

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #131,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
June 19, 1934, 10.50 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news at this end. The news is on the way down from the Capitol to the White House -- it hasn't got here yet -- several hundred bills.

Q Do you plan to sign the Farm Credit Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea; I have not read it. I cannot tell you about any bills as nothing has come down yet. My basket is clean. I am right up to date on everything there is.

Q Have you taken notice of the House Committee's report on General Foulois, Chief of the Air Corps?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not have time. The Secretary of War was in yesterday and I did not even mention it to him. I was on the end of a telephone most of the day and most of the night and cleaning up correspondence in between.

Q There was some startling evidence with regard to the Port Newark Army Supply Base.

THE PRESIDENT: Was there?

Q Are you going to settle the judgeship of the District of Columbia before you go, or after you come back?

THE PRESIDENT: It has been referred back to the Attorney General three separate times and has not come through yet.

Q How about the Alley Cleaning Commission (Alley Dwelling Commission)?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I do not know. There was a recommendation from some kind of a board with various -- I do not remember who was on it -- the Planning Board was represented and then these Alley people who

worked for the Bill were to have people on it, but anyway that was the recommendation. It was a committee.

Q You have not appointed anybody?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it was a committee of six or seven people with various organizations.

Q Have you decided whether the Wagner Labor Board will administer this new Resolution?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; we have not taken it up.

Q Have you decided when you will appoint the Stock Exchange Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Before I sail.

Q How about the Housing Administrator?

THE PRESIDENT: Before I sail. I do not think there will be any appointments announced until I get back here next Tuesday morning. I do not think there is a chance.

Q Have you any setup ready under the Housing Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a thing; I have not even mentioned it.

Q. When do you expect to sail?

THE PRESIDENT: Somewhere between the thirtieth and the Fourth of July.

Q Still?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, still.

Q There are still some departmental objections to the Taylor Grazing Bill. Have those been communicated to you yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I have only a memorandum asking that they be heard from the Department of Agriculture. I do not know yet what they are. I think it relates to a constitutional question, that is some question of law as to whether easements to water holes are permanent easements or temporary. In other words, if it is a permanent easement, it is

a vested right and the Taylor Bill, as I remember it, does recognize it as a vested right. The Department of Agriculture, I think, says they are not vested rights but purely temporary easements and there are some Supreme Court decisions that I am not familiar with and it will hinge largely on that.

Q How about the Coast Guard Pay Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No, did it pass?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know that.

Q Do you intend to visit the Republic of Panama as well as the Canal Zone?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to lunch with the President of Panama.

Q In Panama?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The British and the French Governments have threatened to impound some of the trade profits on credits affected by the debt moratorium. Is there any action along that line that we can take?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. If I said, "Yes," you would probably say we were going to do it. I have not the faintest idea on it but three days ago I asked the Secretary of State whether legislation was necessary before Congress went home and he said no, that the legislation was not necessary because the control over the foreign exchange in last year's bill seems sufficiently broad to cover it if we wanted to do it. I have no idea what the State Department feels about what we should do. You had better check up there. We have the power to do it.

Q Do you intend to select a chief for your prospective Bureau of Insular Affairs before you go away?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. I spoke to the Secretary of Interior about that about a week ago and we just put off discussing it. When does that go into effect?

Q July twenty-eighth.

THE PRESIDENT: Then we won't do it until I can get back.

Q The adjournment of Congress has no effect?

THE PRESIDENT: Sixty days after it goes in?

Q Anything new you can tell us on the steel situation? Do you plan to see any of the steel people before you go away tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely no plans. I will talk to Perkins (The Secretary of Labor) about it this afternoon.

Q Has anything new come to you recently concerning the drought situation, any report?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I got a report up to the minute yesterday. I am afraid I have filed it. I will have to tell you from recollection. Of course, in the wheat country the sections where there was going to be a total loss still remain a total loss. There is very little improvement in wheat. In corn, the situation is a little better but is menaced to a certain extent by the cinch bug in a good many areas, and we won't know how fast and how far the cinch bugs will go for another week or ten days.

Taking it by and large the general drought situation is certainly no better, but I don't think it is any worse than it was a couple of weeks ago. It will depend a good deal on July weather, especially in corn.

The first bale of cotton was picked yesterday somewhere in Texas.

Q Mr. President, in connection with the tariff bargaining, do you expect

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to organize this third Export-Import Bank very soon under Peek?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so; there has been no talk about it.

Q What have the existing banks been doing, if anything, so far?

THE PRESIDENT: The first bank is not doing anything. That was the Russian (pronouncing it Roossian) Bank. Ever hear of it?

Q That is how it is pronounced in Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT: On the second bank, we are discussing extending its operations to take care of the necessary loans to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: It seems a logical place to fit them in.

Q Mr. President, when do you sign the silver bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Tonight, at 8.45.

Q Any proclamation in connection with the silver bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q What is the nature of the loans to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: They have got some pretty ambitious plans worked out. You had better wait until you get down there and I will tell you more about it.

Q Rum?

THE PRESIDENT: No, in Puerto Rico it is largely a question of homesteading and taking over quite a large amount of marginal lands. Of course you are not precluded from growing sugar cane for your own consumption, if you want to.

Q Will this Export-Import Bank handle the marketing of coffee in other countries?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

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Q They sell their coffee to other countries and not here and they lost their market because they lost their supply in a hurricane. That would supply some work.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That would be a logical thing. I signed yesterday the Joint Resolution approving of the ten per cent coffee tax for Puerto Rico.

Q When do you think you will sign the major bills coming down today? Before you get away tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it very much. There are between two and three hundred and the normal course for those bills, of course is to go to the departments and agencies they involve for recommendation and they will be drifting in here in the course of the next four or five days.

MR. EARLY: There are about 125 of those out in the departments.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) says there are about 125 of those out in the departments. Then of course there was quite a lot of stuff went through yesterday that has not got to the departments yet and, well, I will just act on them as they come along. I am having a bunch of them sent up to the SEQUOIA Thursday morning and will probably act on those on the high seas of New London Harbor and have another batch reach me at Hyde Park on Saturday. There won't be any particular order. I will just work on them as they come along.

Q In view of the labor situation, can you give us a background sketch as to policy in that connection? What is going to happen to the National Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. I do not know what the details of the administrative setup would be at all. The real problem is when it

comes down to a question of elections in different plants as to how that machinery of elections will be conducted. If they make an effort to hold practically simultaneous elections in all steel plants, for example, it would be a tremendous strain on personnel because you have to have people to conduct the elections who will have some knowledge of the work. About the best guess you can make is that we will go ahead with the holding of these elections as fast as practicable but it does not mean we can do them all simultaneously or in ten days.

Q Is it your desire to set up a national board or industrial boards for each industry?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know yet. We have not talked about it at all.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I will see you next Wednesday, a week from tomorrow.

(The Press Conference adjourned at 11.02 A. M.)

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #132,  
Held aboard the "SEQUOIA" in the  
harbor of New London, Connecticut,  
June 22, 1934, 11.45 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT: What paper do you represent (addressing Miss Roberta Barrows)?

MISS BARROWS: The New York Times. (Laughter)

Q How do you like the races?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have some news for you tomorrow, something really interesting.

Q Any Commissions there (referring to the official papers being signed by the President)?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Everything is all quiet.

Q Can you give us a word on the races?

THE PRESIDENT: Both awfully good races.

Q The freshmen race was much closer than the other.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, a good race. Here is the Committee's boat.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Good morning, Stevie (Mr. Stephenson). How are you?

Q (Mr. Stephenson) Just fine.

Q Mr. President, are you having a good time?

THE PRESIDENT: Fine. I have to go to work now.

Q We are having a delightful time over at Henry Morgenthau's Naval Academy (referring to the fact that the Press had been quartered at the Coast Guard Academy near New London).

THE PRESIDENT: Where are you, at the Academy?

Q Yes, sir; and we are having one grand time.

THE PRESIDENT: That is marvelous. You know, I have never been there.

Q Goodbye, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #133,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
June 27, 1934, 11.00 A. M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Fred (Mr. Storm). Good morning, Stevie (Mr. Stephenson). This is what is left, plus what is coming in. There are about ten more out.

Q They are all bills, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Those plus ten?

THE PRESIDENT: Those plus ten that are still out. I did 124 last night and this morning. No, I had 124 last night and 15 this morning.

Q The Commissioners for the District of Columbia, giving them authority on the --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): I cannot tell you yet. They will be with the others.

Q Is that the District tag, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I hear Roy Vernou (the Naval Aide to the President) says he is arranging for that cruiser to shoot a 16-inch shell through my back. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It would take a 14-inch shell. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only news I have this morning is that I have been presented with tag license No. 1 for The District of Columbia. So now we are all set up.

The bill position is this, that last night I worked until 1.00 A. M. and did 124 bills; I did 15 more this morning and there are only left

six bills on my desk plus about 10 which Steve (Mr. Early) says are still out around the departments. So there are only about 16 more to be acted upon. I hope to finish them up tonight.

Q The 16 includes the Farm Mortgage Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you anything about that. There will be a list this afternoon and I think by process of deduction you can find out what bills are among those 16 yet to be acted upon.

Q How about the Railroad Pension Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to use deduction methods on it again.

Q How about the Housing Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: The same thing. I am not going to tell you. It would break Steve's (Mr. Early) heart if I did it now.

Q Can we look for some pretty big stuff then this afternoon, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Not this afternoon; not until tomorrow morning. I have some people to see during the course of the day.

Q Have you seen the election proposal of the Sheet Steel Union?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not. Miss Perkins is coming in this afternoon.

Q What is the status of your appointments that you have to make in the next day or two?

THE PRESIDENT: They will come along after the sixteen bills. I have done nothing on them yet, on any appointments.

Q Mr. President, while you were away there was a story carried that Sykes (Mr. Sykes, of the Federal Radio Commission) is going to be the only member of the present Federal Radio Commission to be appointed (to the Federal Communications Commission).

THE PRESIDENT: It is literally true that I have not thought of anything.

Q Do you intend to appoint the Aviation Commission before you leave?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope to but it is not definite and I still hope to get off. If I do not do it before I go, I will do it by radio. I still hope to get off on Saturday but I am not going to crowd myself too much. If staying another couple of days will help, I will wait until Monday.

Q How about the agency for the alley cleaning problem in the District of Columbia?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are having a meeting today.

Q They have not been appointed yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is today that they are having a meeting. I sent some kind of a letter yesterday suggesting they have a meeting.

Q Will the appointments of the Municipal Court (Judges) be announced too?

THE PRESIDENT: I forgot to speak to Jim Farley about that. Steve (Mr. Early), will you remind me to do that?

Q The British are discussing our naval plans in order to come to a level ratio. Can we say we are through seeking to disarm by one-sided sacrifices?

THE PRESIDENT: That sounds pretty good. Will you write that out for me?  
(Laughter)

Q Isn't it on for discussion?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a single thing in the dispatches from Davis (Ambassador Norman Davis) and anything on that has to come from the other side.

Q We cannot even induce you to comment on the British plans?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Since she left you yesterday (the previous evening) there have been no reports definitely from Miss Perkins (The Secretary of Labor) on the

longshoremen's strike. Is there anything she reported to you which you can tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: Was that announced last night? The only thing that happened last night was the appointment of the Board. I think you have that.

Q In the morning papers.

Q Mr. President, the figures from the Treasury Department indicate that liquor is being withdrawn at only a rate of a third of what was anticipated. Choate (Chairman Joseph H. Choate, Jr., Federal Alcohol Control Administration) recommended a tariff reduction in duties on that. Is there anything to be done in that line?

THE PRESIDENT: I might do it by radio. The thing is still being studied.

Q It looks as if two gallons of bootleg liquor is being drunk to every one on which tax is being paid.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I have not the figures on it.

Q About being drunk, you mean? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What is that? Stevie (Mr. Stephenson), you had better wait until you get to the Virgin Islands before you do it.

Q Are you going to speak in Puerto Rico, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not. I hope I will never have to make another speech.

Q Do you plan to appoint people, similar to the longshoremen's strike, in the steel strike?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, because I have not talked to Perkins. We did the longshoremen's last night and might do something today, but I cannot tell you.

Q Since the Labor Bill has been signed, there has been a lot of speculation with respect to the labor boards that exist and there has been comment that you intend to abolish them.

THE PRESIDENT: I have not gotten to it yet.

Q Mr. President, can you enlighten us on the attitude of the Administration toward LaFollette?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I could only talk to you off the record about it. It would have to be off the record because I cannot take part in these things officially or, really, in any other way. As far as I go, personally, I would love to see Bob LaFollette back here because he is a very old friend of mine and has been very helpful. But, as you appreciate it, I cannot go ahead and the National Administration cannot go ahead and compel some party organization in a particular state to do something at the command of the National Administration. It just cannot be done.

My own personal hope is that they will find some way of sending Bob LaFollette back here. That is about the whole story. But I cannot compel the democracy of Wisconsin to go ahead and nominate him. As I say, I have to keep that off the record.

Q Does that apply to New Mexico?

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the honest truth, I don't know the situation in New Mexico. Of course, Bronson Cutting is also a very old boy friend of mine, but I understand that Chavez is going to run and Chavez is a pretty good Congressman. I am trying to get across the idea that if we have the right kind of people, the party label does not mean so very much. I have to keep that off the record, too.

(Laughter)

Q How about Minnesota?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know much about it. Who is running on the Democratic ticket, Hoidale (Representative Einar Hoidale)?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: He is a very good friend of mine and Shipstead (Senator Shipstead) is too. I am in a sort of quandary there.

Q Have you the same difficulty, sir, in Pennsylvania? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: There is no difficulty in Pennsylvania at all. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, before they take you all over the country, let us go to Alaska for a moment about the possibility of establishing a United States Naval Base or Navy base of some kind up there.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it. Is there any talk of it?

Q The Army and Navy are sending squadrons as a sort of training fleet and there has been talk of a survey for a base of some kind.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it.

I do not believe there is anything else in particular. We will have a conference on Friday afternoon and maybe it will be the last one in some time.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(The Press Conference adjourned at 11.10 A. M.)

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #134,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
June 29, 1934, 4.10 P. M.

THE PRESIDENT (Turning the papers on his desk face down) This is to see that everything is properly hidden. (Laughter) I wasn't looking at Russell (Mr. Young); it is all right.

Q Are you all ready to go this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: All I need is some sleep.

Q So say we all.

Q You had a long session of it last night, didn't you?

THE PRESIDENT: I sat up and drank beer with Barney Baruch and Joe Kennedy. I did not do any work at all. It was awful -- two o'clock and I have no excuse for it.

Q They hung a thermometer out here a while ago and it only got up to 129 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

THE PRESIDENT: Wait until you get to Cartagena. That is nothing, the mercury boils down there.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only news at the present moment is an order which I signed this morning to see if we could correct a very difficult situation in regard to the purchases of various articles by the Government. You know, we have been getting a series of identical bids on the plea from the bidders that they are precluded from putting in competitive bids by their filed prices with their respective Code Authorities. We are going to try something new to see if we can break that down. The Executive Order provides -- you can get a copy of it after the Press Conference so that you can tell what it provides -- that any bidder for a Government contract of the United

States or a state or municipality or other public authority, in other words any kind of a Government contract for goods on which the bidder has filed prices with his Code Authority, these bids from now on will be held to have complied with the Code requirements on two conditions: First, if the bidder quotes a price to the Government agencies not more than 15 per cent below his filed price and, secondly, if he does quote a lower price than the filed price, he shall file that lower price with the Code Authority.

In other words, he gives the public the advantage of the same reduction that he offers to the Government.

The second part of it is that if any other member of the Code believes that this lower bid is made possible only by unfair practices, that he has the right to complain to the Administrator of Industrial Recovery who shall thereupon make a finding as to whether the complaint is justified or not.

We hope by this means to restore competition on Government bids and, incidentally, as a result of that, in a very large line of actual prices to consumers, private consumers, and at the same time to prevent unfair trade practices.

Q In other words, Mr. President, if they bid on a Government contract now they do not have to file their prices with the Code Authority?

THE PRESIDENT: Actually at the present time they all bid the same price with the Government on the excuse that that is the price they have filed with the Code Authority.

Q Was this situation true of the Fort Peck Dam Project where they all bid the same price?

THE PRESIDENT: Literally dozens of cases where we have been getting identical bids.

Q How could this react on the public? How could they share if the bids are for the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Because they have to file. When they file bids on the Government contracts, they have to file the same price with the Code Authority.

Q Won't that still be uniform?

MR. EARLY: Fifteen per cent.

Q It limits competition within a fifteen per cent range?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It enables them to have competition to within fifteen per cent below the filed price.

Q They could offer the same prices to the public?

THE PRESIDENT: As to the Government, yes. When they bid on the Government thing it automatically cuts their filed price with their own Authority (Code Authority).

Q That breaks the fixed price?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Isn't the result likely to be that anything that one of their competitors will cut fifteen per cent on, they will cut the same amount?

THE PRESIDENT: We cannot tell; we do not know what the effect is going to be.

Q How would this affect the basing point system, if any?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; it is too complicated a question. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, didn't you sign the Railroad Pension Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I have acted on the Railroad Pension Bill and the Frazier-Lemke Bill and the only reason I haven't told you of my action is that I want to file -- to give out a memo or statement at the same time and those are, neither of them, written.

Q Will we get them tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so, but I cannot guarantee it.

Q Mr. President, do you care to comment on the volume of work that is likely to flow from the Housing Bill, the Housing Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no, I have no idea yet. There has been no survey of the situation.

Q It will certainly be very large?

THE PRESIDENT: We hope so.

Q Can you give us an idea of the setup you supply under that bill, or do you work that out in detail?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have asked -- I had better not even say that. I have not got to the point of that.

Q Will the arrangement be made before you leave?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Are you ready to give us the names of the Stock Market (Commission)?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Today?

THE PRESIDENT: Tomorrow or Sunday, and the same thing on Communications and the same thing on pensions. I hope to get most of them done before I go.

Q How about the Archivist?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not appointing anybody yet. The building won't be finished until next summer and I do not see why I should spend ten or twelve thousand dollars a year.

Q Hopkins (Harry Hopkins) said he was definitely out as Housing Administrator.

THE PRESIDENT: He has never been definitely in or indefinitely in.

(Laughter)

Q Is it possible on this order for Government bids for a bidder on two successive bids to make two successive fifteen per cent cuts? That is, he cuts fifteen per cent on the first one and then files it and then --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): And then there is another opening the following day? I do not see why not. It is perfectly all right.

Q Mr. President, does he file this price after the bid has been delivered to the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It is secret until --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing) Secret until the Government bid is actually opened.

Q And if he does not get the contract, he is not bound by that bid price to the public?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, he is. Everybody, every bidder.

Q If he doesn't get the bid?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so, from this language. He shall have been held to comply adequately with the requirements of the Code of Fair Competition, (a) if he quotes a price or prices not more than fifteen per cent below his price or prices filed in accordance with the requirements of the Code and (b) if, after the bids are opened, each bidder quoting a price or prices below his file price shall immediately file a copy of his bid with the Code authorities, with which he is required to file prices.

Q In other words, whether he gets the Government's bids or not, that price stands?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

I think Steve (Mr. Early) told you about my going off. We are

going on Sunday evening at six or seven o'clock and getting away during the course of the night and stopping off at Hampton Roads at about seven o'clock the next morning to put off fond farewell messages and to send a report of Fred (Mr. Storm) and Stevie (Mr. Stephenson) and Eddie (Mr. Roddan).

Q (Mr. Stephenson) Say little about that.

THE PRESIDENT: To say how they have stood the angry waters of Chesapeake Bay and about half an hour later I hope we will be out of sight of land. I hope, in the meantime, that you will have, all of you, a pleasant and happy holiday, with no news out of Washington.

Q What is this they say about the destroyer?

Q I am hearing a lot of tales about how those destroyers ride.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, they are fine. (Laughter)

Q Oh, yeah? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: They are well broken.

MR. EARLY: That is why they call them destroyers.

Q We hope you have a very nice trip.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.