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Frances Biddle Papers  
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The President opened Cabinet by giving us a very vigorous lecture on jurisdictional squabbings among the Departments, saying that this had done more to hurt the war effort than any jurisdictional fights among the labor unions. He then emphasized specifically greed for power among the Departments for control of the administrative procedures, particularly in Africa over seized foreign countries. He said that Darlan had been appointed simply because he could be useful in the military occupation. Darlan is a traitor and a Quisling and will be put in the "jug" when the time comes, but at present he has saved much precious time for the Army of Occupation on account of his knowledge and authority, resulting in loading the boats by the French and infinitely better cooperation throughout the territory.

The President said to Stimson that Eisenhower should not sign an agreement with Darlan, but that it should be unilateral, an announcement simply of what Eisenhower had agreed, signed by Darlan rather than any formal agreement with Darlan which he could later point to as giving him authority. Murphy is representing the State Department in all problems of lay administration. When experts are needed, they can be brought from the other Departments; for instance from the Treasury, Mr. Bernstein is now working in Northern Africa at this time. All such arrangements, however, should be cleared through the State Department.

The President said that there was too much talk about Government policy on the lower levels, and that "the first man who shoots off his face on Government policy better be fired." He told me after Cabinet that Berle and Welles have been acting as impresarios and have been talking too much post-war stuff.

When it came to my turn, I reported to the President that his control of movement of information, individuals, and goods, bill - about which he sent a special message - had encountered a great deal of difficulty in the Ways and Means Committee before which I testified for three hours, on account of the fear that he would use it to open the doors to indiscriminate immigration; that the Committee had turned down the bill and appointed a sub-Committee with Jere Cooper as Chairman to redraft it. Jere Cooper is working with Oscar Cox in redrafting the bill, amending it so as to insure that quotas would not be affected and that the bill would expire on December 31, 1943, instead of immediately after the President had declared that hostilities had ceased, or by Joint Resolution. This is satisfactory.

Jim Rowe had seen the President two days ago and told him how much the order directing that all draft deferments be canceled had upset the Department of Justice, and Washington generally. This took a great deal of heat off me and on Jim. The Order has had a very bad effect on the morale of the Departments. Instead of emphasizing this, I merely asked the President for clarification; did he wish to have older lawyers, men of 35 to 40 obviously not capable of fighting who were in key positions, not deferred? No, he agreed, that key positions should be deferred. How should the deferments be made? The President suggested that I and the other Departments take up with him personally all deferments. I told him that we had deferred only seventy men out of our employees, except the FBI; that several of those had since gone into the Army, and that many were deferred only because they were engaged in specific litigation until the litigation was over. Morgenthau said that he only had seven deferments out of 7,000. It sounds a little bit fishy. There was general discussion across the table. Everyone complaining. Harold Ickes brought up his young experts in octane gas, whom he said were irreplaceable. The approach to the President is, I think as is usual, on specific cases rather than on a theoretical basis. After several of us take individual deferment problems to him, he will realize that there are so many that he cannot handle them, and he will get Wayne Coy, or someone, to act for him, then Wayne can study all problems that may help the situation.

Knox reported that the news reports were excellent in the Pacific; two first class battleships sunk and two others injured; and that the news which the papers printed yesterday with some reluctance was actually additional casualties so that there had been no overlap. Sinkings, however, are very bad and there are probably a nest of several hundred submarines off Gibraltar. The sinkings will get worse as the weather gets heavier and we cannot send some of our types of escorts. He thinks it will be impossible to keep up the airplane program and that more steel must be put into the escorts, that this is the weakness. Bill Bullitt also told me the same thing at dinner night before last. Don Nelson thinks that both escorts and planes

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can be built on the present program.

I had a long talk with the President after Cabinet for nearly half an hour. He still spoke of the possibility of Hand's appointment, but agreed that he was too old and told me to prepare the papers for Rutledge and Arnold and send them over to him, under seal, for Grace Tully. He will see Rutledge on Tuesday at 2 o'clock. I have not yet spoken to Arnold and will wait until the last minute. Rutledge came in to see me after Cabinet and I told him the story. I think he really believes that he is not competent for the job, such a person is rare, but I think he will do a good job.

I suggested at Cabinet, as a result of Harold Ickes' saying that he could use some Japs, that I had some refugee Germans who, if taken off the list, could be used in the war effort - 2,500 doctors, 1,000 farmers and 3,500 skilled workers. They all seemed to approve and I took up the details with the President afterwards and suggested to him that (unlike the Italian situation) he direct me to take them off the list. The matter will have to be carefully handled on account of the feeling in the House, both anti-semitic and anti-refugee. He suggested that I clear with the other Departments, State, O.W.I. and Army - which has almost already been completed.

I told the President I had spoken to Senator Norris about his appointment as Chairman of the T. V. A. and that the Senator had been greatly moved, tears had come into his eyes, but that he feels that he is finished, old and incapable of doing the work. However, Hugo and Claude Pepper are going to talk to him and the President will probably see him on Wednesday or Thursday.

Grace Tully told me that the President had roared over Hugh Hamilton's letter.

The President said he had just got a letter from George from Brazil indicating that George would like to do some more murals. He is very fond of George.

The President agreed that Josh Lee had too thin a training to be a judge; does not want to keep the place open on the Third C.C.A. for Bill Clark; and after talking to both Wallace and me thinks we do not have to put Bill Smathers in that place.

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I suggested to the President that he direct me, to which he agreed, to call a group of the outstanding people interested in the Negro situation to work out with them a more competent handling of the whole problem. I reported to the President our investigation of and authorization of a grand jury proceeding in the recent Mississippi lynching case of Howard Wash, a negro who was lynched as a result of the jailer leaving unlocked the door of his cell so that the mob entered and dragged him out. The President was pleased with the way we handled it.

As to the Fifth Circuit, the President has promised one job to Pepper for Florida and approves the appointment of one man from Louisiana.

The President said he did not want to take German refugees off the list; but suggested that I write to the Departments concerned pointing out the availability of certain groups of farmers, skilled workmen, and doctors.

The President has arranged with Senator Norris, or tentatively, to make a report to him for the National Resources Planning Committee on the whole T. V. A. program, to act as it were in a capacity of an expert on similar projects in response to the great demand from abroad with respect to the T. V. A. work. He saw Norris yesterday. I told the President that Norris had cried a little at dinner when the President's letter about him was read by Senator Guffey.