

UNCLASSIFIED

1465

6 FEBRUARY 1947

76-77 CLUB

John Sullivan, Admiral Sherman and I dined last night with the 76-77 Club, being a club of Republican members of those Congresses. The purpose of the evening was a discussion of the proposed unification. I made a general outline of the history of the Army and Air Force efforts at unification, gave a list of the Navy's misgivings of what would happen to it in the event of such a thing occurring. I purposely made this list a formidable one and said that it was the reason why we had approached discussions with the War Department with the greatest care and reserve. Having done so, however, I said that it was our judgment that the agreement signed by Patterson and myself and approved by the President represented a sound and desirable result first for the country and second for the Navy. I said that we had no illusions about the difficult of translating the spirit of this agreement into legislative language nor did we have any lack of appreciation of the fact that it could work successfully only if it had back of it the good will and affirmative desires of everybody concerned.

The majority of the people at the dinner were inclined to be against any merger although all had a general idea that economies could be effected by joint procurement. However, my sense of the meeting was that a good deal of their opposition is based on the general desire to oppose any Democratic proposal. I said that this agreement and the President's approval of it was a completely non-political, non-partisan accomplishment and that I thought it would be most unfortunate for the country if this merger project became identified with the fortunes of either party.

A list of the people present is attached.

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76-77 CLUB

List of members of 76-77 Club present at
dinner on 5 February 1947:

Bishop, C.W. (Runt) (Ill.)
Blackney, William W. (Mich.)
Bradley, Fred (Mich.)
Butler, John C. (N.Y.)
Chenoweth, J. Edgar (Colo.)
Chiperfield, Robert B. (Ill.)
Clevenger, Cliff (Ohio)
Elston, Charles H. (Ohio)
Fenton, Ivor D. (penn.)
Gillie, George W. (Ind.)
Grant, Robert A. (Ind.)
Hess, William E. (Ohio)
Hill, William S. (Colo)
Howell, Evan (Ill.)
Johnson, Anton J. (Ill.)
Johnson, Noble J. (Ind.)
Jonkman, Bartel J. (Mich.)
Kean, Robert W. (N.J.)
Kilburn, Clarence E. (N.Y.)
Kunkel, John C. (penn.)
Lewis, Earl R. (Ohio)
McGregor, J. Harry (Ohio)
Martin, Thomas E. (Iowa)
O'Hara, Joseph P. (Minn.)
Rizley, Ross (Okla.)
Rockwell, Robert F. (Colo.)
Scott, Hugh D. Jr., (Penn.)
Smith, Lawrence H. (Wis.)
Tibbott, Harve, (Penn.)
Van Zandt, James E. (Penn.)
Wilson, Earl (Ind.)
Cole

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