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Monday, August 6, 1945

Aboard the Augusta. Weather fair. This was the day we had been waiting for -- while having mess in the ward room, the President came in and said he wanted to make an announcement. He said he had just received two messages about the atomic bomb. That it had been dropped on Hiroshima. It was a greater success than expected. He pointed out that it was 20,000 more powerful than TNT. What he meant was that the bomb was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT. He was given a round of applause and then he made the same announcement in the sailors' mess where he was eating.

After lunch, the President came to the Justice's cabin, and they discussed the bomb. Truman told how his committee investigated the project and only on the appeal of Secretary of War Stimson did he refrain and let the War Department continue with the experiment unmolested.

JFB recalled how he became worried about the huge expenditure and feared repercussions because he had doubt of its working. Stimson talked to Byrnes, and the Justice contented himself with writing a letter to the President suggesting he get a board of scientists to look it over and make an impartial report. "It developed that all scientists capable of investigating the project were already at work on it," JFB said.

"This goes to show how important it is to have men in key placed who have the respect of the people," Truman said. "Jim, you and I know several people who, if they had been in charge of this project, it would never have succeeded, because Congress would not have

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had the confidence in them to permit these huge expenditures in secrecy," JFB heartily agreed.

Later the President expressed his opinion about DeGaul in no uncertain terms. "They are publishing stories about me seeing him -- well, I'm not going to see that SOB." The President then recalled how terrible DeGaul treated Roosevelt and said if he had wanted to see him he would ^{have} never let him come to Berlin just as he did the Poles.

JFB asked the President if he had not already invited DeGaul, but he said he had not. Then the Justice told the President what Matthews had told him about Grew carrying over a telegram inviting DeGaul to Washington and the President filling in the date. The President said he had some future time, and he never meant to see him.

Matthews later told me his story was correct.

And there you have a story which may lead to serious diplomatic relations.

President and JFB at first disappointed over news report on atomic bomb. JFB said some guy talking about soap and Hiram Johnson's death and did not mention bomb. Later in the day, the air was filled with the bomb story.