

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #300,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 1, 1935, 10.47 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT: Hello, Count (Rudolph de Zapp), glad to see you back.

Q (Mr. de Zapp) Glad to see you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: A great burden has been lifted from his shoulders (referring to Mr. Stephenson who had just retired as president of the White House Correspondents' Association).

Q He is normal again.

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly normal again. He looks at least an inch taller.

Q (Mr. Stephenson) I got the weight off.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe there is any particular news. There were three Executive Orders signed yesterday setting up the Resettlement Administration. Steve (Mr. Early) will give you copies of them. I do not think there is anything else in particular.

Q Mr. President, can you clear up the confusion as to what you told the Senators yesterday on NRA?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter) You had better ask them.

Q They told us different stories.

THE PRESIDENT: So I gathered from the papers. It depends on who you saw.

Q Mr. President, I have been asked to inquire whether you favor the Guffey Coal Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't said anything about it.

Q Under that bill there seems to be some question of allocation of production. Would you favor that being done by a commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is a very, very broad subject. In other words

if you will go back and take, for instance, the message to Congress in regard to retaining competition and absolutely free production, I did make an exception for certain utilities, and coal was one.

Under the NRA methods the coal industry during the past year and a half has, so far as I know, for the first time in history been fairly well stabilized and production and consumption are running approximately even. Now, there are lots of schools of thought as to how that should be continued but the objective is perfectly clear. It makes for steady employment, it makes for fairly steady prices and at the same time it does not waste natural resources. All I can say is that that is the objective and we want to keep after that.

Q Mr. President, will you comment on the ship subsidy bill?

THE PRESIDENT: What has happened to that?

Q You said you were unfamiliar with it before.

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had a chance to go into that.

Q Any Message to the Congress on transportation, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Soon; I do not know whether it will be this week -- probably next week.

Q Have you anything to add to what you told Governor Horner of Illinois yesterday as regards Federal funds during this legislative tangle they are having out there?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that I realized what he was up against and I hoped he would get his legislation through.

Q Various Federal relief funds are being held pending --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing) Whose?

Q Missouri. Have you any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know that.

Q (They are being held) for the same reason. Will there be a complete stoppage of relief funds until the legislature acts?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; never heard about it.

Q Have you an appointment, sir, with anybody from Missouri to discuss that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nobody at all.

Q Can you give us any idea as to what is going to happen to cities which have constitutional debt limits and which are hampered from borrowing under the PWA for that reason? Where will they fit in under the new program?

THE PRESIDENT: Almost all of those cities have maturing obligations where they have set up sinking funds so that each year, where the city reaches its debt limit, it pays off a certain portion of its debt and that gives to the city an opportunity of borrowing an equivalent sum. Furthermore, most cities are going up slightly each year in their taxable values, so that adds to the sum also.

Q In Detroit, they issued bonds up to the limit under the old assessments and then they cut the assessments about a third because of the great drop in values and they are away over their limit. There was a report that perhaps the Government might loan them money, which would be a loan on future taxes. Is that true?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on the individual case. You cannot make a hard and fast rule on that. Incidentally, the back taxes in Detroit are coming along very well. They are being paid up pretty well all the time. So, their financial picture, instead of being almost hopeless as it was a year and a half ago, has got so much into the sound field of finance that they can borrow money at a reasonable rate.

I am not worried about financing now; I was, very much.

Q There seems to be some misunderstanding between the people who talked to you and Mr. Ickes about your policy of spending money on projects to be completed in a year. Is that a hard and fast rule or a general objective?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a general objective and is a hard and fast rule so far as the initial allocation goes. Of course, as I said before, we are all human and we will make the allocation on the statement of the local people and the experts that it can be done in that time.

Q How does that apply to the projects that normally take two or three years? Where they could spend ten or twenty million dollars in a year, will that qualify the expenditure so far as that twenty million dollars is concerned?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. If a municipality wants to put in a sewer that takes three years to build, and they come to us for an allocation for one year, I think we will probably give it to them on the understanding that there is no obligation to give them the balance of the money. If they want to take a chance on it, it is different, but there is no obligation on the part of the Federal Government to put up the following year's money.

Q Have you selected anyone to head the Rural Electrification program yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have talked to Morris Cooke about it and he had planned to go abroad but I have asked him either to stay here, if he can -- I hope he will stay here -- but if his personal plans are such that he cannot, I am asking him between now and the time he goes abroad, to set it up for me.

Q Any progress on the neutrality program?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard about it for a couple of weeks, not since the Nye Committee was down here about two weeks ago.

Q Are you going down to Chancellorsville?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I cannot go; I have to stay here; I am too busy; I wish I could.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #201,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 3, 1935, 4.12 P. M.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope everybody in the front row, when they ask a question, will talk right out loud because people in the back nearly always fail to get the question. I think they can generally hear me; if you cannot in the back row, sing out and I will talk louder.

Q Mr. President, ask them in the back row to do the same thing.

THE PRESIDENT: Louder -- what did you say?

Q Ask them in the back row to do the same thing.

THE PRESIDENT: Those in the back row are requested by the front row to do the same thing.

Q May I ask what you told the bankers?

THE PRESIDENT: Which bankers?

Q The group in today?

THE PRESIDENT: The Executive Committee of the American Bankers' Association. Oh, we talked about various details of the banking bill. I think they are pretty thoroughly agreed on the objectives and the purposes -- just some question as to the details of language.

Q Mr. President, the National Business and Advisory Planning Council was here yesterday. I understand that you had something to say to them. Would you mind telling us something about that statement, if you made one?

THE PRESIDENT: I made a speech and my one regret is that there wasn't anyone to take it down because it was a darn good speech, on the spur of the moment.

I told them a lot of things, went back into history, and I think

that nearly all of them agreed -- use this as background, of course -- nearly all of them agreed with the fundamental principles that we were both talking about. I told them that, for example, going back just in my own personal experience, I felt that in altogether too many cases so-called organizations of business men were very misrepresentative of a very large number of business men or, to put it another way, that business thought has very often been diametrically opposed to the corporate expression of that thought through some kind of an organization.

I told them from my own experience, of certain cases that I had run up against. For example, the first year I went up to Albany there was a very bad fire in New York called the Triangle Fire. Some of you older people will remember it. They burned up 150 or 200 girls that were working in a garment factory, the Triangle Building. They could not get out because the doors leading to the fire-escapes were locked. There was started in the Legislature a committee of inquiry of which Bob Wagner was chairman and there was a very young, not very experienced young woman who acted, I think, as secretary of that committee to investigate factory conditions. Her name was Frances Perkins. Well, as a result of this investigation there was proposed a factory inspection law. Practically the whole state was for it and I believe very firmly that the great majority of manufacturers were for it, also the great majority of business men. But the principal lobbyists before the Legislature and objectors to that bill while it was pending were the chambers of commerce and the merchants associations and the manufacturers associations who, in my judgment, were absolutely misrepresenting the membership of those societies.

And then I went on and I told them about other similar experiences, the 54-hour bill in the Legislature to curtail the working hours of women and children in industry to 54 hours a week. The associations that I had mentioned were always against the law whereas the overwhelming majority of business men and manufacturers were probably in favor of curtailing the work of women and children in industry to 54 hours a week. Again, they misrepresented their membership.

In the same way, just to go on, I will give the simple example I stated to them. The Workmen's Compensation Act: The previous one passed when Chief Justice Hughes was Governor of New York, was declared unconstitutional and we passed another one in the 1912 Session of the Legislature that was constitutional and subsequently upheld, providing for a two-fold method of workmen's compensation, one with a State insurance fund and the other with private insurance companies. It was a perfectly sound measure and the best proof is that it is still on the Statute Books, still running smoothly and with practically no amendments in all these years. Most business men, most bankers and most manufacturers were in favor of workmen's compensation as a whole, but the chambers of commerce and the merchants associations and the manufacturers associations spent thousands and thousands of dollars trying to block the bill from going through.

And then I stated to them another phase of legislation of this kind. I said, "Take, for instance, the Triangle Fire. There is an example. We had on the Statute Books of the State, before that fire, various laws requiring this safety device and that safety device and the city ordinances required not only adequate fire-escapes but unlocked doors and doors that opened outward. The law was all right

before that fire and we left it up to the business men and the manufacturers to enforce the law. Today there is a lot of talk about 'let us do these things'." Practice has shown that unless there is some kind of a Government check-up, whether it be a municipal check-up or a State check-up or a Federal check-up, that there are a certain number of people who either through carelessness, very often carelessness, and in some cases with malicious intent to avoid the law, will fail to live up to the law. Probably in the case of the Triangle Fire it was a matter of carelessness on the part of the management that these doors going out to the fire-escapes were locked.

But, when we put in inspection through a Government agency and they knew that somebody was coming around at unexpected or unknown moments to check up on them, from that time on the law was lived up to about 99 per cent.

I just used those as examples, not in answer to but in explanation of some of the statements made in meetings that have recently been had in Washington. I think that there was a pretty general meeting of the minds between these thirty members of this business council and myself on the general principles and objectives that we are all seeking to attain.

I cut this out of the paper this morning, because I think it is rather choice:

"Francis E. Powell, head of the United States Chamber of Commerce in London, last night said that the Old World is amazed at the stubborn fight being made by business here against the New Deal. Tall and silver-haired, Powell once was chairman of the Anglo-American Oil Company. He was astonished, he said, at the frosty reception that greeted his attempt yesterday to bring peace between American merchants and the White House. Hundreds of delegates of the United States Chamber of Commerce Convention sat in grim silence as Powell proposed that a group be notified

to call on Mr. Roosevelt and pledge cooperation."

Then it goes on,

"I was astonished by their attitude," he told the United Press in an exclusive interview. "It couldn't have happened anywhere else in the world. I have listened for days to the criticism of the Government's policies.

"Some admitted perhaps the recovery work had done some good; shall we say they grudgingly admitted it.

"The delegates have heard of the great strides we in England are making out of the depression. They have been told that it was due to our tariffs, the heavier taxes, the balancing the budget.

"Well, that much is true. What they have not been told is that British business men cooperated with their Government. They paid higher taxes. Yes, they subjected themselves to many things to expedite recovery."

"Powell shook his head as he watched delegates stream from the Convention floor after definitely rejecting any plan by the Government to provide for the aged indigent.

"But," he asked, "how can they do these things? Perhaps we are not ready in this country yet for unemployment insurance. Perhaps it should be given more study, but we are and always have been ready for any legislation which removes the awful fear of want and poverty in the minds of those of us who are growing old."

Of course, the interesting thing to me is that in all of these speeches made, I don't believe there was a single speech which took the human side, the old-age side, the unemployment side. There were some glittering generalities, yes, "we hate to see old people starve," "we would not willingly throw people out of work", and so forth and so on. Not exactly what you could call a constructive contribution.

However, the business men who were in here yesterday, I think they understand it pretty well just as I think the overwhelming majority of business men in this country, the individual men, the higher executives and the middle-sized executives and the lower ex-

ecutives, they understand pretty well what it is all about and I go along with them. I think that answers that question rather too fully.

Q Mr. President, is there any reason why the state road allotments cannot be made very soon? It is merely a question of formula, is it not?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they will come along pretty soon.

Q Have you any idea as to how soon Mr. Walker's office will be in a position to receive applications?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they have been receiving a good many in the last week. We are having the first meeting on Tuesday and he is going to bring in quite a lot of applications.

Q That is the first meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Of the Allotment Board.

You were asking about highways?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: There is one difficulty in the highway allotment question. The way the bill finally went through, there was an amendment put on which requires the allocation of highway money to states in accordance with a complicated formula which is not based on the simple figure of the unemployed within the state. We have to take the population of the state and, I think, the road mileage within the state into consideration also. The result of that amendment is that in a few of the more sparsely settled, large area states, in carrying out that amendment, the amount of money which we give to that state for unemployment insurance will be practically all used on highways and they won't be able to get any money whatsoever for other projects.

Q Did you mean unemployment insurance?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not mean that. I meant unemployment rolls.

Q As I understand it, you mean the money earmarked for roads is so large that you cannot afford to use other work relief funds for other purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me put it this way: I suppose there are 10,000 unemployed in the state and that \$10,000,000 will put them all to work. Under this mandatory amendment, we have got to give the state \$10,000,000 for highways, therefore we cannot give them any money for anything outside of highways because it will put all the unemployed to work.

Q Any method of avoiding it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is the law.

Q What becomes of Senator Copeland's white collar charges?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess they will have to work on the highways.

Q Mr. President, the papers along the Canadian Border have been very much interested in the promotion of relations between Canada and the United States. I wonder if you can say anything in addition to what you did say about Chairman McSwain, about this thing the other day?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought I was very forceful. If I could have been more forceful, put it down in your own language.

Q I was wondering whether it is a closed incident or whether something further can be said.

THE PRESIDENT: It is closed so far as notice to every Government official, the Army, the Navy and civilians and otherwise, so far as every Government official in this country is concerned, that we are certainly going to do nothing to arm ourselves in any form, either offensively or defensively, against Canada.

Q Have you decided yet as to the labor, city and farmer representatives who are going to be on your Works Allotment Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. General Wood will represent the business men.

Q Mr. President, are you considering any changes in the personnel of the Automobile Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Wait a minute, I have got something else. I forgot. Morris Cooke writes me today, "This is to advise you that the new rural electrification unit is a going concern. Through the good offices of Secretary Ickes we are housed and staffed so as to handle the first of the incoming business. Through correspondence and applications for rural lines already turned over to us by various departments, we are already in touch with the great field for usefulness. A suggested draft of the Executive Order officially setting up the Rural Electrification Administration will be in your hands early in the week." However, it is going even before the Executive Order is signed.

Q Have you given any thoughts to your loan and grant policy?

THE PRESIDENT: We are talking about that on Tuesday.

Q At the Allotment Board meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think that on this question of loans and grants, my general thought is that we cannot make an absolutely hard and fast line. In other words, there are some busted cities, a few of them, not as many as there were, and of course a busted city is going to get better terms than a solvent city.

Q Mr. President, may I revert to your answer to the road question? Would the same answer be equally applicable to a question about grade crossings?

THE PRESIDENT: I think grade crossings are in exactly the same category.

Don't they come under that amendment?

Q I believe so.

Q Will you limit the allotments to those projects which can be finished in a year?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as we can.

Q May I be a provincial reporter again? Have you ever taken a position with reference to the deepening of the Western end of the barge canal, which is being allowed under the new scheme to be dried up and only the Eastern end to be deepened to 14 feet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not. I have been very careful not to.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference with the two different groups of Wisconsin people?

THE PRESIDENT: What people?

Q The Wisconsin people, LaFollette yesterday and Duffy and Broughton today.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The Governor of Wisconsin presented a plan for the whole State. It was a plan started last Summer by Governor Schmedeman who appointed a State Planning Commission. Back in January, I think it was, Governor LaFollette went over the plan and of course made certain minor changes, and brought it down here for us to study. It was the first completed state-wide plan for public works. It is a very interesting possibility. I say, "only a possibility" because there are still certain questions that have to be worked out on it. But the possibility of adopting this plan for the whole State on the basis of the Federal Government putting up so much and the State Government putting up so much looks very good. It looks as if there will be an actual saving both to the State government and the Federal Government per unemployed person because of the way that the plan has been worked out. It is a good piece of workmanship and the thing is under study and consideration and will probably come up on Tuesday next.

Q Mr. President, have you had an opportunity to read Couch's (Harvey Couch) letter to you, which is for publication Monday morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can you give us any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it will be interesting to everybody. I am giving it out to the papers as a matter of general interest. Even he does not guarantee all of his figures.

Q Mr. President, I sat in a long conference yesterday where there seems to be a considerable amount of uncertainty as to whether individual cities should apply for these things separately or whether you are going to group them in a separate state or region.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on what area they are in. For instance, I suppose there would be a Buffalo area with perhaps Niagara County and Erie County around it. I don't know what that particular area would be but, at any rate, Buffalo should submit its own applications for the City of Buffalo. They would be considered in connection with other applications made by the Counties of Erie and Niagara and Niagara Falls. It depends on the area. The individual government unit should put in its applications.

Q That goes for all cities?

THE PRESIDENT: All cities, yes.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(The Press Conference adjourned at 4.25 P. M. )

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #202,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 8, 1935, 10.45 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not believe there is any news today at all.

Q We can use a little.

THE PRESIDENT: Can you?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am trying to get some happy thoughts out of the front row; they haven't any; I haven't any. Has anybody got any?

Q Mr. President, recently Chairman Vinson of the Naval Affairs Committee recommended the bringing to Washington of several of the old boats, the Constellation and the Constitution and, I think, the Olympia, for permanent preservation.

THE PRESIDENT: Think of the local headaches I would give to Boston and other places if I did anything like that.

Q The Constellation is at Newport.

THE PRESIDENT: This is nothing new, it all came out in the papers sixteen years ago. I had a grand idea when I was in the Navy Department and nothing ever happened to it and nothing ever will, I believe. But the thought was that up on the bank of the river, right near the Navy Hospital, where the new Navy Department building will go, if we ever get one, we should have an embankment and put some of the historic ships along the embankment as they do in some places in Europe, and charge a small admission fee so that the cost of maintenance would be covered.

I don't believe Boston would consent ever to giving up the Constitution, but there are other ships, the Constellation at Newport --

there is no historic reason for her being at Newport because she was not built there. The Constitution was built in Boston. Then there is the Olympia of the Spanish War. Then there is the old Hartford down in Charleston.

Q The Hartford?

THE PRESIDENT: The Hartford. She is down at Charleston. All three are historic ships.

Q Chairman Vinson used an argument about Boston -- he made the suggestion that the Constitution was written in Philadelphia and that they brought that here. It is not a bad argument to answer Boston.

THE PRESIDENT: The first government was set up under the Constitution in New York. As a matter of fact, it was a perfectly pious idea but we haven't any money to do it at this time. We cannot possibly do anything about it this year. It is not in the Budget and I cannot put it there.

Q An idea of yours when you were in the Navy Department -- just how far did you go with it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I proposed it to the Naval Affairs Committee when I was Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

Q No action taken?

THE PRESIDENT: No action taken.

Q Is Norman Armour a good guess as new Minister to Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q Is the Subsistence Homestead Division going to be transferred from Interior to Rural Resettlement?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that?

Q Subsistence Homestead?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can you tell us anything in regard to progress of overtures to Great Britain by this country for an international cotton conference to curtail production?

THE PRESIDENT: No overtures have been made at all. Oscar Johnson went over there, as you know, on -- I suppose the easiest way to call it is a "look-see" trip. He has just come back and I have not seen him.

Q Have you any happy thoughts on the Supreme Court decision, if you have any?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I have one written report on it from the Department of Justice and others are coming in. I have not read this -- it just came in this morning.

Q Mr. President, the Senators passed the Bonus Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: It has not arrived at the White House yet.

Q In that connection, may I ask, is there any indication when a Message might go forward or go back to the Congress on the bonus?

THE PRESIDENT: If I was writing it (the story), I would say "Within a comparatively short time." (Laughter)

Q Within ten days? (Laughter)

Q A veto will be sure? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I am not taking advantage of the ten-day limitation that I have.

Q Are the minutes of the last Press Conference going up to the Hill in response to Congressman Martin's request?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is something I would like to consult with you fellows about a little bit. As you know, there is no particular reason why what was said that day should not go up. Let's make this off the record, because really it concerns you and me more than anybody else. My general thought is that if I agreed and set the precedent

and sent what I said up there, it will put a sort of subconscious cramp in my style. I would be thinking, in the future, about the possibility of their asking for something else and, after all, what I say here, as you know, is not for quotation but it is for your benefit in writing stories for a great many million people. It is entirely extemporaneous on my part. I don't think ahead of what I am going to say. It is a bit slangy and I think that if I once agreed, I would be worrying about the language I was using and the fine points of distinction that ought to be made. Therefore, my general thought is that we ought to keep this between ourselves and not start a precedent of sending it up to the Congress. What do you people think?

(The Press indicated, in chorus, that they agreed with the President)

Q In that connection, it is a sort of reflection on us. Can't they read the newspapers?

THE PRESIDENT: Your point is well taken.

Q Read them and wonder just what was said. (Laughter)

Q About the historical ships, are you still in favor of it, of such a scheme?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Count (Rudolph de Zapp), I am. I think it would be perfectly wonderful if we could have three or four of the historical ships of the Navy moored here along the seawall of the Potomac. It would be very appropriate to put them alongside the new Navy Department building and I hope it will be done some day, but it cannot be done this year.

Q Can you tell us anything further about yesterday's meeting of the Allotment Board?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We discussed a great many different matters of policy.

For example, we talked about the question of loans to cities; we talked about projects that were long-time projects, three- or four-year projects, and the number of people off the employment rolls that would be used in certain types of projects. There was general discussion on that.

Q Mr. President, were any policies decided on navigation projects that would cost \$40,000,000 and would involve the expenditure of about \$10,000,000 a year?

THE PRESIDENT: Navigation projects?

Q Yes, sir, navigation projects.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it depends entirely on the individual project. For instance, Upper Mississippi, we won't be able to finish it this coming year but it is a definite long-time project. We have been going ahead with it for three years and I think it will take another couple of years to go through with it. We will only give them money for one year. Or, on a question of building a new harbor from the ocean, if the Army Engineers believe that a new channel should be built, which would take several years to carry it out, we would give them one year's appropriation.

Q This is an adopted project under the Rivers and Harbors Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can you tell us anything more about the discussion regarding loans to cities?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think probably the best guess for you is this: that we cannot lay down an absolutely hard and fast rule to cover every city in the United States. The projects in the different cities vary and the state of finances in the different cities varies.

Q What about a city that cannot borrow money, looking for an outright grant?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is a question as to whether they should get that form of grant or not. There are other kinds of work that can be done in those cities.

Q Would the old arrangement of 30 per cent of the cost apply?

The outright grant of 30 per cent to labor and materials?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one method, but only one of several.

Q In your Executive Order the other day, setting up the Works Progress Division, you mentioned the possibility that Mr. Hopkins might create jobs directly. Can you talk about that at all? How extensive do you expect that to be?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on how fast the rest of the program goes. It is bound to be fairly large.

Q The Advisory Committee on Allotments, as set up in the Executive Council, has dropped the Division of Grade Crossing Elimination which appeared in the first list. Does that indicate that there will be no Division of Grade Crossings?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; we have not decided on that yet. I may ask the Grade Crossing man to become a member of the Committee.

Q They have a man in the Bureau (of Roads) who knows his stuff.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have not talked to MacDonald (Chief of the Bureau of Roads) about it. It will depend on what MacDonald says.

Q On this discussion about the Press Conference. Can we use the fact that it won't go up there?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait until I write a letter to the Speaker on it. I think it would be a little more courteous. Can we do that, Steve (Mr. Early)?

MR. EARLY: The letter goes to the Clerk of the House.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the letter goes to the Clerk of the House. I will try to get it in an hour or two.

Q Will you try to send a message up on transportation this week?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

(The Press Conference adjourned at 10.55 A. M.)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #203,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 10, 1935, 4.05 P. M.

THE PRESIDENT: I have to hurry -- I have to get dressed. I have a ceremony this afternoon.

Q How about one good news story and then we will get finished?

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh, I don't know any. The only news story I know is that I am going fishing.

Q It is a good idea.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is a good idea.

Q Mostly trout up there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have never been there.

Q It is a beautiful place.

THE PRESIDENT: The Senator (Mr. Young) wants a really good news story. I have only one. I am going fishing tomorrow, taking the day off.

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): Shoot.

Q Mr. President, maybe this will be a story. There is a lot of lamentation to the effect that foreign trade has become a thing of the past and that our exports are drying up. Could you discuss that for background, that general subject of the prospects of international commerce?

THE PRESIDENT: A terrific subject.

Q Fifty well-chosen words. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: A few well-chosen words about to be repeated to the House.

I think our imports are up and that our exports are up over last year. I think so. And I think last year they were up over 1933. In other words, my general impression is that there is a general betterment in

foreign trade, not only our own but almost all over the world. Foreign trade is better as a world proposition, including our own, than it was last year.

I don't know what else we can develop very well, unless we go into all kinds of theories about tariff agreements and so forth. And there are a few things we have done; for instance, we are shipping potatoes out of Maine to Cuba, which we never did before.

Q Mr. President, have you finished with that subject?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything else I can say.

Q This may come within the pending legislation ban but at least I have been asked to lay before you this question: There is a jam in the House on the Home Owners' Loan Corporation Bill. It is held up in conference somewhere and lots of people are asking about it. Is there anything you have to say about it? Either on or off the record or for background?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been sending up word occasionally that I hoped the jam on that bill will get broken. We do want to get it through as soon as we can.

Q Yes, sir.

Q Has your study of the Justice Department report on the Railroad Pension Act, made you change your mind about NRA? [Retirement?]

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a bit.

Q Will it make any changes in the Act itself?

THE PRESIDENT: Which Act?

Q The NRA Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Whose Act.

Q The future Act.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that, of course, nobody has the faintest idea of what the NRA legislation will be and the form it will take in either House yet, so it is a bit difficult to answer that question yet. I do not know.

Q Give us your attitude on the ten months' extension?

THE PRESIDENT: My own personal feeling is that it will be much better to make a two-year extension than a one-year extension.

Q By a general revision, or by the Resolution they have?

THE PRESIDENT: Not by the Resolution because that does not clarify certain points which I think can be clarified. At least we want to try to clarify them.

Q Will you ask them to do that in the House?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not come up in the Senate yet.

Q The Caucus acted on it today.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I do not want to be premature because the Senate has not acted.

Q Mr. President, will you have the transportation Message this week?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot get it in this week; I have not the time to get to it. It is pretty nearly finished.

Q Next week?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope to get it done. It depends on what happens Saturday and Sunday. I will try to get it in Monday or Tuesday.

Q The highway construction has fallen below the levels of last year, largely on account of this new program, waiting to find out how much is going to be allotted to the Bureau of Roads under that \$4,000,000,000 bill. I wonder if you can give us an indication on whether anything is likely to come through?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think it has fallen behind.

Q It is 170 this year as against 248 last year. That is quite a sharp drop.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't we get the legislation earlier last year?

Q You had \$400,000,000 from the year before.

THE PRESIDENT: We had a big carryover.

Q Can you give us an idea?

THE PRESIDENT: We are going to make a tentative allotment at the next meeting.

Q That is for public roads?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, out of the general highway earmarking by the Congress.

Q The Senate today adopted a Resolution --

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Louder, please.

Q -- asking that you make public the reports of the Advisory Council Committees. I do not know whether there are any reports.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I had a very nice talk with Harry Kendall the other day and I pointed out that there are two or three tentative reports which the subcommittees had taken up, subcommittees of three, without consulting with any of the Government agencies. For example, the subcommittee on social security legislation had drafted a tentative report which had not been submitted to anybody, I mean formally, and finally submitted without even consulting the Department of Labor, getting their point of view. Mr. Kendall said that was bad and he was going ahead and in these future reports they were going to talk with various people. For instance, on the question of tax report, instead of putting in their own tax report, made out by the firm of Sullivan and Cromwell in New York, that they would first of all talk to the Treasury Department about it. So we have an excellent modus vivendi worked out and, in their future reports, they are going to talk to the various Government departments and agencies interested

and get their points of view. And then, of course, they are entirely free to make any report they want. Of course, it is their report and I won't make it public; they will do that themselves. All I ask is that they check up with a Government agency to find out what the Government is trying to do.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #204,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 15, 1935, 10.45 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT (Addressing Wilson Brown): What paper do you represent?

Q (Mr. Storm) He represents the Navy Register.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I have any news for you.

Q (Mr. Storm) I see you told the city slickers yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: What is that?

Q You lit into the city slickers yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Good idea; I will have to tell the boys.

Q (Mr. Storm) They loved it too.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, they did.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how are all you city slickers today? (Laughter)

Q Does that make us high and mighty?

THE PRESIDENT: We had a good party yesterday all right. I don't believe there is any news.

Q Mr. President, the Senate has now taken up the Wagner Labor Disputes Bill. For some time you have been kind of indicating that you might care to discuss it with us.

Q Louder.

THE PRESIDENT: He is asking about the Wagner Labor Bill. I do not think I am quite ready. To tell you the honest truth, I have not given it any thought one way or the other. I'd hate to talk about it without thinking about it a little.

Q Have any overtures reached you on behalf of Governor Davey to obtain peace in this row with the Administration over relief?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard a word. Mac (Mr. McIntyre), you haven't anything?

MR. MCINTYRE: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't anything.

Q Are you ready to say anything about a successor to Martin Conboy (as District Attorney in New York)?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. His first assistant will carry on until we are ready to send up the nomination.

Q Any progress on the transportation Message?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Again, there are a couple of people I want to see before it is in final shape. I have not had a chance to see them.

Q Will it go up this week?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Any reaction from abroad on the talk made the other day by Secretary Morgenthau on stabilization?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing, Stevie (Mr. Stephenson). I saw the dispatches from the embassies yesterday afternoon and there was nothing in them yet. I suppose they will begin to come in pretty soon.

Q Have you talked with Johnson (Oscar Johnson) about the world cotton agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: He is coming in to see me today at 12.00 o'clock. I have not seen him yet.

Q Is there anything you can tell us further about <sup>S</sup>stabili~~zation~~ -- supplementing what Morgenthau said?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I think that covered it pretty well. I do not know of anything else.

Q Mr. President, have you decided on continuation of Mr. Eastman's office as Coordinator? You know that expires June tenth.

THE PRESIDENT: There will be something about it, probably in the Transportation Message.

Q. Do you care to comment on the passage yesterday of the Senate Resolution on NRA extension?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The best thing to do is to read what I have said about that, twice.

Q. Do you intend to ask the Postmaster General for any information with respect to the affidavit read before the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know anything about it, one way or the other.

Q. Have you decided what you are to do about Pan-American air-mail rates?

THE PRESIDENT: No; talked about it some more yesterday; no decision made yet.

Q. The farmers are talking about making a permanent national organization?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it in the paper this morning; I wondered how many had.

Q. There were about twenty talking about it. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't heard anything more than I read in the paper.

Q. Have you had any reaction to your talk to the farmers?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Have you any plans on Subsistence Homestead in view of McCarl's opinions?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is still in the stage of technicalities on how the money can be used. I do not think there has been any final determination on it yet.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #205,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 17, 1935, 4.03 P. M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot think of anything. You start.

Q Mr. Morgenthau said this morning in the Hearing that he thought the Government should own stock in Federal Reserve Banks, and I wonder if you would care to express an opinion on that.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would solve a great many questions if we did. I will tell you something off the record. I was talking a couple of days ago with a very deep student of American history about the old fight between Andrew Jackson and the Bank of the United States and at that particular time, his Secretary of the Treasury went in to see him and he said, "You are in a sort of a jam, Mr. President. Here is this Bank of the United States that is privately owned", he said. "You are licking them; you are probably going to put them out of business", and of course the thing had been going on for two or three or four years, this fight. He said, "The United States has a minority interest in that bank. Why don't you go to the Congress and get a majority interest and then you won't have any trouble about the control of the bank." Well, Jackson couldn't see his way clear to do it. That's a hundred years ago but it would have solved the banking situation at that time in a much more satisfactory way and probably would have prevented the era of wildcat banking during the next ten years that held sway over the country. I just cite that as an interesting historical incident.

Q (Mr. Stephenson) Did you say the next ten years or the last ten years?

(Laughter)

Q How about that transportation Message?

THE PRESIDENT: That has been pushed aside. I have not had time.

Q Next week?

THE PRESIDENT: Next week.

Q Do you expect to send up the name of a successor to Patrick Farrell when you send up the transportation Message?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I understand the Attorney General has sent to you a recommendation in the case of Charles Harris, waiting to be hung. Have you seen it?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you know if I have it? Steve (Mr. Early) says I have not got it. Is that a recommendation for extension?

Q You have given him two already.

MR. McINTYRE: The last time he had asked for an extension to complete the investigation.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think they are asking for another?

MR. McINTYRE: I do not know.

Q While Steve made your position on the bonus very clear to us yesterday morning, nevertheless there are several reports going around up on Capitol Hill which say that you would not mind if the Senate overrode your veto. Can you go into any further explanation on that subject for us?

THE PRESIDENT: Let's put it on this basis: You have Steve to a point where you are questioning his veracity. (Laughter) Steve comes back from the Woodmont Club and tells what is literally true -- that we did not discuss the bonus at the Woodmont Club. But there are some people who do not believe Steve. Well, he happened to be telling the truth 100% and now his veracity is questioned on the bonus and I have to admit that he again is stating the truth absolutely.

In other words, the bill is going to be vetoed. That is number one. It is going to be vetoed as strongly as I can veto it. And number three, I hope with all my heart that the veto will be sustained. Now, is that clear?

Q We have a report from abroad that a Professor White from Wisconsin reported you as having had some stabilization conversations with the British. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Off the record, I never heard of it. Who is he? He may be a very famous person but I never heard of him.

Q He is the son of old man White. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): I don't know who he is, Fred (Mr. Storm). Who is he?

Q (Mr. Storm) He is identified as Professor Harry White, of Wisconsin University, in the Agency Report.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I have ever heard of it.

Q To get back to the bonus, can you tell us when you will probably send it up?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I will send it up; I think I will take it up. (Laughter) There is a piece of news for you. The date is uncertain.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether any money will be allocated in the next few days on the projects approved yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Orders, I think, are now being prepared on those recommendations that we made the other day. When the Orders come in here, I will have to go over our recommendations and I cannot tell you whether I will sign them all or not. But either tomorrow or Monday those Orders will be ready.

Q The press release on Passamaquoddy did not mention Dexter Cooper. Will

he have any connection with it?

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine as consulting engineer because, of course, he knows more -- he is the man that went up there originally and was employed by that syndicate that got together, General Electric and a lot of companies, and he was employed by them to gather all the geological and tidal engineering statistics, so I think they will employ him as consulting engineer.

Q In connection with the Wisconsin program, in which the Federal Government recommended for allotment approximately half of the \$200,000,000 of work projects, will there be a general rule with all states that they will be required to match dollar for dollar?

THE PRESIDENT: As much as we can get. It was not put on a dollar to dollar basis but it was such an attractive offer we felt we could not turn it down. Each case will have to stand on its own merits.

Q The House leaders seem to be looking to you for guidance on the Wagner Labor Disputes Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I will probably talk with them over the week end.

Q Getting back to the bonus, you will take the Message to the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will there be a joint session, Mr. President? ^

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you discuss at the Cabinet meeting today the strike at the Camden Shipyards?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Was it brought up at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it was not.

Q I understood it was to be brought up at this meeting.

THE PRESIDENT: No, it was not discussed at all.

Q Will you go down the river?

THE PRESIDENT: Tomorrow afternoon, ever night.

Q Are you going to keep Nelson Johnson as Ambassador in China?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, if the Congress raises it to an embassy.

Q Will you touch any other pending legislation in your appearance before the Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: No, just bonus.

Q Is that Message completed yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you expect to do some work on the river?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it will be done before I go down.

Q There is a report on the Hill that you might meet tomorrow evening with the House leaders on the Wagner Bill and Social Security?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I am going down the river.

Q These Orders regarding public works, will they be given out as approved or will you hold them for a time?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will give them out just as fast as they are signed.

Q Here or at Frank Walker's?

MR. EARLY: Frank Walker.

THE PRESIDENT: Frank Walker. (At this point Mr. Early spoke to the President.) Steve says that you perhaps will like to use that direct quote, that I hope with all my heart that the veto will be sustained.

Q We would.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #206,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 22, 1935, 10.30 A. M.

Q It was a fine Message.

THE PRESIDENT: Too damned long. Everything except the kitchen stove in it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Any news?

Q Yes, sir; you gave us some.

Q You are going to veto the Bonus Bill today, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I may. I do not think there is anything. I haven't anything on my chest. I don't think I have any particular visitors coming. It is a fairly quiet week.

Q What time do you figure on arriving at the Capitol?

THE PRESIDENT: About quarter past twelve.

Q Will you be tempted to make any extraneous remarks on the Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. I always sneak in one or two words, as you know.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the conference yesterday with Mr. Walker and Harry Hopkins? They told us it was just a general discussion. Anything you want to add to that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it was a rather interesting talk we had. It related to two states, Alabama and Indiana. The two relief directors from those states were here.

The problem presented in each state was to make the money to which the state would be entitled on the basis of the people on the unemployment rolls go around in such a way that it would take practically everybody off those rolls. In other words, it brought in-

mediately to a head the question of the percentage of very expensive projects we could allot in any given state. Well, the simplest example is this: We have four billion dollars and are trying to put three and a half million people to work. Well, that is not much more than a thousand dollars per person. You find that grade crossings, they will cost two thousand dollars per person employed because materials are a very heavy factor there.

There are some of those expensive projects where the expenditure per individual runs as high as two thousand or twenty-five hundred dollars. That means that on other projects the amount we can spend must be a great deal less than eleven hundred dollars average.

In both states, the directors brought in very comprehensive plans. Now, taking the case of Alabama, there are certain items that have to come out of the allocation to Alabama. Let us say, for example, that the allocation to that state on the basis of the number of unemployed in the state would be sixty million dollars. We will just use that figure as an example. From that we have to deduct, immediately, the CCC boys from the state of Alabama. That will cost about twelve hundred dollars per boy, which is above the average that the state can spend. Highways probably cost nearer fifteen hundred dollars per person employed. Grade Crossings probably cost two thousand dollars per person employed. Now, those are practically mandatory allotments to the state of Alabama and to every other state, which means that we have to find local projects for the balance of the money that will run at a very much lower ratio of money spent per person employed. Of course, this has nothing to do with the wage scale. In other words, when I say two thousand dollars per person employed it does not mean that the person gets two thousand dollars.

The person gets whatever the rate of pay is, but there is a higher cost for materials and that actually brings the cost per person up to the higher figure.

Taking those two states as examples, we will probably go through the country on the same basis, making certain mandatory allotments, like highways and CCC Camps and things of that kind, and then finding how much money we have left for that state and then cutting the projects to fit the cloth -- to fit the amount of money that is left.

That process probably will take another five or six weeks to work out. Those projects which are in the mandatory category, the allotments on them are very nearly completed, like CCC Camps and highways. We know how much money is going into them. I call them "mandatory" allotments because Congress has suggested that we divide more or less in accordance with a formula. The total of those mandatory allotments, depending a little bit on the state, run between 25 and 50% of the total amount spent in the state.

I am just using this as an explanation of the method we are using in getting the money out and we are still hoping that all these projects will be under way, both the mandatory and the local, cheaper projects by Autumn. I said November and we still think that is a pretty good date.

Q Can we assume, then, that there has been a rough allotment made to each state based on the number of employables on the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Would it be possible to get these estimates by states?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think probably they can be given out fairly soon.

Q I think it would help if they knew how much they were to have.

THE PRESIDENT: That would be dependent on approximate conditions as they prevail.

Q Mr. President, can you give us an example of some of the cheaper types, what type they would be?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, for example, in Alabama they need a good many school-houses. The school district cannot afford to do it the old way, which was to borrow money at 6, 7, 8 and 10%, so probably in the case of school districts they will be asked to provide a certain amount themselves and we may give a certain portion as a gift and the balance we will ask them to repay over a period of years at a very low rate of interest.

Q That would not make it a PWA project in the sense that it would come under Administrator Ickes' direction?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on the locality very largely.

Then, they have quite a number of highway plans down there for bridges over creeks, wooden bridges over creeks, that would cost very little money to build, where the materials entering into it form a very small portion of the cost.

Q Mr. President, is there any example where all the expense would be borne by the Federal Government that would make the money go further than the illustrations you use?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean for municipal projects?

Q Any kind.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends largely on the condition of the municipality, the locality.

Q You stated twelve hundred dollars for CCC boys, for instance.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, the Federal Government bears all of that. They bear all of the highway money except for a comparatively small amount.

I don't remember exactly, but I think the matching portion of highway money is only about a hundred million dollars.

Q To the extent in which a political subdivision can put up its own money the program is going that much further?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, in the case of LaGuardia and his sewer in New York, he has a City which can still borrow money and the result is that he is borrowing 70%, and the only nick in the four billion dollar appropriation will be the 30% which will be a grant. Where a municipality can borrow, we are delighted to do it that way.

Q Is Wisconsin doing practically the same thing?

THE PRESIDENT: Practically the same thing.

Q A hundred million dollars?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are putting up a hundred and nine million dollars and getting a hundred million dollars from us and agreeing to pay us back over a period of years, thirty million dollars of the hundred million dollars we put up.

Q Mr. President, isn't it probable that only a comparatively small percentage of the people on work relief will come under the wage scales? In other words, if you exempt all the highway programs and the PWA programs, and so forth, wouldn't that take more than 50% off the --

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, nothing like that.

Q Has the time arrived when you can say anything about the Wagner Labor Disputes Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet; still talking.

Q Can you tell us anything about the possibility of an international war debt and disarmament conference in Washington -- Senator Tydings' proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard about it. Has he a proposal?

Q Is the Government considering an international conference here now?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a new one on me.

Q Mr. President, on those pay scales again, would the scales for highway and grade crossing elimination work be much different from those you indicate in your Order?

THE PRESIDENT: Not very different; there would be certain exceptions.

Q Have any of the allotments that have been recommended by the Allotment Board been approved yet by you?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think the verbal approval has gone out and I think the Director of the Budget is still trying to find the form of letter for me to sign. Verbal approval has been given to all of those passed the other day. In other words, there will be no delay, although I have not physically signed the letters yet.

Q Can you tell us anything of the criticism of the wage scales set up?

THE PRESIDENT: They will have to be specific before I can talk about them.

Q Well, they are too low. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is not specific. Where, what trade and what locality? You will have to come down to that.

Q Did I understand you to say that verbal approval had been given to all of the projects, the whole billion?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #207,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 24, 1935, 4.08 P. M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the news?

Q The stand in the Senate now seems to be to attach the Bonus Bill with the idea of putting it in any one of three ways on the Social Security Bill. Now, would you care to say at this time whether you would be inclined to veto the Social Security Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Anything that is extraneous to the Social Security Bill will be vetoed. That is easy. Of course, that (the Social Security Bill) is one of the greatest steps in progress we are taking today. I consider the Social Security Bill probably the major Act of this Congress and to attempt to load it down with something that has nothing to do with it -- it is perfectly obvious what the answer must be.

Q Can you tell us anything about the committee meeting this morning about the extension of the Bankhead Act?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better get that from the Hill because it depends on the break in procedure up there. It is too complicated to talk about it down here. Of course, as a matter of general fact, we do want the Bankhead Act extended so they can take a vote on it this year.

Q How about the 12-cent loan, is that to be continued?

THE PRESIDENT: That was not discussed.

Q One member of the conference said you had agreed to a 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ -month extension of the NRA?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard the figure mentioned. I am opposed to an extension to next April.

Q In your Fireside Chat you did not mention any time limit at all on the NRA. You said merely an extension.

THE PRESIDENT: But in my Message to Congress I said two years.

Q Why did you take two years? Why didn't you make it permanent?

THE PRESIDENT: Because we are still in the evolutionary stage of NRA. It should, probably like almost any similar Act, be amended from time to time. The best illustration was the Social Security Act in England, which was put through in 1909, and which has been amended by every Parliament from then down to date. That also is an evolutionary process.

Q And in that time legislation will be brought forward to meet the same objective?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q When he came out of here today, Mr. Green (William Green, of the A. F. of L.) said that he is of the opinion that you are in sympathy and friendly to the purposes of the Wagner Disputes Bill. Is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that is a fair statement. There are a number of amendments and changes of language which were discussed by those who were in here this morning after they (the other conferees) left here. And there may be some changes in language made when it comes up in the House.

Q You spoke of discussing that with the Leadership of the House, I believe at a recent Press Conference. Have you had such a discussion with the Leaders of the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Just in general; not with respect to the details of it. That was one of the purposes of the conference this morning, so as

to be able to take it out.

Q Was one of the discussions with respect to the Majority Rule decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q On Wednesday it is reported that the Japanese Ambassador made a speech and he read copies of letters addressed to him which he said objected to our maneuvers in the Pacific. He discussed it again today with a reporter of the Washington Times and showed him the letters, et cetera. I am asked to find out --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): I never heard about it at all. Steve (Mr. Early) told me about it five minutes ago.

Q Do you care to make any other comment?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you decided the loan and grant policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will have something for you on that either this afternoon or the first thing in the morning. That is the loan and grant policies to cities.

Q You said you would veto the Clark Bonus Bill. Would you veto it --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No -- wait. There is a limit to the "if" questions.

Q May I ask you if you will veto it if it comes to you as a separate bill?

THE PRESIDENT: We will limit ourselves to that particular question today.

Q Mr. President, have there been any suggestions to you from Wisconsin that you rescind your approval of the Wisconsin program?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Getting back to the NRA, is there any sign of a meeting of minds between the Senate and House after this conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Put it this way: "Hope springs eternal."

Q Only hope still?

Q Have these conferences developed a definite procedure on what labor conditions are to be affected by labor legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No; they are still talking about it. I think it is in the House Ways and Means Committee.

Q Something more interesting to our readers: Is Franklin in the Varsity Crew tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: No, the Junior Varsity. They made the whole Varsity Crew the Junior Varsity because the Junior Varsity looked better and they made the Junior Varsity into the Varsity. That is the present status.

Q In the Junior Varsity race tomorrow, do they race too?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. From all I hear that will be the way it will go the rest of the season.

Q When is that transportation Message going up?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, as soon as I can get to it.

Q Next week?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope early in the week. I have not had a chance to get at it at all.

Q Mr. President, is the Works Progress Division contemplating any liberalization of its relief wage scale as urged by organized labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Only in accordance with the Order. If you will read the (Executive) Order, it will describe what can happen.

Q After the races tomorrow will you spend the week end aboard the SEQUOIA?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, coming around back to Washington.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #208,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
May 29, 1935, 4.00 P. M.

Q (Mr. Young) I wrote a story that you have not lost your old smile.

Don't throw me down.

THE PRESIDENT: You bet I haven't. It is working overtime. (Laughter)

All in? No, not yet.

Q (Mr. Young) Big crowd. They are looking for something. Steve (Mr. Early) warned us early this morning. (Laughter)

Q The inactivity on the Hill is bringing them down.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The Hill has gone on a holiday for a day or so and it brings them down here.

THE PRESIDENT: Spring fever. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

Q That (referring to spring fever) is as good an excuse as any.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

Well, all you occasional visitors who occasionally come in, stand in the back row. (Laughter)

I haven't any news at all.

Q Is there anything you can tell us for background or otherwise about this NRA situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q What did you talk to General Johnson about?

THE PRESIDENT: The same as I have talked to 75 other people today and yesterday, the NRA. Business men, lawyers and newspaper editors -- those are the three classifications.

Q You had better talk to us reporters. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. When I get through talking to all of them, I will talk to you and find out what to do.

Q You did not talk to the General as a newspaper columnist?

THE PRESIDENT: As a matter of fact, I did not see him alone, there were two or three others.

Q Did you also see Professor Frankfurter today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I saw him today; I have seen some of the labor and business groups and I have seen two editors so far, and two or three eminent lawyers.

Q Who were they, sir; would you mind telling us?

THE PRESIDENT: If I once started, it would take me fifteen minutes to remember. I started at ten minutes past nine this morning and I have been seeing them ever since.

Q Have you signed the order allocating the funds for the Wisconsin Works program yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Do you remember, Steve (Mr. Early)? I don't remember whether that has been signed or not.

Q There are a lot of rumors in Wisconsin that you will not sign it, that you have changed your mind on that program.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is not so.

Q Can you tell us about your talk today with the House Military Committee? I think they were in here.

THE PRESIDENT: It was a clarification of rather many details in the TVA legislation they wanted to know about and a good many of their questions I had never heard of before so I have to check up on it. I could not give them any information because I did not know it.

Some of the other questions I think we explained satisfactorily

and I think they are going to get the bill out and through.

Q You do think they are going to get it out?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I don't know when, but I hope very soon.

Q Can you tell us anything about your talk with Governor Harrison?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that talk was about the French situation.

Q Any conclusions?

THE PRESIDENT: That you will have to ask the Treasury Department about.

That is one of those things I cannot talk about.

Q During the past few days both Stanley Baldwin and Anthony Eden have expressed the desire of the British for closer cooperation with us in the maintenance of world peace. Can you tell us whether or not that desire is reciprocated on our part?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Laughter)

Q Without equivocation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, without equivocation, we are in favor of world peace.  
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Q Having progress/that far, can we induce you to elucidate on Baldwin's dream that some day the navies and general manpower and resources of the United States and Great Britain might be used jointly in the maintenance of world peace?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that rather a warlike statement? Jointly against whom?

Q Just as a guarantee of world peace, (laughter) against anyone that attempts to break the peace.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that sounds awfully belligerent.

Q Any plans for dealing with the coal situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, the coal situation is a good deal like a good many of the other situations that are brought about by the Supreme Court decision. Well, if I were going to write the story -- I am afraid

you are going to get something now -- if I were going to write the story I would write it something like this: The spot news is not in Washington!

Now, I know what a difficult spot that puts you in, all of you, because you are supposed to represent spot news.

The real spot news in the present situation is what is happening as a result of the Supreme Court decision in every industry and in every community in the United States. That is the spot news.

I have, for instance, a good many resolutions that have come in. Here is one, right in front of me, that came in to me ten minutes ago. It is from the Cotton Textile Industry Committee resolving that they recommend that the cotton textile industry make no change in the conduct of its business and urge the industry to accept this as a general policy. Of course, that has already been expressed by Mr. Richberg in his statement the other day in which he said that he hoped, and we all hope, that the code provisions with relation to fair trade practices and with relation to wages and employment in general will be maintained. That is fine.

But, at the same time, what are we going to do, let us say, in the cotton textile industry if some mill starts lengthening out its hours and cutting its minimum wages? That is putting it rather squarely up to the cotton textile industry and it all comes back to the same old thing. 90% of them, as I said a couple of years ago, want to play the game on the level. But what happens to their playing the game on the level if 10% of them go out and hit below the belt?

You have a coal situation where everything has been going along

pretty well for two years; you did not have any labor troubles and you won't have them if the present coal code provisions are carried on. What would you do as a miner, if your individual company, the individual company you are working for, went out and broke the present coal code procedure?

In other words, it all comes squarely back to spot news outside of Washington. What is going to happen and what is happening today? Are there any of the garment trade people in the City of New York who cut their wages from twelve dollars minimum to eight dollars today? That is where your spot news is.

Are there any factories in New York or anywhere else this morning that said to the girls, "Instead of going home at five o'clock this afternoon, we have a lot of rush work on. You are going to stay until nine o'clock tonight." What are the girls going to do? Are they going to walk out at five o'clock and lose their jobs? That is where your spot news is for the next few days in this country. That is the way I would write that story. That is as far as I can go today, but that is how I would write it.

Q Mr. President, are you going on the air?

THE PRESIDENT: Never thought of it.

Q They asked you also in that resolution, I believe, Mr. President, that you yourself ask for cooperation.

THE PRESIDENT: That has already been done in the statement by Mr. Richberg which I approved.

Q Have you talked to anyone concerning Congressional action to limit the power of the Supreme Court, as can be done under the Constitution?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Oh, I have had -- this is the batch since nine o'clock this morning, but I suppose that we have had about fifty different

suggestions. They go all the way from abolishing the Supreme Court to abolishing the Congress, and I think abolishing the President. That is so as to make it complete. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, what did you tell the oil men who came in today? That looks like a spot break here.

THE PRESIDENT: I told them to go up and have a talk with Congressman Rayburn.

Q Mr. President, are you willing to comment any on the Buffey Coal Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, has it been decided whether you will try to get any legislation this session? Has that decision been made?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I mean on this NRA situation.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course -- I guess we won't discuss that yet.

(Laughter) That is not yet spot news.

Q Is there any possibility of your attending the dedication of the Cape Cod Canal Bridge on June 22?

THE PRESIDENT: June 22, is it? I didn't know that. That is the day after the New London races which I hope to attend. I might try to do it. I did not know about it at all.

Q In that connection, could you tell us your plans for tomorrow, Decoration day?

THE PRESIDENT: Decoration Day I am going out to the stand to watch the parade for half an hour, and then I will continue to see lawyers, editors, eminent lawyers and eminent other people the rest of the day.

Q Any likelihood of General Johnson's returning to official life?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it. Don't get excited about this Johnson story at all because, after all, that is not spot news, it is what I

call "spotty" news. In other words, it is really true that I have seen in the last few days about 25 or 30 people who, all of them, have knowledge about NRA, and I am getting them in to talk things over. Johnson is one. Frankfurter is one and Paul Block, who I had at lunch today, and so forth. I have talked to Congressional leaders and I have talked to a good many people from all over the country, so it is not a case of picking out any one individual. The one individual would not be any news, you would have to list them all.

Q Would you be able to hazard a guess as to when there will be news on the subject here?

THE PRESIDENT: No, get the news on the outside first.

Q Richberg indicated his intention to resign on June 16.

THE PRESIDENT: That is something we have not discussed. In other words, the personalities do not enter into this picture at all, one way or the other, yet.

(The Press Conference adjourned at 4.10 P. M.)