

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Dear Fred -

Tydings believes that
the enclosed more closely
approximates what we want.
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May 19, 1950

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

The free world is looking towards the United States for courageous, vigorous, and honest leadership in the cause of peace.

The Department of State should and must be the "work shop" of our country's effort. Confidence in the patriotism and loyalty of its employees is essential. May I suggest, Mr. President, there is nothing more important at this critical and tense juncture of world affairs than that the people of the United States should know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, concerning whether the charges of Senator McCarthy are true or false. This is essential for the unity of our people at home and the restoration of confidence among the people of other countries who are allied with us in the defense of democracy. Charges against the loyalty of eighty-one of its employees have been made by Senator McCarthy. The files in these eighty-one cases have been examined by four Congressional Committees of the Congress and are now in the course of examination by us.

The importance and gravity of the matters to be settled are such as to lead us to request that you designate a special auxiliary panel of the Loyalty Board to examine these charges and the files of those charged and to report to you and to us on their findings of fact. We would suggest that men of the character and calibre of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Chester W. Nimitz, and Owen D. Roberts be urged to accept this task.

We propose to continue our examination of the files and in the light thereof, together with any other evidence available to us (including the findings of the proposed panel) make a full and complete report.

Three members of our Committee are possible candidates for reelection this year. Try as we might, and as we will, to reach a fair, conscientious, and objective judgment on these matters, we will certainly hear cries from those who disagree with whatever our findings

- 2 -

will be that those findings have been inspired by political considerations. That does not particularly disturb me personally, but the effect on our strength at home and abroad does. Will you please advise me if this proposal meets with your approval?

Respectfully yours,

United States Senator

MILLARD E. TYDINGS, MD., CHAIRMAN
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

May 18, 1950

Honorable Harry S. Truman
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. President -

Since last February 22, a subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has been inquiring into allegations of Sen. McCarthy that persons who are disloyal to the United States are or have been employed by the State Department.

This inquiry resulted from a speech made by McCarthy, in which he said:

"....I have here in my hand a list of 205 -- a list of names that were made known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist Party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy in the State Department." (Speech at Wheeling, West Virginia, on February 9, 1950).

Two days later, McCarthy changed his speech, saying:

"Last night I discussed the Communists in the State Department. I stated that I had the names of 57 card carrying members of the Communist Party." (Speech at Reno, Nevada, Feb. 11, 1950)

When pressed for evidence to support these changing charges, Sen. McCarthy told the Senate on February 20 that the loyalty files and records of 81 employees of the State Department would show that these employees were "either Communists or disloyal persons".

Senator McCarthy did not make known to the Senate and the country at that time the fact that the loyalty records and files of these same 81 cases had previously been examined, not by one, but by four separate and independent committees of the Republican-controlled 80th Congress. None of these committees, after a thorough examination of these 81 loyalty records and files, pointed out that a single one of these 81 persons was a "Communist or disloyal".

Indeed, one of the Republican members of the 80th Congress, namely Representative Jonkman of Michigan, after examining the 81 cases, said on the floor of the House of Representatives the following:

"I want the members to know that there is one Department in which the known or reasonably suspected subversives, Communists, fellow travelers, sympathizers, and persons whose services are not for the best interest of the United States have been swept out, that is the Department of State."

Now these same 81 loyalty records and files are again being examined, for the fifth time, by our committee. I myself have already read over half of these 81 cases, as I write this letter. I find that some of the 81 individuals are not now and never have been employed by the State Department. As to these persons who never have been employed by the State Department, the charges of McCarthy are obviously untrue. Some of the 81 cases were simply applicants for jobs in the State Department but were never hired. Of the 81 individuals mentioned by McCarthy, only 41 of them are now employed in the State Department.

Soon we will have completed our examination of these loyalty records and files. I know you appreciate that any verdict which is rendered by our committee on the McCarthy charges should be such that it will be accepted without question by the people of the country.

Indeed, Mr. President, there is nothing more important at this critical and tense juncture of world affairs than that the people of the United States should know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as to whether or not Communists and disloyal persons have been employed by the State Department of our government, for it is this department which is charged with handling our foreign relations.

Now you know that the members of the Senate are there because they have been elected to public office. Three of the five members of our committee may be candidates for reelection this fall. Thus, no matter how fair, painstaking and impartial we may try to be, the cry of "politics" is likely to be raised by those who are disappointed with our findings.

It is doubtful, therefore, if a committee composed of members of the United States Senate, in an election year - human nature being what it is - can render a verdict which will not be subjected to the reckless charge of bias, political or otherwise, even though there are no facts to sustain such a charge.

Feeling that a verdict clearly above and beyond imputations of unworthy motives is indispensable to the unity of our people at home and to the restoration of confidence among the peoples of the nations allied with us, I have a suggestion to make.

In order that the verdict of these 81 cases may be accepted without any question by our people, I suggest that you appoint a Commission composed of the most eminent citizens of our land, citizens wholly divorced from politics, whose single duty and objective would be to examine these 81 loyalty records and files and submit a report with respect to their findings to you and to our committee.

In this way, the American public will know once and for all what the truth about the McCarthy charges really is. They will know that a fair and impartial examination of these loyalty records and files has been made by men who are not in politics, who have no motive or purpose to serve other than their country's welfare. Their verdict will be accepted without question.

Assuming your concurrence in the wisdom of appointing such a commission, it is suggested that you appoint a board of three individuals selected from among the following:

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz
Former Chief of Naval Operations

Justice Owen D. Roberts
Former Justice, U.S. Supreme Court, Retired

General Dwight D. Eisenhower
Former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
President, Columbia University

Judge Harold Medina
Judge, U.S. District Court for the Southern
District of New York

Judge Learned Hand
Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, 2nd Judicial Circuit

Judge John J. Parker
Chief Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, 4th Judicial
Circuit

Judge John F. X. McGohey
Judge, U.S. District Court for the
Southern District of New York

Judge George C. Sweeney
Judge, U.S. District Court, Boston, Mass.

Judge John Higgins
Superior Court, State of Massachusetts

Such a course as is herein suggested will at once dispel any confusion existing in the public mind. Likewise, it will put an end to the self-serving and unwarranted charges of "whitewash" or "persecution" that from time to time have appeared in the press and over the radio. The verdict of a Commission such as I have suggested will bring the whole matter to a head with unimpeachable finality. If such a procedure is not followed, no matter how honest and detached our committee might be - if past history is any yardstick - we are bound to be attacked by those who are displeased with our findings, and who are often inspired by their own self-serving purposes.

I therefore sincerely hope that you can see your way clear to cooperate with us in the appointment of such a Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

MILLARD E. TYDINGS, MD., CHAIRMAN
RICHARD B. RUSSELL, GA.
HARRY FLOOD BYRD, VA.
VIRGIL CHAPMAN, KY.
LYNDON B. JOHNSON, TEX.
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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

May 19, 1950

Honorable Harry S. Truman
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President -

In his speech to the Senate on February 20, Senator McCarthy said there were 81 persons now or previously employed by the State Department whom he charged with being either Communists or disloyal Americans. At that time he said that an examination of the loyalty records and files by our subcommittee would prove the truth or falsity of his case.

You have turned these loyalty records and files in the 81 cases over to my committee and we are now in the process of examining their contents.

The investigation of the McCarthy charges has consumed a great deal of the time and energy of all members of the committee. We have not been able to attend important committee meetings and sessions of the Senate because we have been engaged in this investigation for more than two months. We still have considerable work to do before we can bring our investigation to a close.

Furthermore, when we do close our investigation, we hope to do it in such fashion that the final verdict, whatever it may be, will be accepted by the people of the country without question.

For the purpose of speeding up our work and arriving at a verdict which will command the confidence of the country, I respectfully suggest and request your aid to our work by the appointment of an independent committee of eminent citizens of the highest standing to review independently the 81 files above referred to. When such a committee has completed its review, I would request that they make a report to you and to our committee for our aid and guidance.

Assuming your concurrence in the wisdom of appointing such a committee, it is suggested that you appoint a board of three individuals selected from among such persons as the following:

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, former Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, and former Chief of Naval Operations

Justice Owen D. Roberts, former Justice, U. S. Supreme Court, resigned

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, former Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces in Europe and former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; now President of Columbia University

General Carl Spaatz, former Chief, U.S. Air Force, retired

May I suggest, Mr. President, there is nothing more important at this critical and tense juncture of world affairs than that the people of the United States should know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, concerning whether the charges of Sen. McCarthy are true or false. This is essential for the unity of our people at home and the restoration of confidence among the people of other countries who are allied with us in the defense of democracy.

I therefore sincerely hope that you can see your way clear to grant this request. I make it solely in the public interest and so our work may be concluded promptly, and whatever the facts warrant a verdict accordingly be rendered for the information of all concerned.

Thanking you for your kind consideration of the above, I am

Yours respectfully,

My dear Senator Tydings -

I have your letter of May 19 and have noted carefully its contents.

As I have told you on other occasions, I do not want to spare any effort to root out any Communistic or disloyal employees from the Federal government. I have set up loyalty review boards and procedures in order to accomplish this very result.

Now your request seems to me to be a most reasonable one. I can see it will in particular assist your committee in its deliberations and at the same time should go far toward acquainting the public with the real facts in the whole inquiry. As I understand it, the committee will be appointed by me but will be an auxiliary of the Senate investigating committee, which is right and proper. I therefore will be glad to appoint such a committee from the list of names submitted by you, and to make available to them the files and loyalty records in question.

Let me re-emphasize that no one is more anxious than I to keep the employment service of the Federal government free of any subversive influences and anything that will aid and assist me in this worthy endeavor I welcome.

Thanking you for bringing this matter to my attention, I am, with best wishes,

Sincerely yours,