

Official White House Transcript

of

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S PRESS AND RADIC CONFERENCE # 190(Filmed, Taped, and Shorthand Reported)

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Held in Room 474, Executive Office Building
 Wednesday, August 24, 1960
 10:30 o'clock a.m. EDST

This Copy For: -*The President*

NOTE: - THE ENTIRE TEXT OF THIS CONFERENCE
 WAS RELEASED FOR QUOTATION AND TO
 RADIC AND NEWSREELS.

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I have all sorts of advisers, and one of the principal ones is Mr. Nixon. But any Vice President that I should have, even if I did not admire and respect Mr. Nixon as I do, I would still keep him close in all these things, because I think any President owes it to the country to have the next individual in line of succession completely aware of what is going on. Otherwise, you have a break that is unconscionable and unnecessary.

Now when you talk about other people sharing a decision, how can they? No one can, because then who is going to be responsible? And because I have been raised as an Army individual, and have used staffs, I think you will find no staff has ever thought that they made a decision as to what should be done or should not be done when I was a Commander. And I don't think anyone in the government will find, or you can find, anyone that would say differently.

C. Lillian Levy, Science Service. Mr. President, on May 13 you signed an Executive Order which allows each interested Federal agency to fix its own radiation safety standards and to exceed, if it deems necessary, the standards recommended by the Federal Radiation Council.



Is there any reason why the Executive Order did not provide that any standards set by the individual agency which would exceed the radiation safety levels recommended by your Council be subject to review and approval by the Federal Radiation Council which originally was established, I believe, for the purpose of recommending radiation safety standards for all agencies, so that the confusion and conflict -- (laughter) -- within an agency between keeping to standards of safety on the one hand, and performing its functions in developing nuclear energy on the other, might be eliminated? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, as a matter of fact, the question is sensible, because I assume, from the way you have read it, that there could be some confusion here if any excess radiation were allowed to escape and were not reported to the proper people. If the order is defective, I will try to find out about it.

C. van der Linden, Nashville Banner. Sir, the Democrats apparently are going to let Congress go home without passing your oft-requested bill for additional Federal Judgeships. They are apparently turning down your offer to share these between the two Parties, in a gamble that maybe they can get all of them next year. I wonder, sir, do you think maybe they are playing politics with this, or are you going to make another appeal to them before they leave?

THE PRESIDENT: They will have to make their own decision, whether they are just ignoring the welfare of the United States and the administering of justice, or for any other reason. I don't know what it is. But I think in every year that I have been here, I have recommended these Judges. And