreed fully with the Intelligence estimate which the President had just read, that what he had to say would be, to some degree, in repetition to what the President had read. Since the end of June, it had been clear that the Soviet Union has begun an all-out attack against the power position of the United States. It was clear that the Soviet leaders recognized that their policy might bring on a general war, and it was equally clear that they were prepared to run this risk. One of the clearest indications we have on Soviet intentions is Soviet propaganda, which seems to work in reverse. The Soviets attack us all along the line for things which they are doing. For example, they attack our intervention in Korea as "aggression," and they say that our actions in Korea are very provocative. They are attacking us most shrilly on Formosa, Japan, and the seating of the Chinese communists in the United Nations. Soviet propaganda, the

with Japan. Throughout the Far East, we are being branded as imperialistic aggressors, and we are charged with doing all the things that we are not doing but that communist forces actually are. Mr. Acheson remarked, in an aside, that the seating of the Chinese communists in the United Nations would be a symbol of the success of communist efforts in the Far East.

As for the West, there is a similar degree of intensity and violent propaganda against our policies. The greatest intensity of Soviet propaganda at present is on the "provocativeness" of United States rearmament. The Soviets say this means we are getting ready for war. The second most important theme in their propaganda at the moment is attacks on the North Atlantic Treaty, and Western efforts to bring Germany into our defense plans. The U.S.S.R. has announced that it will not "tolerate" - Mr. Acheson noted that the word "tolerate" is the one Soviets always use in this regard - the rearmament of Germany.

Yesterday, Mr. Acheson went on, the Soviets began a violent attack on our assistance to Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia. He thought that this probably presages some sort of direct action by the Soviet

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At the same time this kind of activity is going on, Mr. Acheson continued, Soviet peace propaganda is wide-spread. The Soviets keep trying to get us into "discussions." They are vigorously organizing "Partisans for Peace," which they seem to be trying to turn into a rival of the United Nations.

Mr. Acheson said that the major effort of the Soviets at this time is to disrupt us from our allies and that this effort is, indeed, meeting with some success.

Mr. Acheson said that there was only one possible step open to us and that was the greatest possible build-up of our own military strength and the military strength of our allies. Nothing else could stop the drive of the Soviet Union for world domination.

The President then asked General Marshall to describe the current military picture.

General Marshall began by saying that we have only one United States Army Division in the United States at this time. It will be Spring before any other divisions are trained and ready for action. Four National Guard Divisions now in Federal service will not

be ready until the middle of March

General Marshall then turned to Korea and gave a brief summary of our position there. He said that our forces would soon be in reasonably strong defensive positions, and he mentioned the present situation of the Tenth Corps and the Eighth Army. Both of these outfits were in better condition now than we had thought possible a few days ago, and their only contacts at the moment are with North Korean guerrillas. General Marshall expressed the opinion that our troops would be able to hold with some firmness in Korea for some time to come, and there was no problem of great overriding urgency in Korea now, such as we had feared a few days ago. There was no immediate necessity for us to try and negotiate and it was probably just as well, since we have a very weak hand.

At this point, General Marshall digressed on the subject of the behavior of the American press. He expressed some annoyance at the fact that there was a good deal of newspaper agitation as to the location of two South Korean Divisions and the U. S. Seventeenth Regimental Combat Team. The papers seemed to be setting out on a search to locate these outfits and there were caustic criticisms

because the Army was not revealing their location. The result of

the newspaper flurry was to needlessly upset and worry the relatives

of the men in the Seventeenth Regiment. There was no point to all this, General Marshall said, because the Seventeenth and the South Korean Divisions had been safe in a beachhead for over five days. It was very difficult to restrain oneself at times in dealing with the press, General Marshall concluded.

General Marshall then turned to our military situation in Japan. He noted that we had no troops there now and that security was being maintained by 75,000 Japanese police. This was a situation of deep concern, since we could not know what the Russians might do next. They had many strong military bases, especially air bases, within easy striking distance of Japan.

So far as Western Europe is concerned, General Marshall said that things were coming to a head very fast. The Russians were stepping up their propaganda and agitation, as the Secretary of State had reported, but at the same time we were moving forward with defense arrangements. General Marshall said he thought that the basic agreements which were being reached in Brussels were going to be very satisfactory. There would be an integrated European Defense

Force and a Supreme Commander. The Pentagon was now working on a

job if this country is requested to name a commander. Of course, General Marshall said, we expect that request to be made.

General Marshall then turned to the question of appropriations. He said that the Pentagon had been working on the assumption that we would engage in a four-year build-up period. Now, we were planning to move very much faster. So far as procurement goes, we are going to try to procure by 1952 what we had planned to procure by 1954. As for troops, General Marshall said, we want to get in the next six months all the troops we had planned to build up over the next four years. We would probably call up two more National Guard Divisions, and activate another regular Army Division. This speed-up process could not be done without a good deal of strain, particularly in the procurement of military equipment. The Army right now was finding it very difficult to negotiate contracts, and General Marshall could foresee a great deal of trouble in this area. This was the area of greatest importance, as it imposed the limits on the men that we could have in service.

General Marshall asked those present to remember that we have over twenty National Guard Divisions as well as Air Force and



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Naval reserves. We have about 2-million men in the reserves, but the limitation on using them is a material one. "The limit now," he said, "is how fast we can pick up these reserves. We don't want to take on so many that it would weaken us." The military was expanding as fast as it could with efficiency, General Marshall continued, but they were not going so fast that they would be inefficient. General Marshall said his aim was to get a base established so that the military could move in any direction; so that they could expand very rapidly if necessary; so that they could reach a plateau and stay there; and so that they could cut down if that became possible.

General Marshall said that the military's expansion plans meant that it would be necessary to go to the Congress for another supplemental budget request.

General Marshall concluded by saying that the major issue, so far as the military was concerned, was how to accelerate the materiel program further. After this was worked out, he would be asking Congress for changes in personnel legislation that would enable them to expand and keep men in the service.

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Senator Bridges asked the President if he might ask a question of General Marshall.

The President said that he would prefer that Senator Bridges hold his question until later; he would like to get through with all he had to say before the general questioning started.

The President then said that our most urgent need was to improve our own military situation. In this regard, he said that it had occurred to him that he ought to re-declare a state of national emergency. That would help in a number of ways, because, for example, it would help the Defense Department in negotiating contracts. He reminded those present that General Marshall had referred to the difficulty in contract negotiation.

In order to get our military forces established on a proper basis, the President continued, it is desirable to declare a national emergency. That would give the Chief Executive some authority and powers which he needed, and he would come to the Congress if he needed any additional authority.

The President said he thought that the Members of Congress would be interested in knowing that Prime Minister Attlee had assured him last week that the British were speeding up their defenses in the same proportion that we are.

The main thing now, the President said, is "proper and orderly mobilization as quickly as it can be done, while we stabilize the economic situation at the same time so contractors can fulfill their contracts and obligations to deliver military equipment on schedule."

In connection with economic stabilization plans, the President referred to a meeting which he had called for the next day for the purpose of discussing price controls, wage stabilization measures, priorities, allocations and other things. The President named members of the Senate and House whom he would invite to this meeting. The Proclamation of National Emergency which he had in

these problems but not all and it might be necessary to come to Congress for further authority.

On June 25th, the President continued, we thought the fighting was going to be between the United Nations forces and North Korean forces. We had hoped to keep the fighting from spreading. We did everything we could and we tried every means in our power to keep the Chinese Communists out of the war in Korea. Unfortunately for us, the Chinese Communists had entered Korea without any provocation and they had come in for the purpose of driving out General MacArthur's forces. The President was confident that they would not succeed in driving General MacArthur out but Chinese intervention had brought about an entirely new world situation. It was a situation of very great danger, and we had to meet it as quickly and as strongly as possible.

The President said he was finished, and he would be happy if Senator Bridges wished to ask General Marshall a question now.

Senator Bridges asked General Marshall if the plans of the Department of Defense which he had been discussing made provision for Universal Military Training, and whether the General

General Marshall said we could not undertake UMT now, but we would like to make our plans in such a way that we could proceed directly from selective service to UMT sometime in the future if war doesn't come. We probably will have to modify our old plans for universal training to make it fit the new circumstances. General Marshall said that, although it was certain we could not start it now, he felt just as strongly as ever that we must eventually have Universal Military Training.

General Marshall said he would like to explain that he felt that the most powerful thing we have is the National Guard. Our best defense is a National Guard reasonably ready for service. It is not the terror of the atom bomb; it is the availability of a large number of trained men that will make us a strong nation. General Marshall said that we must work out a procedure that will insure a steady flow of trained men into the ranks of the National Guard, and we must also work out a way of replacing the veteran officers in the National Guard as they get old and fat. What a well-trained National Guard really does, concluded General Marshall, is to match our productive capacity with an equivalent strength in trained men.

Senator Taft asked General Marshall whether present defense plans called for "full mobilization." He noted that General Marshall had referred at one point to full mobilization and he wondered whether the plans for expansion that the military service now had meant full mobilization or just an intermediate stage on the road to full mobilization.

The President replied that this was not full mobilization, and we wouldn't have an all-out mobilization if we did not get into an all-out war.

There was a rapid exchange between the President and Senator Taft in which Senator Taft appeared to be trying to ascertain what degree of mobilization the administration was planning. The President's responses were to the effect that we would have whatever mobilization was necessary to meet the situation as it developed.

General Marshall explained to Senator Taft that the Department of Defense was not attempting at this time to reach a state of full mobilization, but to prepare the base for full mobilization, should it become necessary. We were trying to prepare a

base, General Marshall said, so that we could expand very, very

rapidly in case of necessity. General Marshall repeated again

that the Department of Defense did not want to "plunge into full mobilization now."

Senator Wherry said that it appeared as though the President were asking for the authority for full mobilization, but was asking for it in the hopes that he would not need to exercise all that authority. He assumed the President would not exercise any authority that he did not need to.

The President replied, "of course not."

Senator Taft noted that any action the President took would be subject to the provision of appropriations by the Congress.

The President agreed, and added that his actions at this time were a matter of concern to the entire Congress, not just the Appropriation Committees. That is why he had invited so many Congressional leaders to the White House to talk these matters over with him today.

Congressman Vinson asked if he was correct in understanding that the President intended to proclaim a national emergency.

The President responded "yes."

Congressman Vinson asked if this proclamation would provide

The President said priorities and allocations would be provided as fast as we could.

Congressman McCormack referred at this point to the existing national emergency proclaimed in 1939 and 1941 by President Roosevelt. He remarked that we were now in an entirely different international situation, and that the basis for a national emergency was different. He thought it appropriate for the President to declare a new emergency which would recognize the new situation.

The Vice President asked if the President had meant, in reply to Congressman Vinson's question, that controls would be begun simultaneously with the issuance of a proclamation of emergency.

The President replied no, but they would be begun as fast as possible.

Congressman Vinson said that a proclamation of national emergency would enable the Department of Defense to negotiate contracts and that would be very useful.

The President reported that he had made an agreement with



would be slowed up by shortages.

Congressman Vinson noted that, if the President proclaimed a national emergency, no additional action by the Congress would be necessary in the fields of contract negotiations, priorities, or allocations. The President had sufficient authority under the Act of September 8, 1950.

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Senator Taft said that he didn't understand why a proclamation of national emergency was necessary at this time. He thought that the Act of September 8 gave the President all the authority that was necessary in connection with defense procurement. Nothing in the Act requires any proclamation by the President before the Defense Department can negotiate contracts.

Mr. Charles Murphy explained the legal effect of a proclamation by the President, and its relation to the Armed Services Procurement Act of 1948 and the Defense Production Act of 1950.

Congressman Martin said that the President had referred earlier to the fact that the issuance of a proclamation of national emergency would permit the President to do six important things. So far, all that had been talked about was authority for the Department of Defense to negotiate contracts. He wondered about what the other matters were.

The President handed Mr. Martin a list of legislative provisions prepared by the Department of Justice which would become effective in the event the President proclaimed a national emergency.

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great psychological effects on the American people. He thought that a proclamation would be good for the country. It would help create a united front to enable us to "meet the situation with which we are faced." The President said he thought such a proclamation would also be of value in making it clear to the other countries that we mean business.

The Vice President asked General Marshall about plans for increasing the size of the Army. He had noted in the papers, he said, that the draft rate was running at the rate of 80,000 men a month. He wondered how big our armed forces would be by the end of 1951 if we continued to draft men at that rate and if all of the National Guard were called into active service. General Marshall estimated that we would have nearly five million men under those circumstances, but he doubted that it would be possible to continue the draft at that rate and to call up the Guard at the same time. We would have a serious manpower problem in maintaining production at the same time.

General Marshall said that he did not. The Army did not want all of the Guard at one time; it could not handle so large a number.

Senator Wherry wondered how many of the five million men that General Marshall had been speaking about would be "foot soldiers". General Marshall replied that about two and one-half million would be in the Army; the rest would be in the Navy and the Air Force.

Senator Wherry wondered how many divisions that would mean.

General Marshall replied that two and one-half million men would mean about forty-seven divisions plus a large number of supporting troops. He replied that the Army was making no such plans, however, the equipment was not available. Shelter and training facilities were not available. Furthermore, the Selective Service Act would have to be changed to permit the Army to keep men in service. Otherwise, we would find men leaking out of the Army when their terms of service were up.

Congressman Vinson said that he understood, from earlier conversation, that the Department of Defense was planning to do in 1950 and 1951 what it had been planning to do by 1954.

General Marshall replied that that was correct.

Congressman Martin asked the President if he wanted any additional legislation at this session of Congress.

The President replied that he did not. He wanted the Congress to pass the military appropriations that he had requested, aid to Yugoslavia, the tax bill, and civilian defense legislation.

Congressman Martin did not know whether his next question would be out of order but he would like to know whether we were doing anything in other countries to get additional support. What are the prospects of other countries helping us out? The President replied that that was why Prime Minister Attlee had been over here last week — to talk about our plans for the defense of western Europe. The President thought that prospects were good for other countries sticking with us.

At this point, General Marshall described briefly the defense plans of France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Italy. He said that agreements had been reached by the military leaders of all of these countries, by the deputies, by the defense ministers and by the foreign ministers. The United States and all these countries were in agreement as to the number of men each nation would supply in the defense of Europe. General Marshall said he was not concerned

about the details of the plans because he thought they were good plans, but he was concerned about the ability of these countries to carry out these plans. He was concerned especially about France, and he described the very heavy loss of French officers in the fighting in Indo-China. He also wondered about the ability of the French to have trained cadres, with which to train properly the divisions that France was planning to raise in the next couple of years.

Congressman Martin wanted to know if we were making any effort in India and Japan and the "Chinamen who are friendly" to get any additional fighting men?

General Marshall said there was a question of practicability here. We are unable to use Japanese troops because there was a Sino-Soviet Treaty of mutual assistance. If we were to use Japanese, that might be an excuse for the Russians to get into the act. As for India, he just didn't know. He thought India was a country trying to perform the rope trick.

Speaker Rayburn asked the President if he did not wish to get the sentiment of members of Congress on the specific question of declaring a national emergency.

The President said he was anxious for all to speak on this

The Vice President said he had approached the question of a national emergency with great hesitation. He didn't want it done unless it were necessary. This was somewhat like Universal Military Training. He had never favored that, but eventually he came around when he was convinced it was the only thing to do. Now, in view of the situation in our own country, and in view of the tragic world situation, he thought that the declaration of a national emergency was the only thing to do. It would stiffen the back of our friends and it would bring to the attention of our own people the need to take every step in preparation for what can well be a very tragic time ahead. A terrible possibility faces us, the Vice President said, in view of Russia's deliberate moves to upset the whole world. For our own sake, and to strengthen our friends, the President ought to declare a national emergency.

The President asked Speaker Rayburn for his opinion.

The Speaker said he was still uncertain in his own mind and he would like to hear the reaction of some of the other gentlemen present, especially some of the chairmen of committees, so that he

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of national emergency was essential. He had not firmly made up his mind against it, but he did not know what it involved.

The President asked Senator Taft for his views.

Senator Taft said he spoke for himself only and with some hesitation. He had some basic differences on questions of foreign policy but it was, no doubt, neither the time nor the place to discuss such differences. The specific question at the moment, as the President had said, was one of building up our military strength. Senator Taft said he thought the most necessary thing at the moment was a definite military plan. He thought the exact size of the military program ought to be decided. So far, all he had heard was general discussion and he had not been able to figure out just what kind of a military program the administration was intending to have. He thought it was more necessary to have some definite plans than it was to issue proclamations which would have only headline effects lasting a day or two.

The President had referred to the psychological effect of a declaration, Senator Taft went on. He thought a far better psychological effect on the people would be created by putting before them



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a definite program. The people ought to be told what scale of spending was anticipated, and what it would mean in taxes, and what it would mean in drafting boys. The main thing we need, Senator Taft said, is a program, a definite program that the people can understand.

He wondered why we were fooling around with a four billion dollar tax bill when it was perfectly obvious that it would not begin to meet the need. He thought the administration ought to state clearly what was needed.

As for the legal reasons behind the issuance of a proclamation, Senator Taft said he was dubious. He would prefer that the President come to the Congress if he wanted or needed additional authority.

"I'm generally inclined against a declaration of national emergency," Senator Taft concluded, "without knowing the details of what is involved."

Congressman McCormack said that the most imperative need at the moment was to make America as strong as we could. We had to recognize the complacency of democracy. We had to recognize that it

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Senator Taft broke in at this point to say that he was very strongly in favor of building up the Army. He was not dissenting on that point and he wanted nobody to misunderstand him on that point.

Congressman McCormack said that it was his frank opinion that the proclamation of a national emergency was a frank, definite, affirmative act of leadership. He thought the President ought to issue the proclamation.

The President asked Senator Wherry for his views.

Senator Wherry said that he appreciated the briefing he had heard. As for the rest of his comments, he hoped the President would understand that they were personal and he was not speaking for his colleagues in the Senate. He could not speak for them until he had consulted them.

The President said he understood.

Senator Wherry said that he would go along with the program to strengthen the nation, but as to the proclamation, he thought he needed more facts before he could go along with that. He went on to say that he was doubtful about some other things too. He was

doubtful about a number of our commitments abroad (he did not specify

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the President said he wanted could not be provided in the regular manner by making a request of Congress. The various committees were in town, and they could all act promptly if they had to.

Senator Wherry asked the President point blank why he did not ask Congress for additional powers if he wanted them.

The President replied that he needed additional discretionary powers to act promptly for whatever emergency became necessary.

Senator Wherry commented that total mobilization was a big step. He wanted to know if the President couldn't possibly ask for what he needed now, short of taking the steps that lead to total mobilization. Wouldn't it be better, he asked, to request the powers the President needed now, rather than to ask for everything.

The President replied that time is of the essence.

Senator Wherry commented that only the President would know, he was the only one who had the facts.

The President replied that the facts were available to Senator Wherry and to everybody else in the room. All they had

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to do was to come and ask him for them.

The President asked Congressman Cannon for his opinion.

Mr. Cannon replied that this was no time for niceties. Time was short.

He thought we had better be forehanded. He thought the President should go ahead and declare a national emergency.

The President remarked that he didn't want any more powers than he needed. He thought that members of the Congress would recall that he had from time to time voluntarily given up powers and he had even asked Congress to repeal some of his powers. That was all in the past. Now we are in a new situation. We don't have much time. We are faced with the most terrible situation since Pearl Harbor. The President said he was not asking for powers just because he wanted them, but because it was essential.

Senator Bridges referred to the rising cost of military equipment. He said he had very much in mind the fact that rising costs meant that the Army was not getting what it had thought a few weeks ago it would get. He thought the President ought to look into this situation.

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The President replied that that was the next step.

He was going into the matter of controls just as soon as the matter of a national emergency was taken care of.

The President called on Senator Connally for his views.

Senator Connally replied that events in Korea had given the world the impression that we were very, very weak. Our major problem now is to build up military force and let the world know that we are ready to fight. Ready to fight — and able to fight. As for the matter of a declaration of a national emergency, he thought it would have to be handled very carefully. The people would not know what it meant. Some of us here in the room, Senator Connally remarked, don't know what it means. He thought it would be all right for the President to issue the declaration if he explained it to the people at the same time.

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The President said that he expected to go on the air Friday night on a four-network hookup and that he would explain exactly what the world situation was, what steps he was taking, and why.

Senator Connally commented that the Korean situation had made everybody very jittery. He thought a speech by the President would be a good thing. It is essential for us to increase our military strength and to do it now. Everything else is subsidiary to that. A speech would help the American people understand what we have to do. They would then understand why the only important question in the world today is whether we have got the strength to stand up to communism. Nothing else will impress those against us, said Senator Connally, except a tremendous army, a satisfactory Navy, and a great air force.

The President asked Senator Tydings for his views.

Senator Tydings said he would speak, since the President had asked him to, but "I've had my horse shot out from under me." Senator Tydings said that the United States was in deadly peril. The question now is whether we can survive. The Congress can't regulate time; it can only take advantage of time. It ought to take advantage of time now and provide whatever is

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The war in Korea has shown us how weak we are and how strong the enemy is.

The war in Korea has shown us how well equipped communist troops are and

how well they can fight. We now know in what mortal peril we are and we

now know what we have to do about it. "We still have some time left,"

Senator Tydings said, "but damn little. I am in favor of giving the President

the power to get ready as fast as he can. We face extinction otherwise.

Russia is stepping up her army at a tremendous rate. We can't stand around

here and talk about what people may think, or how they may react. We must

act now."

Congressman Vinson said that the President should issue a declaration of emergency at this time. He spoke again about how such a declaration would enable the Department of Defense to let contracts and to procure necessary equipment. He thought such a declaration should be followed by allocations and by price controls of all commodities which are vital to the national defense. The equipment which the army will now order will cost a billion dollars more than it would have cost three months ago because of the rise in prices. We must stop such a rise.

The President asked Senator McKellar if he wished to comment.

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even though the bill had not yet come to the Senate from the House. Senator McKellar said that he thought his Committee would recommend what had been requested.

The President thanked Senator McKellar for the prompt work of his Committee.

Senator McKellar went on to say that he thought the United States is in a very precarious position. We must be careful of what we do. Senator McKellar said he did not know what effect the declaration of a national emergency would have on people but he had some fear that it might be regarded as a declaration of war. He didn't know, he didn't want to say whether that would be the case. He was sure that we should build up our defenses as fast as possible. His Committee would do what it could. General Marshall had said the other day that he had asked for all that he could spend at this time and the Senate Appropriations Committee was going to give him what he had asked for.

The President then asked Senator George for his opinion.

Senator George said that it would be hazardous to issue a proclamation of national emergency if there was a divided opinion in the Congress about the wisdom of such a proclamation. He hoped that that



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to be issued. He also thought it should be followed by a definite program that included allocations and priorities and economic controls. He thought that there should be a new program of taxes to go along with these other measures.

The President asked Senator Millikin for his opinion.

Senator Millikin said he thought there might be a question of timing in the issuance of a declaration of national emergency. He feared that if the President issued a declaration out of a clear sky, that it might be misconstrued by the people. He thought the people ought to be prepared for such a drastic step. He thought the President should go before the people and explain to them what he was doing and why; it was a bad thing to get out of step with people.

Senator Millikin continued by saying that he was not impressed with the "psychological" argument on behalf of a declaration. He agreed with Senator Taft that a declaration would be a headline for a day if it were issued without a commensurate program. It might needlessly alarm and confuse the people if they were not told the reason for a declaration of national emergency, and what it meant. Above all, he felt that the President should

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up all the time. We should never let our guard down again.

The President said that he agreed very strongly with Senator Millikin. He had been trying since 1945, the President said, to keep the nation strong.

Senator Millikin concluded by saying that nobody abroad would be scared by anything we did unless we had "massive" strength. Just issuing a declaration wouldn't scare anybody abroad unless we had an army to go along with it. Pounding the table with his fist, Senator Millikin concluded, "We ought to make ourselves as strong as possible as fast as possible."

Several members of the Congress called out, "Aye, aye."

Speaker Rayburn spoke up and said that Congressman Richards had to leave at this time (11:35 a.m.) as he had to be on the floor at 12:00 Noon.

The President asked Mr. Richards if he had any comments to make before leaving.

Mr. Richards said he did not other than that he thought the question of wages and prices was intermixed with the entire defense program. In any speech the President might make, he thought the people would want to hear

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world. There was only one thing for us to do. That was for us to strip off our peace clothes and to show our muscles to the world. This wouldn't slow down the Russians because they are determined to destroy us but it would make it clear to the rest of the world that we were determined to stop them and that we were going to stop them.

The President asked Senator Lucas to speak.

Senator Lucas remarked that he was in the same position as Senator Tydings; he felt that in a meeting such as this, he should be seen and not heard. But since the President had asked him to speak, he thought it would be a most fatal mistake if those present were not able to agree on a course of action to follow in a time of such grave national emergency. He hoped devoutly that the members who were present would not leave the White House and say to the press that they didn't agree with the President. He hoped, Senator Lucas said, that Senator Taft and Senator Wherry and Mr. Martin would not go out saying that a declaration of national emergency was not necessary. This would hurt us no end. As for himself, Senator Lucas said, he agreed with Senator Millikin that the President should tell his program to the people and then declare a national emergency.

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Mr. Taber continued that the confusion was probably due to the lack of definite government policies and programs, and that the President would have to provide those policies and programs. If the President wanted to issue a declaration, he would certainly have to tell the people what the results would be.

Mr. Taber said that he agreed with what had been said by others that we would have to proceed with building up of our military strength. We also have to get our allies moving faster although he was not sure how that would be done. Mr. Taber said that he was satisfied that if the American people were provided with a definite policy and a definite program, that they were prepared to go along.

The President asked Congressman Short for his remarks.

Mr. Short said that we are in a desperate fight against time. Nobody can doubt Russia's intentions. She means to dominate the world. Every moment that is lost is bad; we have to build up our armed services and do it fast. Mr. Short said that he regretted seeing Congress delegate powers, regardless of the man to whom it gave them. But in this instance it had to be done. He thought that Congress should back the President

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he thought the President should issue a declaration of national emergency if that would give us "adequacy." If the declaration was adequate to bring into being great powerful military forces, it should be issued. If the declaration would not give us "adequacy," we shouldn't issue it. For his own part, Senator Wiley said, he did not know what result a declaration of national emergency would have. He did know that we had to protect the American dollar. (He referred at some length to a talk he had had with a contractor from his home state and the experiences of the contractor in letting sub-contracts at the present time.) The dollar now, Senator Wiley continued, was worth only forty cents and we had to do something to see that it didn't go down to twenty-five cents. As for the declaration of national emergency, if the President and his advisors felt that it would give the Executive Branch more adequacy to meet the situation, then it should be issued.

The President said he thought everybody by this time had had an opportunity to speak. He thanked the members of Congress for their frankness and said that he appreciated their having come to the White House.

The Vice President asked the President if he might speak for a moment. The people in Washington, Mr. Barkley said, are prone to mistake

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"in this very room" on July 28, 1939, when President Roosevelt had talked with a group of Congressional leaders about repealing a provision that prevented the shipment of military equipment to other countries. The Vice President said that he recalled very clearly Senator Borah's statement that there would not be any war in Europe and that he had sources better than the State Department's. Cordell Hull hit the ceiling, the Vice President recalled. The leaders went back to the hill and didn't do what President Roosevelt asked. They went home on August fifth. Then war came in September and the President had to call Congress back to do what it should have done when he first asked them. "I mention this," the Vice President said, "as an example of our difficulty in foretelling what is going to happen." This shows how the President needs powers to do things in an emergency. Congress is not always around to give him the authority he may need. The Vice President said that he thought Senator Millikin's suggestion had a great deal of merit and it was worthy of consideration. The Vice President said he would like to suggest that the President go on the air on Friday night, tell the people what he was going to do, and then declare the national emergency early next week.

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Wherry said that he thought the President ought to ask Congress for what he needed, and that he should ask for all powers short of a national emergency.

Congressman McCormack asked to be excused for speaking a second time, and said that he would like to concur with what Senator Wiley had said. This is indeed a question of "adequacy." If the declaration of national emergency would make the Executive Branch more adequate to deal with this crisis, then it should be issued. He did want to recommend to the President that he take action at the same time he went on the air to speak to the people. The President should not, Mr. McCormack said, just tell the people what was on his mind, he should tell them what he was doing about it.

Speaker Rayburn said he agreed 100 per cent with Congressman McCormack. The President ought to act at the same time as he speaks; it would be even better if he acted before he speaks.

The President then arose to adjourn the meeting, but Secretary Snyder said he had one statement that he wished to make before the group left the room. He said he wanted Senator Taft to understand that the

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was enough to do the job. He wanted to make it clear that that bill was not all he was going to ask for by way of taxes. The President now arose as did all the rest in the room. Speaker Rayburn asked the President if he had any views on what the group should say when it left the White House.

The President said he wanted to caution the members only on one thing and that was not to reveal the contents of the top secret military and Intelligence reports which they had heard.

As the President was preparing to leave the room, Speaker Rayburn asked if he were going to issue a declaration of national emergency. The President said that he was still considering the matter and that he would have more conferences with members of Congress and with the Cabinet and with others before he made up his mind.

Senator Millikin asked if he could have a list of the additional powers which the President would have if he issued a declaration of emergency. The President replied that he would send such a list to the Senator.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.