

that press conference was published in the New York Times of August 19, 1954. As everyone knows, the New York Times keeps a meticulous record of what is said at the President's press conferences. In those days, reference was not made to the President by name, but the personal pronoun was used. I shall read now, in the form of an indirect discourse, what appeared in the New York Times:

"Now, as to his (the President's) actions, his own actions, he was not going to defend himself, as he had told reporters time and again he should not. He merely said this: Of course, he approved the recommendations for this action, and every single official action he took, involving the contractual relationships of the United States with anybody, and except only when the question of National security was directly involved, was open to the public."

Mr. President, I ask that particular attention be given to the words:

"Every single official action he took, involving the contractual relationships of the United States with anybody, and except only when the question of National security was directly involved, was open to the public."

That was the President's statement; and it was a proper statement. I agree completely that when the national security is actually involved, of course then the information can be classified. But the fact is that subordinates throughout the executive branch of the Government are indulging in the classification of public business matters which do not involve national security; and there was no national security in this particular case.

But let me proceed with the quotation from the President's statement. These are his words: "Any one of you present might singly or in an investigation group, go to the Bureau of the Budget, to the chief of the Atomic Energy Commission"—that, of course, was Admiral Strauss—"and get the complete record from the inception of the idea to this very minute, and it was all yours."

That was all he had to say about it. There was the declaration of the President of the United States to the representatives of the American press, and he said any one of them might go individually or in a body to the chief of the Atomic Energy Commission and every fact in this case was theirs for the asking.

After that statement, we in the Judiciary Committee asked the chief of the Atomic Energy Commission for the facts. He did not give them to us. He was not following the instructions of the President. He was defying the President.

I have no hesitation in saying that the President of the United States, whose physical condition is such that he cannot devote full time and energy to the burdensome tasks of his Office, and must depend upon aids and assistants, was depending upon these men to carry out his wishes and to be as free and frank with the public as he said he wanted them to be. But Mr. Strauss, both before the Judiciary Committee and later before the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, refused. "I shall decide," was his response, in effect.

Mr. CARROLL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. O'MAHONEY. I yield.

Mr. CARROLL. What was the ground or basis of his refusal? It was executive privilege, was it not?