

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE DIRECTOR AND
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON
① MARCH 19, 1946

② J.E.H.
③ AH: esp. org
alleg's
p. 48

In a memorandum from the Director dictated at 2:36 p.m., March 19, 1946, the Director advised he had talked with the Attorney General on that date; that the Attorney General said Senator James O. Eastland (D-Mississippi) had called him and stated he understood the FBI had a file on Alger Hiss; that the Senator said he understood Hiss was involved in the Canadian espionage case and that he wanted to see the file. The Attorney General said he had seen Secretary of State Byrnes that afternoon, and Byrnes said his relations with Senator Eastland were very friendly. The Director told the Attorney General that the Senator had also called him and made the same request; that the Director had sent Mr. Clegg over to see the Senator and Mr. Clegg explained to him that the files were confidential and could not be shown without the authority of the Attorney General. The Director told the Attorney General that the Senator further stated that he knew the Attorney General well and would try to convince him that the Senator should see the files privately. The Attorney General told the Director he would not do this. The Director told the Attorney General that the Director felt this was a thing for the State Department to work out with the Senator; that we (the Bureau) had given the State Department all we had on Hiss and they should work out something with the Senator so he would not press an investigation.

The Attorney General further stated that Secretary of State Byrnes wanted to dismiss Hiss but had been told he cannot do this without giving him a hearing as he is a Civil Service employee. The Director told the Attorney General he did not think a hearing would be wise as the material is confidential and if it were not used there would not be enough evidence against him; that the Director thought the best thing the Secretary of State could do would be to move Hiss to an innocuous position where he would understand the situation and resign; that the Secretary of State should take Senators Connally and Vandenberg into his confidence as they are friends of his, then they will understand the situation. The Attorney General said he would call the Secretary of State and tell him this.

1-p memo re AG Clark's efforts on Hoover's behalf to prevent subpoena of FBI files by Senate Appropriations Committee, + 2 p memo re alleg's of A.H. espionage

Deletions