At the Bipartisan Conference on January 5, 1954, the President made a
clear statement of American policy toward Korea, which amounted to a
complete backing of the policies announced in recent weeks by himself
and Sec. Dulles. He pointed out that the recent announcement in regard
to inability to confine hostilities to Korea should the fighting be re-
newed, was in no sense a criticism of past Administrations but rather a
recognition of the new situation which now obtains. He said that the
Administration believed, speaking generally, in the doctrine of hot pur-
suit -- that is, of using our full strength to destroy bases used against
us. He commented that we cannot allow Communist intransigence to keep
us deployed too widely.

He indicated that the decision to withdraw divisions from Korea was based
on a unanimous JCS decision, and he pointed out that the accomplishment
of training of Koreans will result in maintenance of total ground strength
at the maximum levels specified by the armistice.

Later in the meeting, he replied to a question by Rep. Vinson by saying
that the withdrawal of divisions would have the effect of showing the
Communists that we are confident in the strength of our naval and air
arms, and that this will have greater impact than any reliance on ground
forces of which they are not afraid. Sec. Dulles reinforced this with comment
on the possible Communist desire to pull our troops into Asia where they
could not be effective in the face of surplus Chinese manpower. Sec.
Dulles also commented that President Rhee will be less apt to break the
truce if the possibility of embroiling the United States is eliminated
by the withdrawal of troops.

Still later in the discussion the President expressed his feeling that
the withdrawal of troops would not have adverse effect on our Allies
since we are making clear that we will fight offensively should a new
outbreak occur. He concluded by saying that in the long run it might
develop, of course, that Rep. Vinson's approach was right and his own
was wrong, but that all the indications are that a new approach has to
be tried and he stands ready to modify policy should it become necessary
to do so.