

August 7, 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. STEINMAN:

*The President!*



The Des Moines Register and Tribune on July 31 had a bang-up editorial taking MacArthur to task for his Boston address. It quoted two paragraphs which it held mean "that the Armed Services do not owe their primary loyalty to those who exercise executive civilian authority and that a Commander-in-Chief is nothing more than a political master of the hour. In a democracy all our executives are temporary--a condition which General MacArthur obviously looks upon with some contempt. They are temporary because the people choose them and may therefore dismiss them and elect others if they wish to. It happens that the people elect the heads of this pitifully temporary executive branch of government. It happens also that the Constitution makes the Chief Executive not only a supreme head of our government but the Commander-in-Chief over all the Armed Forces specifically."

In conclusion the editorial emphasized "It is still a safer principle to have them (executives) popularly elected and to insure their authority over the military than it would be to give the military a free hand, uncontrolled by the elected civilian government. This is inherent in the very philosophy of democracy, and it is terribly revealing for General MacArthur to speak his mind so clearly on this subject. The acts which brought about his removal for repeated insubordination now become, we think, a little more understandable." //

J.V.F.