

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #253,
On the road in front of the cottage
occupied by the newspapermen,
Warm Springs Foundation, Warm Springs, Ga.,
November 26, 1935, 12.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: How is the game of golf?

Q Bad, as you noticed.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw you (Mr. Smith, of the Atlanta Journal) wrote a
nice piece about what good golf they played.

Q It was wonderful and what a good kibitzer you are, too. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: They can't take it; that is the real size of it.

Q That was destructive criticism.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it was.

Q Doc Smithers was the one who could not take it.

THE PRESIDENT: Twice I absolutely ruined him but Roberta (Miss Barrows) --
it helped her game a lot.

Q That was the 250-yard drive she made -- more or less -- not counting
the two kicks.

Q There is some talk about a nice holiday for the departments. They
want the afternoon of the day before.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they usually have it for Thanksgiving? Have they ever
had it Thanksgiving?

Q I do not think you ever gave it to them, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I hate to break precedent.

Q Have you seen the reports by the American Federation of Labor and the
Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Board on improvement in
business conditions?

THE PRESIDENT: I only read the headlines this morning.

Q What did you think of the headlines?

THE PRESIDENT: The paper never stands sponsor for the headlines, so why should I comment on them? That is a good answer, too; a very good one.

Q What are you going to tell us about the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: We have made very good progress. I did the Navy this morning and there is only the District of Columbia and that is not ready yet.

Q I thought you were preparing to complete the D. C. budget?

THE PRESIDENT: He (Mr. Bell) did not bring it with him.

Q How do you regard Buchanan's idea that by having a dandy fight he could come within \$500,000,000. of balancing the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: He did not tell me that.

Q That is not why he left today?

THE PRESIDENT: We have made some big savings already. We have not taken up the D. C. budget yet but we have saved approximately \$400,000,000. over the department estimates.

Q On safety of highways, have you given any thought of forbidding in interstate commerce the shipment of any automobile capable of going over fifty miles an hour?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard of it until ^[James P. ?] Sherman Buchanan suggested it.

Q What is this?

Q Prohibiting the shipment in interstate commerce of any automobile able to run over fifty miles an hour. We have to do something; they are going to kill more people by automobiles than we lost in the World War.

Q It is the slow drivers that are killing them, not speed.

Q Did Buchanan suggest it?

THE PRESIDENT: He said it is something to think about. I asked him whether he thought it was constitutional and he said he had not thought of that side.

Q I think you could do that under the interstate commerce or the welfare clause.

Q There seems to be a pretty well grounded report saying that in the next Budget you can separate relief from public works so that Ickes and Hopkins will be separate.

THE PRESIDENT: That is just a rumor. There is no justification because we have not considered it. All we have been doing is going over the department figures -- nothing else.

Q There has also been a report that on January third you might put in a budget for the regular departments, leaving the emergency budget for later?

THE PRESIDENT: That, I take it, is just another rumor. You can multiply it ad infinitum. There hasn't been a single thing done except to go over the individual items in the departments.

Q You could spike a lot of rumors.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not spiking rumors because, if you once start, you have to spend your entire day spiking them. We have just taken all the items in the department and nothing else, and that is all you will know until the Budget Message goes to the Congress.

Q There is one logical question I have with respect to this saving of \$400,000,000. over department estimates: Did the estimates put in by the departments this year approximate the appropriations last year?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you anything about it because it has not been added up. There again, the only thing that has been done is to take the department estimates this year and see whether and how we could save on the items of the department estimates. I don't see how you can write anything further, that being the fact.

Q I thought there might be an indication from comparative tables.

Q Mr. Ickes said he found a third case of collusive bidding by the four American steel companies and submitted them to you?

THE PRESIDENT: They have not come yet. It would be naturally referred to the Federal Trade Commission with the other cases.

Q What do you hear from the Secretary of State on the big war?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing. Just what you read in the papers and not everything you read in the papers.

Q Anything in connection with oil?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing.

Q Have you answered Gene's (Governor Talmadge's) letter of welcome, published yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you publish the letter?

THE PRESIDENT: Better get it from him.

Q I am glad of that. I don't like to write about it.

Q Have you started on your Atlanta speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I dictated two pages and tore them up. I did not like them.

Q How long will it run?

THE PRESIDENT: Twenty minutes.

You don't need a story today. There isn't much in this --

an awful lot of figures about lumber imports and lumber cut. If you run shy (of news) next week I can give you some figures.

Q Mr. President, while here have you signed the --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It may have been or it may not; I don't know. Those things come in from various sources. Fifty people have been suggested.

Q Have you signed the commission of David A. Davis to be Judge in the Northern District of Alabama? I have an uncle --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No appointment has been made and probably will not be for some time.

Q How far in advance of Thursday will we be able to get the advance copy of the speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Thursday afternoon sometime, if I can make it. I will give you some parts of it anyway. I may have to fill in in the middle.

Q That middle part --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will try not to put anything in there that will spoil your lead. It probably will be mostly figures. I won't get some figures until the last moment.

Q You will have a duck party if this weather keeps up.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It is a long procession too; it will take you all over the town.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw the map in the Journal.

Q Any new visitors on the list, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q What were you and Mr. Aubrey Williams discussing?

THE PRESIDENT: We haven't. He is coming up at 2.00 o'clock for lunch.

Just general figures on relief.

Q He says you have not given him all his money. He just wants \$13,000,000. I did not think that would take lunch, would it?

(Laughter)

SECRETARY MORGENTHAU: Just hors d'oeuvres.

THE PRESIDENT: Everything very quiet and next week will be even quieter.

Q Are you going to visit the C.C.C. Camp next week -- I hope?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. McINTYRE: This is the afternoon Conference for morning papers.

THE PRESIDENT: The C.C.C. Camps and the Pine Mountain development.

Q I am enjoying better rest (at the C.C.C. Camp) than these boys are.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Aubrey Williams, who had just arrived) Come in, Aubrey. They say you want 13 millions. Is that right?

MR. WILLIAMS: I don't know about that.

THE PRESIDENT: I will hold you to it.

Q We will keep the Senator (Mr. Russell Young) away from the C.C.C. Camps until you have had a chance at them this year. (Laughter)

Q The Senator (Mr. Young) is giving No. 27 over at the Manchester Kiwanis Club in the basement of the Methodist Church on Tuesday night.

THE PRESIDENT: That ought to be good.

MR. McINTYRE: He has two new chapters in his book and they have not been printed yet and he thought he might send them up and they would be available for your Atlanta speech.

Q Probably save you a lot of worry.

THE PRESIDENT: If you do that, maybe you can get the copy by Thursday morning.

Jimmy (James Roosevelt) arrives tomorrow and Mrs. Roosevelt tomorrow evening.

MR. McINTYRE: Is Jimmy flying down?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Your mother is not coming?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. McINTYRE: She will be pleased to know that everybody is disappointed that she is not.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #254,
Held on the road in front of the cottage
occupied by the newspapermen,
Warm Springs Foundation, Warm Springs, Ga.,
December 3, 1935, 11.30 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Where are they all?

Q Good morning.

THE PRESIDENT: (to the correspondents coming out of the cottage) Sissies;
had to stay around the fire. (Laughter)

Q Pardon our dress; we have been out playing a lot of golf.

Q Any news?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news at all, except I believe
I have your recommendation as a movie director. We will have some-
thing to do when we leave the White House. You come with me and
have a good job.

Q It would be fine; I would like it.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Trohan, won't you say "Yes"?

You ought to have heard Mac (Mr. McIntyre) sing last night.

He was good. He does not sing well though.

MR. McINTYRE: When I tried to reach that low note I fell off the chair.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that was good.

Q We understand from Washington that the presidency of the Export-
Import Bank was offered to Jesse Jones. I do not know whether the
morning paper accepted or not.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q That means that those banks would go into the R.F.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my, no; separate corporations.

Q Jesse isn't going to leave the R.F.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is in addition to his present duties. It is very much the same kind of work because it really is lending.

Q Stories out of Washington say that some class friend of yours is suggesting that you may go to Philadelphia for the Convention -- that you want to go there personally and attend the Convention.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it. You will get stories out of every other city in the United States before January. It is all right.

Q Have you any choice in the matter?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not thought about it. I think we had better have it down here on the top of Pine Mountain Valley.

Q You are a candidate for re-election?

THE PRESIDENT: The National Committee will decide where the Convention is to be held and the Convention will decide who is to be the candidate.

Q Why, Mr. Murphy!

THE PRESIDENT: "Mr. Murphy" is right. He was the Tammany leader. He was the sort of person who always has your hand. People would come to him and they would say, "Who is going to be nominated?" and he would say, putting his hand out like that (indicating), "The Convention will decide."

Q The convention was largely held in a back room somewhere -- the real convention, I mean.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the real one in those days.

Q Anything on the list for tomorrow?

MR. McINTYRE: You have one or two on the list. The local people are coming on Wednesday at 10.30.

Q There has been some curiosity around the country about this estimate

of 55 to 70 billion dollars. Can you tell us who they are? (The newspaperman was referring to the President's speech in Atlanta on November 29th in which he had referred to bankers who, in the spring of 1933, had told him that the country could safely stand a national debt of between 55 and 70 billion dollars.)

THE PRESIDENT: I have a list and I have letters and I think probably it would be worth while to look up some of the files of the financial journals for the same period.

Q You may have to learn to sing in this next campaign. I came in with a conductor and I told him about the speech and I said, "Gene (Governor Talmadge) is going on the radio" and he said, "Gene is the only jackass in Georgia with a tenor voice. He ought to sing for us." (Laughter)

Q Have you received a specific request to make public the names of the bankers?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you have any intention of doing so?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any news for us?

THE PRESIDENT: That's good, Eddie (Mr. Lockett). I do not think there is any at all. I haven't even seen the Sunday papers and today is Tuesday.

Q Mr. President, what do you hear from Washington on the situation abroad?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard a peep except what is coming out in the papers.

Q Anything on the oil sanctions?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Any callers on the list today?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing except what is coming out in the papers and I have not seen them since Saturday afternoon.

Q Could Jesse Jones help us get a list of the bankers?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he knows the names of some of them himself.

Q How about the Chicago speech? When are we going to be able to get an advance on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not thought of it at all. I will try to get part of it before we leave. I may have to add some on the train.

Q Are you going to mention the A.A.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q No politics?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter) And that will be -- let's see -- that will be the fifth opening gun of the campaign.

Q Practically a salvo.

THE PRESIDENT: No. It started last May. One of the speakers in May was widely heralded as the opening gun of the campaign and each speech since then has been labeled as the opening gun of the campaign. I hope it will get started sometime.

Q You have got lots of ammunition.

Q That is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, off the record.

Q What about the speech about joining the church at Notre Dame?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I will tell you what, off the record, you could use. It is an interesting thing. Jim Farley got a degree the other day -- this is off the record, I am just giving you a tip -- he is Irish and he gets a degree from a university in Chattanooga.

I think it is a very, very strong Baptist or Methodist institution. And the following week I go out, an old tested Dutch Reform, and get a degree from Notre Dame. That is a good combination. It shows we are breaking down religious prejudice at last.

Q Oh, no; I still hate the Catholics. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Who has been taking your money, Stevie (Mr. Stephenson)?

Q That is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What would you write if you were writing a story for the papers?

THE PRESIDENT: I would write that a good time was had by all.

Q Which is true.

THE PRESIDENT: Which is true.

Q Are you going to visit the C.C.C. Camp before you leave?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q By the way, Walter Trohan is speaking in the basement of the Methodist Church over here in Manchester.

THE PRESIDENT: They are always proselyting; yes?

Q They found out about Notre Dame.

Q We are kept in the basement there.

Q (Mr. Trohan) Sometimes they hang with a rope; I am not going over.

THE PRESIDENT: I really induced them to do that.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news and won't be for the rest of the week.

Q The golf game will continue this afternoon.

THE PRESIDENT: Those negro songs last night were wonderful.

Q Graham Jackson. They will be here on Friday night for the dance.

Will you be there?

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #255,
Warm Springs Foundation, Warm Springs, Ga.,
December 6, 1935, 11.00 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not recognize George (Mr. Durno) without his bonnet.

Q Just the body -- the soul is gone.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Senator. How are you?

Q (Mr. Russell Young) Fine.

Q What time did you go to bed?

Q (Mr. Young) A little after 12.00.

Q Mr. President, any comment on the strike of the utility companies against registering under the very liberal terms of the holding company bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we can almost paraphrase the late Mr. Murphy, "The Court will decide."

I do not think there is any news at all except that I am going out at a quarter past 1.00 with various engineers of the C.C.C., the State Park Commission and the National Park people to re-engineer that road we went over the other day.

Q (Mr. Smith of the Atlanta Journal) Good; I think that is a fine movement.

THE PRESIDENT: What they did first -- they thought they wanted the shortest distance between two points so they ran it absolutely straight. It is, in a good many places, just up hill and down dale. It is meant to be a scenic highway, so we are going out and re-engineer it.

Q You had better make a bum job of it because, if it is a success,

you do not want to be called a great engineer with the campaign coming on. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't do the engineering -- I leave that to the engineers. All I say is, "There is a lovely view. I have the aesthetic sense. Can't you possibly swing the road over fifty feet so that I can see the view?"

Q Is Mr. Delano in the party?

THE PRESIDENT: He went back yesterday afternoon.

Q I have been talking to Governor Osborn about a bridge over the Straits of Mac^Kinac.

THE PRESIDENT: I have been learning a little geography from Governor Osborn this morning. I am very much interested in it. You can say that as soon as I get back to Washington I am so much interested in what the Governor said that I am going to start the Army Engineers making a preliminary survey of it.

GOVERNOR CHASE OSBORN: That is fine; that is magnificent. It makes your new part accessible. So we rather think that the Lake Superior fishing and the bridge across the Straits of Mac^Kinac will make you come up there sometime.

THE PRESIDENT: The Governor said that a good part of the year you can get across on an ice breaker.

GOVERNOR OSBORN: In the summer the ferries are so congested that there are delays and great danger of collision.

THE PRESIDENT: Two parts of the same state cut in two.

GOVERNOR OSBORN: Andy Johnson (Jackson?) did that and we want to marry that part of the country.

Q I would like to ask a District of Columbia question: Commissioner

Allen in Washington is going to afford an opportunity for the citizens of Washington to vote in an advisory way on the problems coming up in the District so as to guide the Commissioners on the sentiment in the city. I wonder if you have any news on that at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Let me check with Allen when I get back. It is a new one on me.

Q In connection with roads, will you follow out your transportation Message of the last session and request the enactment of legislation for the regulation of all forms of transportation being settled in one Government agency?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that we can go any further than we have been talking about already. We have put the busses and trucks under the Interstate Commerce Commission and the question is still open as to whether certain phases of shipping, inland shipping, lake shipping and ocean shipping, both coastwise and foreign, should be, for rate purposes, under the Interstate Commerce Commission. Of course we haven't got it in a bill yet although it has been agreed upon.

Q Regulation of all forms of shipping?

THE PRESIDENT: Of transportation, that is the general thing. Everything that can be coordinated in one body ought to be.

Q What are the prospects?

THE PRESIDENT: Here is a case that would not come under interstate commerce, the lighting of the highways, that being purely an administrative function.

Q Department of Commerce?

THE PRESIDENT: And that, of course, would remain there. That is an illustration of the division of functions, but all regulatory functions of all transportation ought to be in one body.

Q Could you comment on the story that appeared this morning from Washington, from Secretary Hull, which was interpreted as being a warning to the Japanese not to go too far in northern China?

THE PRESIDENT: I had not heard of it. I have not read the papers yet.

Q We ought to get one international story. (Laughter)

Q Senator George yesterday expressed a personal opinion that if the Supreme Court invalidated A.A.A., we were very close to a manufacturers' sales tax. Do you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q How are you getting along with your speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't done a thing on it, not a thing.

Q We have had it practically completed for four days now. Let's have that stricken from the record. (Laughter)

Q The Senator (Mr. Young) is sending up No. 62 this afternoon. (Laughter)

Q In connection with this railroad problem, somebody seems to know... what is going on and it seems as though they are adopting the Salt Lake City end of the plan of reducing their fixed charges. Is anything going on within the Administration except for the R.F.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing is that through Eastman's organization and through the Commission itself they are encouraging the railroads to get rid of unprofitable branch lines and to substitute busses for them and to get rid of surplus trackage and switches and things like that. The railroads are trying to

cooperate and are cooperating very, very well with them. I think this past year -- I saw the figures for it the other day -- I think they abandoned over a thousand miles of tracks and only built eighty miles of new track.

Q Speaking of highways around here, are you familiar with this road on the Columbus Highway over the railroad -- that curved bridge? It twists around and dips down.

THE PRESIDENT: This Columbus road is going to be graded some day.

Q It is pretty well graded now except that one place.

THE PRESIDENT: It is on the map. It is a bad place.

Q Will we get the text tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: That is only a hope; I don't know. I am going to be out practically all afternoon. I will try to do a preliminary draft this afternoon and evening and get you something before we leave.

Q You are not hoping any more than we are.

MR. McINTYRE: What time are you going to get back from that trip?

THE PRESIDENT: Two hours or more.

MR. McINTYRE: You may get a chance to work on it this afternoon.

Q How about Notre Dame?

THE PRESIDENT: I have to write that speech too. Will you help me?

Q That Notre Dame speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to tell them what transpired in the basement of the Manchester church. "Transpired" is a good word.

(Laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #256,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 13, 1935, 10:30 A. M.

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody? Has the behavior of all who stayed at home been good while we were away?

Q Not exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: I could certify to the character of those who went with us. They were all right. They got a very high mark.

Q We should have a certificate.

Q We acquitted ourselves admirably before the Kiwanis Club at Manchester and we all got a certificate when we got home.

THE PRESIDENT: We are having the speeches put in the Congressional Record.

Q You might give them the idea, too.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news that you have not heard. To you who stayed behind in Washington I want to report that the Press at Warm Springs made a 100 per cent record. They had a feast of reason and a flow of many speeches which will appear in the Congressional Record shortly.

Otherwise, everything is quiet.

Q Are you speaking of the Senator Young School of Expression? (Laughter)

Q The Post Office Department had a disastrous fire and the local fire chief said that the file room, in which the fire occurred, was one of the worst fire hazards imaginable and he said further that the fire department has no jurisdiction in Government files.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they should. I think it would be a very good

thing if the fire department here were responsible and could make reports on Government buildings, including file rooms.

Q When I asked the guards outside why the White House doors open in, they said they did not know the reason. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think we ought to have an investigation made.

Q The District law is that they open out. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Is it? Is this a public building?

Q It is not a District building.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it is even a public building on some occasions.

I do not think there is any news at all.

Q Is it your intention to seek neutrality legislation in relation with the steps which have already been taken to discourage war profits?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot answer that intelligently yet. We will have to wait about two weeks.

Q Will you make that the subject of a Message to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Make what?

Q New and permanent neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: We have to have something before the first of February, obviously. The old Act runs out. Whether we are going after new neutrality legislation, I don't know. Obviously, we will try to get something before the first of February.

Q Will it involve a Message to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have no idea.

Q Will you ask for N.R.A. legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I haven't a report yet.

Q What did you think of Major Berry's conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know enough about it.

Q Would you care to comment on reports from the Philippines that some Filipino leaders believe the Commonwealth should be continued indefinitely?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q On this N.R.A. report, would that come from the Federal Trade Commission? Are they making a study at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, Fred (Mr. Essary). I think they are studying it and various other people are studying it. There are a good many angles and then also, of course, the N.R.A. is reporting to Congress, or a Committee of Congress, I have forgotten which it is. There was a Resolution passed.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your talk yesterday with Naval people?

THE PRESIDENT: We spent two solid hours going over the Naval Reserve problem. Where is Ray (Mr. Clapper)? Honestly, we did.

Q How many are in there?

THE PRESIDENT: Much too few. The real question was this: Starting away back in 1913 I have been interested in getting some kind of a Naval Reserve bill up. After the War, in 1920, we had all kinds of paper plans and from that date to this date they remained mostly on paper. The result is we have a wholly inadequate Naval Reserve. What we were discussing was not only a definite effort to put it on paper but to create a Reserve that would be adequate. The general figure we are shooting for is a Naval Reserve of about 150,000 men. That would include, of course, all different kinds of what might be called classes. For instance, there would be the 16 to 20 year men who have served three, four or five enlistments in the Navy. Then there would be

another group that served four or eight or twelve years in the Navy; there would be graduates of the Naval Militias, people from merchant ships, and so forth. It would take a good many years to work it up to 150,000 men. But we do definitely want to make a start.

Q Do you know how many we have now?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better check on that. I think it is --
(interposing)

Q/ We were told yesterday, 30,000.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that includes the inactive list too. I don't believe it is as high as that. Twenty-two to twenty-five thousand on the active list.

Q Do they propose a bill to put these men on a regular pay status?

THE PRESIDENT: It would be very much the way the Army handles their Reserves. The same thing for the Marine Corps and Staff Corps.

We also talked over another problem that relates to Staff Corps. For instance, on the medical end, the Army has enrolled most of the big doctors in the country and put them in the Reserve, being able to offer them a rank of Major or Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel. Under our law it has been impossible to get high-class doctors in the Naval Reserve because we can only offer the rank of Senior Lieutenant. So, we want to equalize that. The same thing applies to supply officers and instructors, for example civil engineers.

Q By any chance, did you discuss the London Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not at all. It was not mentioned.

Q Have the business men given you any suggestions as to how to take people off the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Has private industry taken many off?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the recent figures. I had the Department of Labor figures about three weeks ago but there will be some more out soon.

Q Mr. President, is there any present intention to extend the neutrality legislation to include raw materials?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't discuss it because Congress has not gotten here yet.

Q The Federal Reserve Board Open Market Committee met and decided to take up its Advisory Council's suggestion that they sell Government bonds. Do you consider that 3 billion reserve of member banks unhealthy?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a little bit too technical to answer offhand.

Q When do you expect to announce the appointment of the new members of the new Federal Reserve Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't send their names to the Senate until the middle of January.

Q The dead line is February first?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you considering speaking before the Ohio State Bar Association?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I was asked and had to say that I could not possibly do it. There is only one possibility of going away from Washington next month and that is still tentative, so I think you had better not write about it -- the dedication of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial in New York at the Natural History Museum. I laid the cornerstone and they want me to attend the final dedication. It was built by the State.

Q Anything on Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: No; making progress.

Q On that other -- we can't use it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is somewhere around the middle of January and I am not

dead sure I can go to it. I am just considering the invitation.

Q That is in New York City?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you making an appointment of an Ambassador to France sometime soon?

THE PRESIDENT: France? There is no vacancy.

Q No vacancy? (Laughter)

Q One of my editors asked me to ask you that question.

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any and I hope there won't be any.

Q Do you care to say anything about the developments in the silver market this week?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the Treasury.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #257,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 17, 1935, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody?

Q Has anybody yet discovered what happened to Norman Thomas?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard yet. There are many rumors afloat.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news at all. I commend
to you the old lines --

"'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the streets
Not a creature was stirring,"not even the Press.

Let it go at that.

Q Is that Press spelled with one "s" or two? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the fact that the
little republic of Finland has made its payment on the war debt?

THE PRESIDENT: Only to express my happiness and appreciation.

Q Mr. President, the W.P.A. hasn't given out any figures showing
employment under the relief program, except those of November 15.
They have been promising "later in the week" for the last three
weeks.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know any more than you do.

Q You haven't had any details?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, the spokesman for the Federal Council of Churches
has asserted you were going to take some action to silence the
Army and Navy officers for their criticism of the Federal Council
of Churches. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's sort of round-about.

Q Mr. President, do you care to make any comment on the Townsend old-age pension plan?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not at this time.

Q Mr. President, will you discuss your plan for financing beyond the fifteen million that is about exhausted?

THE PRESIDENT: It being a very major--I think I have said this before-- a very major public work that will cost a very large sum, I feel that there should be some form of Congressional approval. I don't know what sum will be included in the public works bill. That, of course, if it goes through, means Congressional sanction; and if it doesn't go through, it means we cannot go ahead with it.

Q There will be a public works bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Independent of the ordinary budget?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no budget bill. They are appropriation bills.

Q You mean by that the \$500,000,000 proposition?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. As a matter of fact, it probably won't run as high as \$500,000,000.

Q Will there be major projects?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you received, Mr. President, the Santee-Cooper River Project?

THE PRESIDENT: The last engineering report came in about six months ago.

Q They had a special report.

THE PRESIDENT: There is no reason why that should not be made public.

You can get it from the Army Engineers or Interior. It is only about two pages.

Q Do you care to discuss Mr. Hoover's recommendations?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you have in mind for relief through public works in the new Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Would projects like Quoddy take additional money?

THE PRESIDENT: All uncompleted projects.

Q This Congressional section of the Canal will be a separate bill, will it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily.

Q Mr. President, do you care to discuss the continuing decline in the price of silver?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I would have to ask the Treasury.

Q Mr. President, are you disposed to comment on the progress or lack thereof of the London Naval Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I can, Fred, I think it is safer not.

Q Has there been any consideration of that \$30,000,000 project in St. Louis?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That is a question tied up with the Attorney General's office. In other words, the Missouri Legislature, I think, created this authority with the authority to contract for the purchase of land up to a certain sum provided the Federal Government matched their share.

Q There were three to one.

THE PRESIDENT: Three to one, whatever it was. We don't have enough funds to obligate for the entire project. We could give them a smaller sum out of W.P.A. to put people to work on the demolition

of the buildings, but we cannot give them the whole sum. The Attorney General holds that we cannot give them any under the present law. Probably that means that we would have to get some kind of authorization bill or resolution through Congress in order to obligate the Federal Government to pay at some later date the balance of our share over and above the amount we give now as work relief.

Q Could that be included in the less than \$500,000,000, or would that be a separate bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I told the St. Louis people I would try to get that through the first week of the session.

Q Will housing be included in this new public works bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Will this bill contain only specific appropriations or new public works funds?

THE PRESIDENT: Specific appropriations.

Q Chiefly those already under way?

THE PRESIDENT: Chiefly those already under way.

Q That means there will be no new Public Works Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't say that! (Laughter)

Q Will you continue the double budget system through the next year?

THE PRESIDENT: Continue it?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Never have had a separate budget--there has been just one budget.

Q Your relief budget; of course it is all together, but I mean the various allocations. The Treasury has segregated the expenditures--

relief from ordinary expenditures.

THE PRESIDENT: Same way they segregate Army from Navy or anything else.

Q May I ask you this question: What do you think of Mr. Hoover's remarks about your deficit? He says you were \$2,200,000,000 short.

THE PRESIDENT: Look it up!

Q I have an easy one, sir. (Laughter.) Any comment you care to make on the Legion program submitted to you today?

THE PRESIDENT: No, Fred.

Q What answer did you give the Governors of Iowa and Nebraska on the project between Council Bluffs and Omaha?

THE PRESIDENT: Told them if their statement was checked up by the Roads Administration, and it didn't cost the Government any more money, and there were no other objections, I thought it was a pretty good idea.

Q Do you care to comment on Mr. Hoover's new style of public speaking? (Laughter.) (No answer.)

Q I have a harder one, Mr. President. Are you disposed to explain your action of approving the allotment of \$61,000 to build a new house for elephants at the Zoo in Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; in the first place, you are too low--it is \$61,800. Don't forget the 800. And in the second place, the reason for approving that was it was brought to my attention by the Smithsonian and the Natural History Museum in New York and various scientific and political societies that the elephant is in grave danger of becoming extinct. (Prolonged laughter.) The

same thing happened in the case of the buffalo about thirty or forty years ago, and by the liberal expenditure of Federal funds the buffalo is still in existence as a rather rare and interesting animal. We hope to preserve the elephant in the same capacity for future generations, and therefore we are making this appropriation to be used, first, in the National Capital to which tourists resort from all over the nation, and, secondly, a large part of this money, I understand, will be used not only for an elephant house but also for digging a pit for the elephant!

(Laughter.)

Q Mr. President, you are sure you are not trying to make a donkey out of the elephant? (More laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: No danger of their becoming extinct!

Q That answers very well, sir; thanks!

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #258,
Executive Offices of the White House,
Friday, December 20, 1935, 10.37 A.M.

MR EARLY (before members of the Press came in): How about next
Tuesday, Mr. President--Christmas Eve?

THE PRESIDENT: That's bad; we will have to shift that, because I
will be going to the Park. Probably better shift it to Monday.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: It has been suggested that because next Tuesday after-
noon is Christmas Eve we ought to shift the Tuesday conference to
Monday afternoon, if that is all right with you people, 4.00 o'clock.

We are calling a North American Wildlife Conference February 3
to 7, to be held in Washington, the purpose being to bring together
all interested organizations, agencies, and individuals in behalf
of restoration and conservation of land, water, forest, and wild-
life resources. The conference will be under the direction of a
Citizens' Committee which I will appoint under the chairmanship of
Mr. Silcox (F. A.), Chief Forester. The governors of the various
states, or persons designated by them, will be invited, and in
addition every state will be asked to send twice as many delegates
as it has Senators and Representatives; so there will be a total
of 530 times 2--about 1,060. The delegates from the states will
be selected at meetings of the conservation organizations within
each state, leaving that up to each state to determine the details
of the method. At the general meetings each day--separate meet-
ings of scientists and technicians in each field involved--they
will discuss restoration of the rapidly vanishing wildlife of the

continent, which involves also soil erosion, restoration of impounded water, and pollution control; also a better utilization of the public domain, worthless lands, national parks, forests, et cetera. They will adopt a program and make definite recommendations as to methods of closer cooperation between interested groups, individuals, and Government agencies. The final objective is restoration and conservation of national land, forests, and wildlife resources.

Q Is that the result of Ding's agitation?

THE PRESIDENT: Partly the result of the tremendous impetus that he gave to the whole subject.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to ask the representatives of any foreign countries in on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I can't answer that definitely. Probably they will seek to have some there from Canada and Mexico.

Q I was wondering, because they call it the North American Conference.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is it to be assumed that you will address this opening meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. We will probably have a small group come in here.

Q Will Mr. Hopkins be in on that? There have been some complaints from Field and Stream and other interested magazines that there was a lack of cooperation between Ding's bureau and Hopkins' organization; that Hopkins' mosquito control section goes into places where it isn't necessary and wipes out a lot of wild fowl food. I wondered if it would be an attempt to get those fellows together.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

Q Is the Weather Bureau involved in this also?

THE PRESIDENT: Only very, very indirectly.

Q Will they be likely to recommend legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it. They already have that. (Pause)

Anybody any further questions?

Q Mr. President, have you any idea how much will be left out of this year's \$4,000,000,000 at the end of the fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: No, reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

Q Mr. President, are you transferring N.R.A. to the Commerce Department?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be some kind of announcement on that probably in two or three days. The way you have stated it, I couldn't say yes or no, either one.

Q Would you suggest some way I could state it so you could answer?

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'll tell you; I'll take pity on you. We are considering it, but we haven't got the final order drafted for the transfer of N.R.A. to two or three departments. In other words, certain functions will go to one and certain functions to another during the remainder of the life of N.R.A.

Q Is Federal Trade one of them?

THE PRESIDENT: The details are not worked out yet, and you will have to wait.

Q Where does George Berry fit into this, if at all?

THE PRESIDENT: He fits in perfectly.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #259,
Executive Offices of the White House,
Monday, December 23, 1935, 4.07 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest that except for the society columns we put the lid on tomorrow about 12 o'clock, noon, if that is all right with you people, until Thursday morning.

Q Very good, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make on Governor Pinchot's open letter?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got it yet. It may be in my mail.

Q Mr. President, is Mr. Robert L. Johnson, Relief Director in Pennsylvania, going to Europe on a mission for you?

THE PRESIDENT: He is going to Europe, anyway; and he is going to make a report on relief problems in Europe. He is going at his own expense; it won't cost either the State of Pennsylvania or the Federal Government anything.

Q What kind of problems, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Relief.

Q Mr. President, I have a rather formidable list of questions sent to me by my office for you; there are four of them. The first one is: When is W.P.A. going to take care of the three and one-half million on relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the last figures were 3,480,000, or about 20,000 short of the goal. You work that out on a percentage basis and it amounts to a quarter of one percent or an eighth of one

percent. In other words, it is about 99 7/8 percent successful.

Q Here is No. 2: Is the public justified in thinking the Federal Government was committed to taking care of all employables?

THE PRESIDENT: Repeat that.

Q Is the public justified in thinking the Federal Government was committed to taking care of all employables?

THE PRESIDENT: That is sort of a catch question. In other words, it presupposes that there is some ground for supposing that the public has any thought along that line, which I don't think they have. You see the situation is a very simple one: Away back on the 5th of January last year we had to put in some kind of estimate for appropriations, and that estimate was based on figures that showed that there were about--as far as anybody could tell after a pretty careful survey--three and one-half million employables unemployed in the country--employable needy unemployed; and I said that to Congress in just those words. At the same time I estimated it would take four billion dollars. Of course some people will drag in the four billion eight, as is customary with a certain kind of story writers. It was four billion dollars for the care of those three and one-half million people during the fiscal year 1936; and Congress gave us four billion dollars to take care of three and one-half million people.

That is a perfectly clear, simple statement. If there were less than three and one-half million people, obviously we would not spend the four billion dollars; and if there were more than three and one-half million people, obviously we would not have enough money to take care of the additional people.

Congress gave us four billion dollars. With that we could only take care of three and one-half million people in this current fiscal year. Got some more?

Q Yes, sir, two more. This is an "if" one. If the four billion dollars doesn't care for the three and one-half million people, who will be responsible for the rest?

THE PRESIDENT: States, counties, municipalities, and private charity.

Q Have the States and municipalities any responsibility beyond the three and one-half million?

THE PRESIDENT: They have entire responsibility over and above the three and one-half million. Congress said four billion for three and one-half million people, and I have to stick to the money that has been appropriated to me.

Q Mr. President, do you still consider that three and one-half million an accurate estimate, or is it more than that?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say at the present time, taking the country as a whole, it is an accurate estimate, within a very small percentage. Of course, there again you have to look at the picture as a whole. It is not an accurate estimate in some places. It is too high in some places; in other places it is too low.

Q Thank you, sir, that ends my list.

Q Could you tell us what you discussed with Mr. Fleming, of the A.B.A. today?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the general banking situation--that was all.

Q How about the conference with Governor Eccles, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing.

Q Did you discuss appointments to the new Federal Reserve Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet; going to pretty soon.

Q What do you think of Mr. Fleming's statement to us he was going to hold regional meetings of bankers to take over a good portion of the Government lending agencies? What do you think of that plan?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't really my child. Isn't that the American Bankers' Association?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot properly comment on plans of a wholly private organization.

Q The sponsors of the Florida Ship Canal say they expect another allotment. Do you expect to dig up more money for them before Congress comes in?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Isn't there enough money to keep them going?

Q I think for a few months. The sponsors say there will be another allotment.

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Have you discussed with the Secretary the P.W.A. application in connection with the Birmingham Industrial Water System?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I didn't.

Q I believe he was to send you a memorandum.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got one. I don't think I have heard about it the last three or four days. As I understand the situation, there have been various allotments made on other projects, and the only way this could be put through would be to cancel the allotment made for two or three plants, and that is

tied up in the court.

Q Mr. President, how does Major Berry fit in with the new N.R.A.

Executive order?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean?

Q No mention is made of him at all, and I was wondering why provision was not made.

THE PRESIDENT: He will just continue. ✓

Q Will his personnel come from the N.R.A. payroll?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it will come out of the N.R.A. funds just like everybody else.

Q Under the direction of the Department of Commerce?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and Labor, et cetera. There would not be any change.

Q Can you give us an idea how much money you have at the present time of the four billion dollars not spoken for?

THE PRESIDENT: It has all been spoken for.

Q Another budget, seven billion, with a billion and a half deficit-- is that it?

THE PRESIDENT: Same comment, which is unprintable; in other words, just another cock-eyed guess. I haven't seen one which is right yet.

Q Mr. President, have you completed your relief budget estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q Will it be submitted with the general budget estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: As far as I know.

Q Mr. President, estimating your budget, the public debt would be \$30,725,000,000. Today it is \$30,500,000,000.

Do you expect to pass that budget of yours?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the Treasury. I haven't the faintest idea. I don't know what their financing is. We have an enormous balance on hand at the present time.

Q They carry \$2,200,000,000.

THE PRESIDENT: That is very excessive. I have noticed a great many stories which said that all of a sudden, over night last week, the national debt increased \$950,000. Put out in that form, it honestly is a plain deception on the American people. In other words, let me put it to you this way:

Suppose you had some expenditures that had to be met, say \$10,000, next spring; you knew you had to meet them next spring, but you decided that the market was pretty good to borrow the money at the present time, and you therefore borrowed \$10,000 today and put it directly into the bank on deposit. Would it be a fair thing for you to say that you had gone into debt \$10,000 over night? That is the answer, and that is the answer to the stories you write about Government financing. In telling half the truth they create not only a wrong impression but they tell something that just isn't true. If you borrow \$10,000 and put it in the bank and leave it in the bank, you are no worse off than before you borrowed it; you are neither richer nor poorer. That is just a little homily; I don't suppose it will do much good.

Q You are going on the assumption, then, that you will not have new financing next spring to carry on your financing program. You

have expended \$1,600,000,000 of your relief money, according to the Treasury, and then with this balance that you have, plus the income in revenue, you expect to make your original estimate about \$30,700,000,000.

THE PRESIDENT: Not far out; but as I say, you better get the figures from the Treasury.

Q Mr. President, what you are going to say over at the community tree-- will you have that in advance?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I will get it out by noon.

Q Mr. President, crime is bad enough in this country so that people have to go abroad for protection.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not!

There is one thing I asked for for my own information, and that is as to what had happened to all of these P.W.A. projects and all the housing projects--what the status was at the present time--the story on housing, not the Federal Housing, but the slum clearance, that is the easier way to put it. There were 50 projects. One of them was out; that is the Louisville project, because it got into court. Another one was held up pending enactment by the City Council of a street vacation ordinance; that left 48, and 48 of the 50 have been definitely committed by the awarding of contracts or the starting of work on a force account basis. That is the record on housing.

Then on the P.W.A. projects the total allocations that went through were \$343,000,000. Out of that there were \$49,000,000 of projects that were delayed by causes beyond the control of

P.W.A. These projects were in litigation through no fault of the applicant--that is, the city or municipality or State--42 projects with a total of \$49,000,000. Extension of time was granted for one month. This is by December 15, the deadline you were talking about, for 7 projects totaling \$5,000,000. The Colorado River project, which is held up because of the irrigation problem, \$15,000,000; the Santee-Cooper, which is held up, \$225,000; extension of time due to state requirements, 202 projects \$8,000,000; projects not yet cleared by the Comptroller General, 93, totaling \$6,000,000.

Q How many was that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: There were 93 projects, \$6,000,000, cleared by the Comptroller General on December 13, which were so late that they could not start the thing in the next two days. That was a total of 42 projects with \$49,000,000; so we deduct the \$49,000,000 from the \$343,000,000, leaving an amount available for possible award on December 15 of \$293,000,000, contracts awarded or in process; so, actually ready for award, with nothing in the way, \$260,000,000, leaving a balance of contracts not awarded, but which will be awarded by January 15, of \$34,000,000.

In other words, on this total of \$293,000,000 that could have been awarded by December 15, 88 percent was awarded by December 15, which is not bad.

Q Mr. President, speaking of the Colorado River, is that Texas or Colorado?

THE PRESIDENT: That is the one down at the Parker Dam, near Yuma.

THE PRESIDENT: What do you do about the little girl back home who is supported by her home and always has been--what they call a part-time school teacher. She works about eight or ten weeks teaching out of the year. Is she employed or not?

Q Before Miss Perkins was Secretary of Labor, she was always complaining that the Hoover Labor Department never showed part-time employment.

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody shows it--no department of the Government. Nobody has been able to define an unemployed person. How about the occasional girl who teaches piano lessons? Is she unemployed? I don't know. How about the roofer who works on roofs? In times of prosperity he did not work more than 150 days a year. What happened the other 200 days of the year? Is he employed? I don't know. Neither does anybody else know.

There are two criteria in regard to unemployed figures; one is the figure we have been talking about, the $3\frac{1}{2}$ million who are needy and can work. That is a perfectly simple fact. The other fact is the Department of Labor fact that shows that in industry--the reporting industries--there are about 5 million more people at work at the present time than there were in the spring of 1933. That is a fact. That doesn't include the non-reporting industries; and I asked Miss Perkins how many more there are in the non-reporting industries, and she says, "I not only won't tell you but can't tell you. We know there are more." And it doesn't include additional people that have found employment on farms. Nobody knows that. It is almost an impossibility to take a census of farm-paid labor. You have that simple factor

of 5 million more people employed in reporting industries than in 1933; and in addition to that there are some more in the non-reporting industries, and more on the farms. What that figure is, the Lord only knows!

Q Is it possible for the Bureau of Statistics to get together and hand out a definition?

THE PRESIDENT: No. If I put it up to this group, you would sit for a month and then you would not agree. And then you could not take a census if you did agree.

Q If the present Federal Reserve Board hesitates to act because they do not want to commit their successors, is there any probability that you may nominate the new Board right after the meeting of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Much too "ify"; I don't know.

Merry Christmas, everybody! Won't see you till Friday.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #260,
Executive Offices of the White House,
Friday, December 27, 1935, 10.35 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought if it was all right with you people we would next week do the same thing as this week -- have the Tuesday conference on Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock, then put the lid on Tuesday at noon over the New Year. There won't be any news. I will be working on the Message to Congress and on the Budget.

I am having two Press Conferences today; I am having representatives of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism and also the American Association of Teachers of Journalism. They are holding a joint conference in Washington, and this conference with me is to be strictly off the record.

They want to talk about press conferences in general. (Laughter)

Q They would!

THE PRESIDENT: They would is right! (Laughter)

I don't think there is any news at all.

Q. Mr. President, do you care to comment on Colonel Lindbergh's departure? (No answer.)

Q Mr. President, are you going to deliver your message on January 3 or January 6?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I haven't talked to any of the leaders about it, except just briefly with Joe Byrnes. I haven't seen Senator Robinson yet.

Q You will take it up in person?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q You will have your Press Conference, will you not?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Have you discussed with Secretary Ickes the Birmingham Industrial Water System?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. Mac, have you talked about it?

MR. McINTYRE: There has been no final decision reached on it yet.

Q Have you received anything from the District Building regarding the credit of Government employees?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw a headline in the paper about it.

MR. McINTYRE: There hasn't anything come up about it.

Q Mr. Robert Boyle was talking to you about a week or so ago; did he discuss the Commodity Exchange Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: That was quite a long while ago, wasn't it? Yes, we did talk about it, but merely with two people sitting around the table trying to iron out the problems of produce exchanges -- just in general terms; we didn't take up the details.

Q Were you considering a method of extending similar control to commodity exchanges to what you have over the security exchanges?

THE PRESIDENT: There are certain things we are discussing now to prevent bad practices. We are talking it over with the produce exchanges.

(Pause)

I don't think there's any news.

Q No New-Year's resolutions? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the other fellow! (Laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #260 - A,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 27, 1935, 10.45 A.M.

(Mr. Early introduced Mr. Frank L. Martin, President of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism, and Mr. Kenneth E. Olsen, President, American Association of Teachers of Journalism. Mr. Martin is Dean of the School of Journalism in the University of Missouri. Mr. Martin and Mr. Olsen were called in ahead of the others.)

THE PRESIDENT: Glad to see you! Mr. Martin, will you and Mr. Olsen come and stand in behind the barrier and protect me? (Laughter)
I thought we would treat this group just like any other Press Conference. All right, Gus!

(The main group was ushered in.)

How many of these people coming in are students?

MR. MARTIN: None; they are faculty members, and all of them, I think, have had years of newspaper experience.

THE PRESIDENT: Gather right around, right up to the desk, just like the Press.

MR. DONALDSON: All in, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: I was just telling Dean Martin and Mr. Olsen I thought we would run this just like a regular Press Conference. I asked Dean Martin and Mr. Olsen in here to protect me, the way Steve Early and Marvin McIntyre protect me at the regular Press Conferences. You came in rather slowly and diffidently; the regular Conference come in very fast and noisily and crowd up just as close as they can get.

I am tremendously interested in the schools of journalism in this country. I think they are doing a very fine job. I

understand nearly all of you have had a number of years' experience before taking up your teaching capacities.

Are there any questions you want to ask in regard to Press Conferences or otherwise? Of course, this is off the record -- like the regular Press Conferences! (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, what about the Press Conferences?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is a grand thing. I got my first training in the old Navy Department days; and we had a Press Conference -- the Secretary or the Acting Secretary -- once or twice a day, which was quite a strain. In connection with that during the war I almost overthrew the French Government. I went in to see Clemenceau one morning at breakfast, and he said, "Oh, you will destroy my government!"

I said, "What happened?"

He replied, "You had a Press Conference yesterday!"

What happened was that the high command decided it was time to get out some publicity about what the American Navy was doing to keep down the U-boats, and I was asked to have a Press Conference with the French reporters. They all came in full dress suits, with white ties! They were not what we would call the reporters of the papers; they were the editors of the papers.

They all came in and I told them what the Navy was doing, and I was quite frank. At the end of it one of them said, "Do members of the Cabinet in the United States receive the Press occasionally?"

I said, "Yes, twice a day."

They were astonished and asked all about it -- what the

procedure was in the departments in Washington -- and I told them quite frankly how it was -- a conference in the morning for the afternoon papers, and an afternoon conference for the morning papers. That same afternoon they went in a mass to see the Premier and demanded the same thing of the French Cabinet. The system would not work over there, but it works all right here.

I think Press Conferences are very helpful. Of course, in Albany I carried on the same system. We had conferences there not always twice a day but sometimes; here we have them twice a week -- on Tuesday afternoon for the morning-paper people, and Friday morning for the afternoon-paper people. They ask all kinds of questions, and it is perfectly simple to avoid telling things that you do not want to have come out. And also I think it is very effective in straightening out a good deal in the way of misconception and lack of understanding that arises because of the infinite variety of new experiences in Washington.

MR. EARLY: You might tell them about the Canadian trade conference and the special conference.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; and then occasionally we have special conferences, such as when we explain the textbook. The textbook every year is the Budget, and then I have in primarily the people who are going to write the Budget stories, who are either the heads of bureaus here or the people who are interested in the financial picture, and we go over the Budget Message that is to go up to Congress the following day and take it apart. Everybody can ask any question they want about it. Of course, the Budget Message is a terribly difficult thing to write a good story about --

an accurate story about. Of course, as you know, the average of the newspaper profession knows less about dollars and cents -- c-e-n-t-s -- than almost any other profession -- except possibly the clergy. That is the reason for a great many of these perfectly crazy, wild stories that come out of Washington about Government finances, though I am trying all I can to keep the accuracy of these financial stories on a little higher level.

Q Don't you think the conference, as a whole, leads toward accuracy?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, very much.

Q Do you have any trouble at all with intentional violations?

THE PRESIDENT: Only from a very small percentage of the Press. After all, the people in the newspaper profession, I suppose, have a little higher average of straight-shooting than the profession I belong to -- lawyers! (Laughter) But it isn't a hundred percent. (Laughter) We get our violations from people that belong in the lowest 10 percent. Here is a case, as I say, "just between us girls." Of course you know that in the Gridiron Club it is supposed that ladies are always present and reporters are never present! And it is nearly always maintained. This year the story of what occurred at the Gridiron Club and part of what I said appeared. It wasn't any of the members of the club, and it wasn't the 80 or 90 percent of the straight-shooters. We always run that risk. Taking it by and large, all the off-the-record stuff is exceedingly well handled.

Q You do have to give a certain amount of background material that is "off the record"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do these correspondents cause you quite a lot of trouble and put you "on the spot"?

THE PRESIDENT: A great deal! Then of course here is another thing: they get a lot of queries sent them from their own desks, and some are perfect fool questions, but they have to present them in order to retain their job. They do not want to. And they may get quite a tart answer from me, but they have to do it. That is one of the great difficulties the average newspaper man labors under in this town -- and any other town -- and that is the orders from the desk. Of course the order from the desk isn't always the fault of the fellow who is running the desk; it nearly always traces back to the man who owns the paper.

Q You haven't found it necessary, as some previous administrations have done, to have the correspondents submit questions in writing?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I take "pot luck" on that; it works out, on the whole, very well and is rather stimulating.

I'll tell you another thing: Of course I know when a question is either a "planted" question or a question that is sent to them from their editors; but taking it by and large, the run of my conference questions usually give me a sense of public opinion -- of how a subject is going to be treated. What they are looking for is perfectly legitimate stories.

A word as to the relative value of news: Sometimes I think a perfectly tremendous matter of very great importance is going to be the subject of the press conference, and I get ready. It is obvious to me that that is the news; and when the conference comes, nobody asks me about it! (Laughter)

Q. What is the relationship of your conferences in the White House to other department conferences, if any?

THE PRESIDENT: None at all. I do think the other departments have people that come in to check on what I have said, and then tell the chiefs of their own departments what I have said. Of course there is a type of story which it is almost impossible to control -- and yet I suppose it is because all the departments are readily accessible to the Press and questioning -- and that is the story which is built up by what the chief clerk in the Interior Department says to some newspaper friend; what the Assistant Secretary of Commerce says; what the Third Assistant Secretary of State says, et cetera.

A newspaper man down here will very often say, "I have to write a good story on such and such a policy." He goes around and collects a dab of information here and there and the other place, without any relation. Having got all these dabs of information, he sits down and goes through a process of mental evolution. He says if this is so, that will follow, and something else will follow because there is a little suggestion of it in what somebody has said. The interesting thing is that things built up on that kind of background of information are nearly always wrong. It is not a good way to write a story. It is a case based on a whole lot of individual premises that in most cases do not dovetail in the picture, and it lays us open to criticism. Somebody down the line in a department who thinks there is nobody else in the world, and nothing else in the world as important as what he is doing, gives a scarehead story of how he is being crucified.

He gives it out in confidence.

Again, "just between us girls," there is good old Jay Darling; he has the greatest enthusiasm on the protection of wildlife in the United States -- perfectly fine, a lifelong student of it -- and we persuaded him to give up his cartoon work and come down here. Jay came down, and he couldn't see anything in the Government except birds and animals. It was fine. I loved his enthusiasm, and, incidentally -- and this is a story that has never come out, and you can't use it, because Jay is a good friend of mine -- he slipped over on me the only bill that I know of. I signed it without knowing what was in it. He had a bill that started off as a perfectly fine, simple bill for the extension of wildlife refuges, and it created the machinery to set up wildlife refuges all over the country, but of course no money involved. He brought it over to me, and it looked like a good tie-in with field agencies that had to do with wildlife. I said, "That's fine!" He takes it up to the Hill, and he pushes it; and finally the bill passes and comes down to me. It is quite a long bill, with six or eight pages. I read the first page, and that is just the way the draft had been; I looked over the last page, and that was just the way it was before. I signed the bill. Then I discovered that Jay, up there on the Hill, had tucked in the middle a paragraph appropriating \$6,000,000! (Laughter) Talk about an unbalanced budget! (Laughter)

Jay was horrified down here because of government red tape. Oh, of course there is government red tape! Here is the Comptroller General and all the other people that simply create delays of weeks and months sometimes before you can get things through, especially

in a new thing like this wildlife conservation; so good old Jay got terribly upset. The one thing he cared about was birds and beasts. Of course marvelous stories about government red tape came out directly from Ding.

I am enthusiastic about wildlife conservation myself, but there is such a thing as a sense of proportion. I hope he will come back -- not this session, but the next; we are trying to save money this year.

Q If the newspapers desire information between conferences, they can get it from the secretary?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Steve is out there in the room next to theirs, and if anything comes up in the middle of a day, they ask Steve about it.

Then, of course there is one thing that is always a little difficult, and that is the people who come to call on me. A great many of them want to get publicity out of the call for themselves. It is perfectly natural, and they come in, and one of two things may happen; we may talk about the weather and glittering generalities and the individual's family and things like that, and then he goes out and announces to the boys outside -- the Press -- that he has taken up such and such a new dam or irrigation system with me (laughter), which is of course immediately telegraphed back to his home district. I didn't say it was a Congressman! (Prolonged laughter) But this applies to other people, besides. And then there is the other fellow who, of course, has come in and talked to me about it.

There is also the fellow who occasionally does misquote. Of

course they are not supposed to quote at all, but that is a thing we have to take a chance on.

Anybody else any questions?

Q I have a question, Mr. President, that I feel rather reluctant to ask. These two associations publish a journal called "The Journalism Quarterly"; would it be possible to obtain a summary of your views in connection with the proceedings of this convention? I know you are probably reluctant to do that.

THE PRESIDENT: All I can do is to turn to Steve Early; and I would like to have you repeat the question, sir.

Q These two associations are publishing a journal, and it occurred to me that the readers would be very much interested in your views on the value of press conferences.

MR. EARLY: I think if it were written indirectly, without quotation, it would be all right.

THE PRESIDENT: Could you work up something like that, using some of these notes, without quotations?

Q Yes, sir; thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that would be a perfectly feasible thing.

You have a very great responsibility. There is one problem in journalism, as in the law, medicine, and other professions, which one hesitates always to talk about in any profession; but as you are teaching youngsters I think it is fair to bring it before them, and that is this ethical question: How long should a man stay on the paper and, under orders, in order to retain his job, write things he doesn't believe are true or that he thinks are unfair, personally? As I say, that is not a problem that is

peculiar to journalism; nevertheless, it is a problem, and it has been a problem down here. With a great many newspapers in this country, as you know, the tendency has been in the last, I would say, six or eight years, more than the previous time that I have been in public life, to color news stories. That tendency has been growing, and I think it is a terribly dangerous thing for the future of journalism. For instance, one of the best known newspaper men in Washington came back from a look-see trip around the country, and one of the questions he had asked the garage man and the bell boy and so forth and so on, was, You have heard such and such a thing lately. Do you go on with the idea?

No, I don't believe what I read in the press. There is a growing tendency on the part of the public not to believe what they read in a certain type of newspaper. I think it is not the editorial end, because, as you know, very few people read the editorials. I asked the editor of the Times, "How many people read the editorials in the Times?" He said, "I think more people read the editorials in the Times than any other paper." I said, "I think that probably is true." He said, "I don't believe more than 8 percent of the readers of the Times read the editorials."

Lack of confidence today is not because of the editorials but because of the colored news stories and the failure on the part of some papers to print the news. Very often, as you know, they kill a story if it is contrary to the policy of the owner of the paper. It is not the man at the desk in most cases. It is not the reporter. It goes back to the owner of the paper.

Q You find that particularly true in politics and government.

THE PRESIDENT: And many other things. Not only government but I think
a great many other matters, such as crime news.

Q Is there any remedy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it. (Pause) It is good to
see you all.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #261,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 30, 1935, 4.15 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. I have been working yesterday and today on two Messages, one the Annual Message and the other the Budget Message. I hope to have them ready in time.

Q Mr. President, have you cut the Public Works appropriation down?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll tell you about that within a few days.

Q Is that in the Budget Message?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I thought that would be a good time to present it. I think it is a fair guess, although I haven't talked with Senator Robinson, that the Budget Message will go up on Monday.

Q Mr. President, has your attitude toward paying the bonus changed since you vetoed the payment bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Toward the bonus?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there a new bill?

Q There probably will be.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will have to see what it is. Otherwise it is an "if" question. And if there is a bill, it will still be an "if" question.

Q Will the St. Lawrence treaty come up this time, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q I think when you were Governor you went on record favoring three bridges across the St. Lawrence River.

THE PRESIDENT: I never favored building three bridges. I appointed a commission to determine where there should be a bridge, and there

were three different sites suggested -- one at Alexandria Bay, one at Ogdensburg, and one at another place. The commission reported in favor of the Ogdensburg site. I have forgotten what the amount was -- something around three million dollars -- for the Ogdensburg bridge, provided they were able to supplement that with either a state appropriation or by selling bonds locally. They didn't get very far with it, because the last I heard they were still discussing it with the Canadian authorities, and had not reached any agreement.

Q Now that the treaty has gone through, there is quite a sentiment in favor of the bridge.

THE PRESIDENT: Which treaty?

Q The treaty with Canada.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope they will build a bridge. They need one. The last report I had was that they could not get into agreement with the Canadian authorities.

Q That would be a State bridge, would it, or Federal?

THE PRESIDENT: The idea was it would be a loan-and-grant bridge.

Q Mr. Ickes gave them \$350,000.

THE PRESIDENT: It would be part in grant and part in bonds, and then it would be a toll bridge and pay its way out.

Q Mr. President, if you send up the Budget Message on Monday, when would your Annual Message be delivered? Has that been decided?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. If I were writing the story, I would guess this week.

Q What plan have you for New Year's Day?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will work all day. Tomorrow night the family

will watch the New Year come in.

Q Going to have any conferences with the Congressional leaders on New Year's Day, as last year?

THE PRESIDENT: I have none scheduled.

Q Have you replied to Gifford Pinchot?

THE PRESIDENT: I sent him a personal letter.

Q Did you talk with Senator Harrison this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: He came in to see me.

Q On the matter of the banks?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my, no, -- the governor-elect and new speaker of the Mississippi House. We talked about highways.

Q Did I understand you to say you are not going to give out your letter to Governor Pinchot?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am not going to give it out.

Q Could you tell me what information you requested on Quoddy?

THE PRESIDENT: That is between the Governor and the Legislators.

Q He gave out a letter to each Legislator saying you had requested information as to their attitude on Quoddy.

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to see the letter. I haven't seen it.

Q Have you any observations to make on the year past or the year coming?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think that will be in the Annual Message and the Budget Message. It will be covered.

Q Happy New Year, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: Happy New Year to all!

Q The lid on?

THE PRESIDENT: Until Thursday morning.

Q Fine! Thank you!