

● Joseph Alsop-

Subject File

PSF - Bx 115

PSF Alsop

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

7-17-40

MEMORANDUM FOR JUDGE ROSENMAN:

Joseph Alsop dictated the following message for you over the telephone, from Chicago, at 5:45 PM:

"The Foreign Relations Plank adopted by the Resolutions Committee appears to me and Bob Kintner a complete abnegation of the foreign policy for which the President has so finely fought. As we devoted considerable time and effort to writing an interpretation of the President's foreign policy, we feel great hesitancy at commenting on this apparent cave-in without further light on it. Speaking frankly, it is not too much to say that the majority of those who have most deeply admired the President's conduct of foreign affairs are in despair here in Chicago this evening. Can you therefore call me at the Stevens Hotel, Room 810 if you think a private explanation worth while? A deadline looms before us, and both Bob Kintner and I earnestly hope you can manage it."

(signed) Joseph Alsop.

PSF: Joseph Alsop
Johns Hopkins Hospital,
September 19, 1942

Dear Mr. President,

Unless the American people are even more frivolously ungrateful than I suspect them of being, you must have had in these last months many expressions of the sort in which I now propose to indulge myself. Yet my feeling is so strong that even although I ~~suppose~~ ^{suppose} it a work of supererogation, I cannot restrain myself from telling you of it in writing.

The feeling of which I speak is, very simply, one of the deepest gratitude to you, as a man and as a leader. I have been out of the United States for nearly a year and a half. I have passed three months with the AVG, six months in internment in Hong Kong, and the rest in half a score of places all over the Far East. I have had time to think, and time to see things in perspective. And I have returned home with the firm conviction that you have saved my country, almost single handed, not once but twice. First, when all but a few, and those not powerful men, failed to realize the very existence of the forces undermining us internally, you saw them, dealt boldly with them, and placed us once again upon a firm foundation. Second, when all but a few, and those not powerful men, failed to grasp the even more terrible danger of the forces threatening us from without, you understood them, prepared to meet them, and are now, so I believe, leading us to victory against them. I can dimly imagine how difficult it must have been for you to do what you have done, beset as you have been on every side by ignorance, irresponsibility, parti-

sanship and the strange, blind selfishness of class and group which is our special affliction in America. But I do not need to imagine, for I know, how great is the debt every American owes to you. You have preserved us from the ultimate disaster. If Abe Lincoln's America has not become, and is not going to become, Bertie McCormick's America, it is you we must thank.

I hope you will believe that in saying these things, I am neither insincere nor over-emotional. As a newspaperman in Washington during the New Deal years I found much to criticize and some things to laugh at. In Washington again after my return to America, I have found some serious disappointments. I would not change much that I said as a newspaperman; I do not deny the disappointments of my return. But what I now see, and only imperfectly realized before, is that the details have only evanescent meaning so long as you get the main job done. I don't suggest that the cases are parallel, but it perhaps clears my meaning if I say that I now remember more often that Lincoln named Simon Cameron as Secretary of War at the very crisis of the Republic. Thad Stevens, as you will recall, on that occasion first applied to Cameron the description, "I don't believe he'd steal a red hot stove if it was nailed down," yet Lincoln saved us. Your Cameron was only Harry Woodring, and you have saved us too.

There is no need for me to labor my point, or to rephrase my gratitude. No American now cares a hill of beans about anything except keeping this country what it has always been through all its changes--- a place where the freedoms and the human decencies are not essentially endangered by the treacheries of the Timothy Pick-

erings and the Bertie McCormicks, the stupidities and self-interested short-sightedness of the Buchanans and the Bob Tafts. We are going to do it, so I am convinced, and we are only able to do it by your courage and forethought and leadership. Consequently my gratitude to you is a very personal feeling--- so personal that I only tell you of it because I like to think that in a very small way it may hearten you for your grim task.

Steve and Grace were both kind enough to suggest that you might want to see me, but I have nothing to tell you except that Chennault is a very great man and a brilliant leader, which I imagine you know already, so I told them not to make any effort to fit me into your already appalling schedule. It was splendid to take lunch with Cousin Eleanor, to find her so well, and to be able to thank her for everything she so kindly did for the family while I was caught in Hong Kong. At the moment, I am at Johns Hopkins being vetted, in the expectation of returning to China to rejoin General Chennault's staff in the near future. I shall go more lightmindedly, having got all this off my chest, for it is in an sense an amende honorable as well as an expression of what ~~is~~ I strongly feel.

Very sincerely yours.

Joseph Alsop.

from:
J.W. Alsop, Jr.
Johns Hopkins Hospital
Baltimore



The President,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

PSF Joseph Alsop gen
file
personal

November 9, 1942.

Dear Joe:-

I was very remiss in answering your mighty nice letter from Johns Hopkins, but I do want you to know that it is that kind of a letter which makes a fellow feel that perhaps what he is doing is worthwhile after all.

What a privilege it is to be alive in this particular day and age! Until now almost every practical philosophy and ideal has been confined to national thinking or perhaps regional planning. I wonder what your classmates at school would ~~have~~ thought of you if you had announced that you would be part and parcel of American military and naval operations in Africa, Asia and Polynesia.

If I had suggested that at Groton in 1900 they would have put me down as more unorthodox than I actually was.

I wish I could go with you to Chennault and I am suggesting as an alternative that he be told to return here for a short visit if he thinks it advisable.

Affectionately,

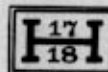
Joseph Alsop, Esq.,
Office of War Information,
224 West 57th Street,
New York, N. Y.

PSF: [unclear]

to close this letter without presenting to you his respects, for it was partly in talk with him that I reached the conclusions about the world and America which I did in the Far East.

Yours very sincerely,

John A. [unclear]



November 5

[1942]

Dear Mr. President,

I should be exceedingly remiss if I failed to add a word of gratitude for your great personal kindness to me to what I wrote you from Johns Hopkins. My lunch with you was an experience, and the help you gave me is a fact, which I shall not forget. It will perhaps please you to hear that although I have discussed the air situation in China with at least twenty people in Washington, many of them men who give most of their time to thinking about it, I had to wait until I saw you to receive the most perspicuous and sensible analysis of it. I hope that circumstances will not lead you to abandon the decisions towards which you seemed to be inclining, for I am certain that if my Chief is given a free hand and reasonable resources to work with, he will do you great credit. Even if he is not given a free hand, he will still do you credit, but I am certain that a mind so original as his works best in independence. He would wish me, I know, not

PSF: Also p San Carlos 3-44

RETURN TO THE PRESIDENT.

E.R.

file
Personal

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 6, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MISS THOMPSON.

PLEASE SHOW THIS TO MRS. ROOSEVELT
AND RETURN FOR MY PERSONAL FILES.

F. D. R.

*Return to
the President*

PSF: *Alsop* *See memo "A"*
3-44

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 6, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

MISS THOMPSON.

PLEASE SHOW THIS TO MRS. ROOSEVELT
AND RETURN FOR MY PERSONAL FILES.

F. D. R.

Personal letter from Joseph H. Alsop, Jr.
4-8-44.

PSF: Alsop

HEADQUARTERS FOURTEENTH AIR FORCE
A. P. O. 627, C/O POSTMASTER
NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

In reply
refer to:

April 6, 1944

Dear Mr. President,

A rather flustered letter from Mother has just revealed the part you played in having me commissioned. More than a year ago, I wrote you of the gratitude which I and all other Americans owe to you for your wise leadership. That is already a debt which cannot be repaid. To it, you have now added another, quite personal debt, repayment of which is equally impossible. I cannot tell you how much it means to be in uniform at last. I shall always remember what you have done for me.

If it is not impertinent, I should like also to say that the sense of your still being at the head of our affairs is my only source of hope for the future. Judging by such news as comes from home, a large part of the population of the United States seems to have been infected with the madness of the Cadarene swine. Frankly, I should be resigned to our plunging ourselves, as a country, over one or another of the numerous cliffs available, if I did not think you would somehow succeed in heading us off. I do not suppose Lincoln himself encountered such appalling difficulties. I deeply admire the calm courage with which you face and surmount them.

I may add that in all my career as a political reporter, which had its decidedly sickened moments, I have never seen anything to equal the present behavior of your opponents in pure emetic power. The press is bad enough. A reading of Time is now an excellent substitute for a finger down the throat, and half a column of Arthur Krock is better than a whole tumbler full of mustard and water. As for the politicians, the blend of hypocrisy, greasy self-serving and pious blather achieved by the Congress in such episodes as the Soldiers' vote debates, quite puts the old-fashioned stomach pump in the shade. But I should not make jokes about it, for it is too tragic and too serious a matter; however superficially funny Arthur Vandenberg may look, hitching up his senatorial toga to conceal the dirty underclothing of his real purposes, one ought to hang him rather than laugh at him.

More power to your elbow, you men all
we have, I think, between us and what might be
worse than mere defeat.

Yours, as always, sincerely and gratefully,
Give my heart to Mommy and my love to Cousin E. Joseph W. Alsop Jr.

PSF: Joseph also ~~has~~ cases "a"
3-40

June -

A map for the President.

Red lines show territory now held
by Japs -

Black wavy lines show.

RRs - which will be main lines
of advance.

Again this is personal.

Love -

Joe Alsop.

LONG RANGE AIR NAVIGATION CHART

