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The United States Senate

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Report of Proceedings

TO BE RETURNED TO SENATE
ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

Committee on Armed Services

NOMINATION OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH TO BE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

NOMINATIONS (Ref. No. 379)

S. 2971 and H.R. 4384

EXECUTIVE SESSION

August 24, 1950

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Washington, D. C.

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STATEMENT OF:

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

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**NOMINATION OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH
TO BE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

NOMINATIONS (Ref. No. 379)

S. 2971 and H.R. 4384

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Thursday, August 24, 1950.

**United States Senate,
Committee on Armed Services,
Washington, D. C.**

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:45 a.m., in room 212, Senate Office Building, Senator Millard E. Tydings (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Tydings (chairman), Byrd, Chapman, Johnson (of Texas), Kefauver, Hunt, Saltonstall, and Knowland,

Also present: Mark H. Galusha, of the Committee Staff; Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, Director of Central Intelligence; Thomas J. Canning, Corps of Engineers, Department of Army; and Oliver J. Dompierre, Administrative Assistant to Senator Ferguson.

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**NOMINATION OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH
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Thursday, August 24, 1950

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The Chairman. I think we might go ahead, General. We have five members here, and a couple of more are coming, and all of us are pretty busy.

We are very familiar with your background as a military man, Ambassador to Russia, General, and we are very familiar with your record as one of our outstanding military men in World War II, and, as I stated, Ambassador to Moscow, to Russia, and certainly that ought to be an excellent background for the very difficult job to which you have just been nominated, to wit, head of the Central Intelligence Agency.

I hardly know of anybody who, on qualifications, ought to be able to fill it with more distinction and more efficiency than yourself, because Russia seems to be the thing we want to know most about, and your service over there, both as a soldier and as Ambassador, ought to eminently qualify you.

**STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL WALTER BEDELL SMITH,
NOMINEE AS DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.**

General Smith. Thank you, sir.

The Chairman. And Admiral Hillenkoetter is also in this picture, and as he leaves, I think I would like to express on behalf of our committee our thanks for his fine service and

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cooperation with us, particularly since he was the first head of this agency, and got it organized and got it going.

Admiral Hillenkoetter. Thank you very much, sir.

The Chairman. Now, I will turn this over to the members of the committee. Senator Byrd, do you have any questions you would like to ask General Smith?

Senator Byrd. No questions, except I approve of him, and would vote for him.

The Chairman. Senator Chapman?

Senator Chapman. Mr. Chairman, I have no questions to ask the General, but I am sure by reason of his experience and public service, both civil and military, he is admirably qualified for this important assignment.

General Smith. Thank you.

The Chairman. Senator Johnson?

Senator Johnson. I am very happy that he has found it possible to undertake the position.

The Chairman. Senator Saltonstall?

Senator Saltonstall. The only question I would like to ask the General, in view of all the newspaper reports that we have had, to ask on the record how is your health, and do you feel physically competent to do this job as you are capable of doing it?

General Smith. Well, the doctors say yes, Senator, and certainly a year from now I will either be in a situation to

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know that I am or I will be busted, and in the meantime you will have gotten a year's service. I think so. I think so because I believe I am in better shape now than I was during the war, given a little time to gain some weight.

The Chairman. Well, we hope so, General.

General Smith. I hope so, too. I have gotten rid of the thing that caused me the trouble.

The Chairman. Senator Kefauver?

Senator Kefauver. Mr. Chairman, I think General Smith is an excellent selection for this job. I have just finished reading "Three Years in Moscow", but I would like to know something about whether this work is going to be enlarged in its magnitude.

It would seem to me that particularly in Asia we have been needing very badly some way to at least cause some confusion and diversity of opinion behind the lines of the enemy. I hate to see the yellow people united in their opposition to us. Does that come under the purview of the assignment that you think you have?

General Smith. I think that Admiral Hillenkoetter will have to answer that in detail, Senator, but I believe, in a general way, that it does.

I have studiously avoided doing anything except read the law carefully, the Act which created this institution, its table of organization, and the Task Force Report, the Hoover Task

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Force Report, on the agency.

Senator Kefauver. In other words, the type of work that General Donovan did during the last war?

General Smith. There is one department of the Central Intelligence Agency which is responsible for that type of work, but I would prefer to defer to Admiral Hillenkoetter on that, if I may.

Senator Kefauver. No other questions, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman. Senator Knowland?

Senator Knowland. Mr. Chairman, I came in late, and I am sorry that I missed what went on previously.

The Chairman. I am just asking if you want to have any questions of the General.

Senator Knowland. I am delighted to see the General again. I think the last time I saw him was in Berlin.

General Smith. I remember that very well.

Senator Knowland. I remember him from his prior assignment, and I think he will make an excellent head of this organization, which is important.

I would not want the opportunity to pass without at this time also saying a word, as one member of this committee on, the constructive job done by Admiral Hillenkoetter.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have had presented some of the reports which were given to the Government of the United States prior to the Korean invasion, which to me

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indicated rather clearly the build-up that was taking place north of the 38th parallel, the clearing of a line north of the 38th parallel of several kilometers of all civilian population, which is certainly a danger signal, the building of roads and bridges, and reinforcing them towards the frontier which, I think, is a major danger signal, and I would say to the General that I hope in addition to getting the information which is his job, there will be some way found so that those who receive it from you may, perhaps, pay more attention to it than, I think, was paid to the reports that were available to the responsible agencies of the Government.

General Smith. What you say, Senator, is very pat. I do not want to take your time, but my mind from the very beginning of this thing has gone back to the events which took place before the battle of the Ardennes. I am thinking of some of Hillenkoetter's troubles.

Ten days before that battle started our Chief of Intelligence at SHAEF, General Strong, at the staff conference one morning said that there was every indication that the Germans are about to attempt a major counterattack. In the first place, he said, the relieving divisions which have gone into the line have stayed, and the relieved divisions, which usually come out at the end of four days, have not come out, and they have doubled their strength in ten days.

In the second place, all of their armor has been withdrawn

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from the line; six divisions, usually going back for refitting, we can trace them, but they had radio silence, and obviously they are concentrating for some purpose.

In the third place, we have detected a fleet of submarines in the Atlantic which, for the last week or ten days, had been sending back long-range weather reports three times a day, and from that we come to the conclusion that the Germans will undertake a counteroffensive, that it will come at the first period when they can confidently predict bad weather, when we cannot use our planes; we cannot predict that it will come at Ardennes or at Strassburg, but at some place.

When it came there was an immediate yowl "Failure of intelligence," and yet nobody could have been more accurately forewarned. There we were. We had only three divisions in reserve, but that is all we had, and there you are.

So, as I just said to Senator Tydings, to really meet what popular conception there is of the Chief of Intelligence, there are only two personalities that I know of who might do it. One is God, and the other is Stalin, and I do not know that even God can do it because I do not know whether he is close enough in touch with Uncle Joe to know what he is talking about.

The Chairman. I wanted to help General Smith out to answer, and I suggested that one of the first things to do would be for him to get a copy of the Hagerstown Almanac. Senator Byrd, I think, uses it. It is the most accurate prediction of

the weather in the United States.

(Laughter.)

Senator Saltonstall. I would want to stand up for the Farmers' Almanac in New England, which very naturally has a high reputation.

The Chairman. I get them both.

Senator Saltonstall. Mr. Chairman, might I just say, that I certainly commend what Senator Knowland said about the organization that Admiral Hillenkoetter built up, and from sitting on the Appropriations Committee and sitting on this committee, I think that General Smith is inheriting an organization that has a good background and a good start, and I am confident that he will build it up.

General Smith. Thank you, sir.

The Chairman. Senator Hunt?

Senator Hunt. No comments, Mr. Chairman, except to say that I am pleased to see the General get on this particular job.

The Chairman. Thank you.

Now, gentlemen, I do not think we ought to swear General Smith or put him to a third degree or give him the usual treatment of taking him into the steam room here.

(Laughter.)

The Chairman. I think we might as well let him go and tell him that I think he has a pretty good chance of being confirmed by the United States Senate.

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General Smith. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much, gentlemen, for these statements.

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