

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #313,  
In the Study at Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 7, 1936, 12.00 o'clock Noon.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. The boys got into Portsmouth last night, which is on schedule. They had a good cruise and are coming back here in a day or two.

Q Do you have any message for the meeting in Detroit today? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, the newspapers are full, as you are well aware, of the stories of war and rumors of war, and we are wondering whether you would have anything to say at all in relation to America's foreign policy in relation to what is going on over there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There is no news.

MR. EARLY: You had an appointment with Van Kirk?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same old things over again.

Q If you could repeat for us, for example, what you said down in Dallas, in your speech, that we were --

MR. EARLY: (interposing) The luncheon talk.

THE PRESIDENT: What did I say?

MR. EARLY: Some of them said it was paragraph 19 of the Russell Young School of Expression.

Q You also said it at Chicago. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news.

Q What did Mr. Ogburn (Mr. Charlton Ogburn) have up with you this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: The appointment was arranged on the third of July and I have been trying to see him ever since. We talked about the constitutional aspects of labor legislation. You know, he is

counsel and has been working on a great many of these things.

We talked about the National Labor Relations Act and a number of other acts -- the general terms and situation with respect to the cases, where they are on the court calendars, et cetera.

Q Have you heard from Washington concerning Secretary Dern's condition?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He didn't have a very good night, the night before last.

Q The picnic was a great success. Steve (Mr. Early) got two laughs out of it and had his first smile in three days. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, it's a good idea. Keep on taking him for a ride; he needs it.

Q Grace (Miss Tully) and Roberta (Miss Barrows) are thankful.

THE PRESIDENT: He hasn't had a ride for two months.

MR. EARLY: You are perfectly "ride", sir. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Shall I tell you about the plans a little bit?

Q Please.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course I have been doing a good deal of telephoning all around the country and it seems best, in view of all the circumstances, not bringing in George Dern because that is one of the factors -- to adhere to the original plan in regard to the Western trip. That is to leave about the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth and go straight out to the northern dust bowl area, which means, in fact, the western Dakotas. We will stay there two or three days. I want to see certain conditions at first hand because I am a great believer in getting information through the eye as well as through the ear. Out there I will meet with the

governors of those Northwestern States and discuss their situation with them and their State people and the Federal people out there.

As the thing has shaped up in the last few days, the problem, for simple understanding, divides itself into three parts. The first is the immediate relief problem, that is to say, people who need relief at the present time, which can be and is being taken care of during these weeks. The machinery has been put into operation and while they have not all been taken care of, the machinery will be pretty well organized by the time I get there.

The second phase relates to the coming winter and spring. For example, by the time snow flies out there, we have got to necessarily abandon the building of check dams, soil erosion prevention and outdoor work to a large extent on account of snow. We have got to find ways and means of carrying the relief problem through the winter months. In the same connection, we have to take care of carrying the livestock problem during the winter months. Third, you have got to take care of the seed problem for the spring. Fourth, we have got to take care of the mortgage and debt problem during the winter months. Now, that all makes the second phase.

Then the third phase is the longer-range planning which will be worked out when I confer with the Great Plains Drought Committee, which will have completed its swing from Texas up to the northern tier of states between now and the time I get there.

MR. EARLY: In connection with that Committee, through an oversight

Secretary Wallace was not named to that Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, he was, but he hadn't had his official letter.

Q In that same connection, Steve (Mr. Early), have you the names of that full Committee?

MR. EARLY: You can get them right from this letter.

THE PRESIDENT: They are Secretary Wallace, John C. Page, Acting Director of the Bureau of Reclamation; Colonel Richard C. Moore, Division Engineer of the Missouri River Division of the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army; Frederick H. Fowler, Director of the Drainage Basin Study, National Resources Committee; Rexford G. Tugwell, Administrator of the Resettlement Administration; Harry L. Hopkins, and the Chairman is Morris L. Cooke.

Now, having spent about three days up there in the Dakotas, and having conferred with the neighboring governors, I will probably then go over to Minnesota and Wisconsin and confer with Floyd Olson and Phil LaFollette.

MR. EARLY: If possible, with Floyd Olson.

THE PRESIDENT: And the Senators from those states.

Then -- I can't give you dates on this thing because that thing has to be worked out, but I will go to the south, probably to Iowa, and confer there with the governors of those states west of the Mississippi, that is to say, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri.

Q Kansas? Are you going to have Mr. Landon there?

THE PRESIDENT: Why not?

Q (Mr. Storm) My lead. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Then, from there we will go east into the corn belt,

east of the Mississippi, and confer with the Governors of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky. Then, from there on, the schedule is indefinite. It depends a little on how long these, what might be called the four locations, take. The first is the Dakotas, the second is Minnesota and Wisconsin, the third is the group of states around Iowa and the fourth is the states east of the Mississippi. I don't know how long those are going to take, possibly one day or two days each.

Q When you are in the Dakotas will you confer with the Governors of Montana and Wyoming?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any others?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What towns will these be in?

THE PRESIDENT: No details at all.

Then, after the conference in the states east of the Mississippi, I have no present schedule except that I have to be in Charlotte, North Carolina, for an engagement that I made months ago, an engagement on the tenth of September. In other words, I may go straight from out there in the Middle West to Charlotte, or I may come back to Washington and go to Charlotte, or I may go down to the T.V.A. and Big Smokies to Charlotte. I cannot tell now which way I will get to Charlotte from that Middle Western area.

That is the tenth of September and the only other date is the eleventh of September, to address the International Power Conference in Washington. I will definitely be back in Washington

on the eleventh of September.

Q Didn't you have an engagement -- the 200th Anniversary of Harvard?

THE PRESIDENT: That's the seventeenth or eighteenth.

Q What is the purpose of the visit to Charlotte?

THE PRESIDENT: It is some kind of a seven-state -- it is a non-political seven-state homecoming meeting or something like that.

Q Can you tell us, sir, about your plans next week?

THE PRESIDENT: Next week I am a little vague except this: Between now and the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth I haven't made any definite and final plans and I can't very well, except that I will be in Washington on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and probably Thursday. Then, between Thursday and Saturday it is just possible that I may go into the Pennsylvania drought (probably meant "flood") area, but I don't know. But I will probably get back to Hyde Park a week from tomorrow night -- Saturday night.

Q Just Pennsylvania flood area?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Back here Saturday night and then stay here, I think and hope, for a week. But it might be only six days. In other words, I may go to Washington the following Thursday or Friday so as to get more time on the Western trip. But I think you can park your wives with the idea of being here next Saturday.

MR. EARLY: "Check" (the wives), Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, "check." (Laughter)

Q There are objections to that word "park"; we will get them when we get back to the hotel.

Q I wonder whether the conference with the state officials is to plan for a cooperative drought program -- state and Federal -- all the

way through?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is.

MR. EARLY: And this is a morning paper conference.

Q (Mr. Storm) George (Durno) and myself are behind the eight-ball in a big way.

THE PRESIDENT: It is a morning paper conference. File bulletins at four o'clock this afternoon.

Q Standard or daylight?

MR. EARLY: Standard.

Q I thought we settled it last night -- five o'clock daylight.

MR. EARLY: I left while the discussion was still in a liquid condition.

Q You left when it was your turn to buy. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: The only other news today is that Jim Koffett and his wife are coming to lunch.

MR. EARLY: They are here.

THE PRESIDENT: And this afternoon I am going to try to get a road up a steep hill with a good grade, and it is quite a job.

Q Have you a new car?

THE PRESIDENT: I did have one this spring.

Q That's news to us. We thought we would write a little piece on it and we all got a call back.

Q What kind is it, a Ford?

MR. EARLY: I thought so last night.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't go ahead and advertise that old boy, can you?

(Laughter)

Q You said some time ago at the White House, when we were discussing the trip to the drought area, that you might speak in connection

with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the North and South Dakota States.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it the last two months so I suppose it's off. I talked to Tom Berry on the 'phone this morning and he didn't say anything about it, so I wouldn't write anything about it because maybe they are having some kind of a gathering and maybe they aren't.

Q Only tremendous will power will keep me from filing this story until four o'clock.

Q Will there be any addresses?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course it is possible, after I have -- of course, nothing planned but it is possible that I may feel the country ought to have a picture painted to it of what drought means. I don't know.

MR. EARLY: I just wondered if it wouldn't be a good idea to talk to the newspapermen about the number of invitations from state fairs and others trying to draw gatherings?

THE PRESIDENT: Almost every state fair out there has asked me, hearing I was coming west, to come to the state fair and speak. In a good many states they have political candidates of various kinds, --

(interposing)

MR. EARLY: / Democratic and Republican contests --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) and things like that at the state fairs.

This not being a political trip, I am not going to any state fairs.

Q Mr. President, have all your invitations to the governors gone out as yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I don't know my dates as yet.

MR. EARLY: We will have days on the train between departure from here or Washington before arriving in the Dakotas -- going west and working east.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to see the West first.

Q I can't imagine any of it being worse than '34.

THE PRESIDENT: They say it's worse than that in the Dakotas.

Q Because even the crab grass was dead then.

THE PRESIDENT: It was dead, but still there. This year the grasshoppers came along and removed it.

Q The worst in history.

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, somebody last night -- don't use this because I will try to get a story for you on it. You remember Frank McCoy who used to be attached to foreign missions, etc.? He said that he was talking with old man Jusserand -- he was a grand old boy and of course a great historian. Frank said that this would be worth checking, that Jusserand said to him years ago that back in the days of Louis XIV of France the Loire Valley was becoming a desert. It had been completely cut off; the soil had been just milked for years. Louis XIV around 1680, being an absolute monarch, he started to rebuild the Loire Valley. He put in pipes, he put in pasture, he put in check dams -- we call them check dams -- and prevented the running off of the water and for a period of some time, over 100 years before the French Revolution, the King of France was bringing the Loire Valley back from a state of desolation to a state of cultivation. Of course the thing worked and today it is one of the most delightful parts of France. It was done by human beings to correct the errors of

human beings.

I would like somebody to check on that. It is an awfully interesting thing.

MR. EARLY: I think we can get the State Department, through the American Embassy in Paris, to give us a fill-in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the best way. Will you start that, Henry (Mr. Kannee)? I think it would be an interesting example to get a story on that. Of course they are awfully careful about runoff. They save every drop of water that falls from the heavens.

(Note: Following is the report from Paris:

"FRENCH REPUBLIC

"Paris, September 7, 1936

"The Under-Secretary of State

"Dear Sir:

"In a few words, the building operations ordered by Louis XIV along the course of the Loire, are comprised of the following:

"Between the Forez plain and the Roanne basin, the Loire is deeply embanked between hard rocks which the geologists term 'the carboniferous massif of Neulize.' In that particular locality it forms such narrow gorges, that between the years 1702 and 1706, several rocks had to be exploded by mines, so as to permit navigation beyond Roanne, in the direction of the St. Etienne collieries.

"Soon after these operations were completed, however, in the successive years of 1707, 1709 and 1711 extraordinary and unexpected inundations occurred which caused devastations such as had not been seen since 1608 throughout the course of the Loire.

"But when the memory of this last unundation, which was already a century old, had effaced itself from most peoples' minds, one began to look upon these catastrophes of 1707-1711 as unprecedented events, and the idea occurred that they might have a bearing on the building operations which had just been completed in the river bed above Roanne.

"The rocks which had been exploded in order to permit the passage of boats were, it was said, natural, veritable dams which served to retard the spreading of the inundations below Forez. Eye witnesses affirmed that these rocks, before they were done away with, had been obstructive and strong enough to cause the formation of a temporary lake in the lower part of the Forez plain.

"Persuaded by his advisors that the establishing of the 'New Navigation' was one of the causes of the disasters of 1707, 1709 and 1711, Louis ~~IV~~ ordered dams to be constructed in the gorge of Roanne, which would allow boats to pass through and which, at the same time, would help to resist the pressure of the Loire inundations as efficaciously at least, as the natural dam of rocks had, before they had been cleared out of the channel.

"Thus in 1711, the dike of Pinay, which is still in existence, was constructed. But this dike was no more successful in preventing catastrophes parallel to those of 1707-1711, than the natural rocks had been in 1608. The inundation of 1790 destroyed a quarter of Roanne; those of 1846 and 1856 devastated thousands of acres, in spite of the construction of the dike of Pinay.

"The building operations, that of erecting and consolidating the 'causeway', that is to say, the longitudinal dikes ordered by the same King, were just as ineffective in protecting the riverside country in the middle and lower sections of the course of the Loire.

"Even today the Valley of the Loire is not exempt from danger. But it does not seem that the menace of inundations has ever turned the peasants away from their exceptionally fertile soil. The abundance and the variety of its products have been extolled since the sixteenth century. The expression 'garden of France' is already evident at the time of Rabelais.")

Q In connection with this flood control trip, you aren't going to Ohio and Connecticut?

THE PRESIDENT: Connecticut later. Of course, I am not going into all those drought states or all the flood states. I won't go to Connecticut until later on. I don't know; I haven't worked the thing out. It would be only a two or three-day trip from here.

MR. EARLY: It would be an easy thing to work out of here on the Connecticut trip.

THE PRESIDENT: That would be very easy -- just a motor drive. I can get to Connecticut in an hour and a half from here.

Q It is just over the line.

THE PRESIDENT: I think everything is quiet.

MR. EARLY: Flash -- four o'clock!

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #314,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
August 11, 1936, 3.50 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think the boys look well?

Q (Mr. Young) They look a little pale.

THE PRESIDENT: They got all washed out. Had too much clam juice.

Q (Mr. Young) Yes, but the taproom sun didn't burn them any. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Seems quite a crowd from the length of time it takes  
(for them to come in). There isn't any news.

Q Nothing?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. You have it all. I  
take it everybody has been behaving himself. As to those who went  
with me, I can assure you that their behaviour was a thousand per  
cent.

Q Is Dr. Morgan resigning from the head of T.V.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I heard of. Been talking about all kinds of  
plans and there was no suggestion of it.

Q Have you received anything from the Budget Bureau on the appointment  
of a committee to investigate D. C. taxes?

Q Or to study the fiscal relations?

THE PRESIDENT: I was going to ask Bell about it and I entirely forgot.  
I will try to talk to him tomorrow about it.

Q In connection with your conference with the T.V.A. Board, was a  
proposition put up to you to expand the T.V.A. activities beyond  
the present scope?

THE PRESIDENT: No; never heard of it.

Q Could you tell us what you did discuss with them?

THE PRESIDENT: Talked about progress of present dam work. Talked about the Commonwealth & Southern agreement -- extending it beyond the first of November. And we talked about various municipalities which are applicants for power and also several cases where more than one private company wants power and we talked about the shortage of power among the private companies in that area. It has got to be quite serious.

Q Mr. President, in connection with your conference yesterday with Secretary Swanson and Admiral Standley, is there anything new to be said on the re-establishment of an European Naval Squadron?

THE PRESIDENT: I will talk off the record. I can't imagine why and how any of you people get excited about that. There has never been a discussion of the establishment of an European naval squadron except in the press. The Navy Department never had any thought about it and neither did I.

Q Secretary Hull said he was not unmindful of it.

THE PRESIDENT: That's probably a polite way of telling the Press there is no story.

Q Anything you can tell us about this \$300,000,000. earmarked for P. W. A.? There seems to be a good deal of discussion in various localities that they cannot supply 100% relief labor and I wondered if there is any likelihood of modification.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I told you this at Hyde Park the other day. The objective of P.W.A. new projects is to devote that portion called "grant", which is an actual gift of Federal funds, to the amount of money that is spent on the project for the payment of

wages to people off the relief rolls. Therefore, each project must stand on its own feet. The only case where a percentage figure enters into the grant is the limitation of 45%, as a maximum, of the total cost of the project.

Now that means, in effect, this: Those projects which use a very large amount of labor, especially unskilled labor, will in all probability be able to get up to the maximum, which is 45%. Projects that require almost entirely skilled labor would get a much lower percentage because there is a very definite shortage of skilled labor now on the relief rolls.

But, we are widening the scope, widening the field from which the individual municipality may draw on its supply of labor. For instance, in the case of -- take a practical illustration of a bridge that required a number of caisson workers and there are no caisson workers in town: If they want to get a Federal -- might call it a reimbursement or grant -- we are perfectly willing to have them go 50 or 100 miles away to the nearest locality that has a caisson worker on its relief rolls. In other words, they will not be geographically limited. Our object is to use the money to take the people off the relief rolls.

Q Is the new St. Lawrence waterway treaty being drafted to meet the objections of the Canadian Government?

THE PRESIDENT: No; nothing new on it.

Q It was announced in Ottawa the night before last that one was now before the State Department and it was certain of passage before the next session of Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a new one.

Q Will you tell us if this expansion of that margin will eliminate some of the situations where cities haven't received grants?

THE PRESIDENT: Depends entirely on the individual project. It is a case of the individual project, not the city.

Q Did you give any assurance to the delegation from Texas today with respect to that?

THE PRESIDENT: I told them to find out how many people they could take from the relief rolls and, if they could take them, they would be reimbursed to that extent.

Q Any limitation on the distance you can go for skilled workers?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think the practical considerations enter into it. I don't care where they come from, provided they get to work.

Q Does the provision stand that they are to get their labor from the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q If they do not employ people from the relief rolls --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They pay them out of the portion put up by the municipality.

Q Does that mean 100% or 90%, or could they scale that percentage down in any case? In other words, would they have all the labor to come from the relief rolls?

THE PRESIDENT: They could employ all the labor they want out of their own money from non-relief sources.

Q That would mean 45% --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) 45% has nothing to do with it. Let me re-state it so you will all understand: The objective is, so far

as possible -- of course there will be a few exceptions on projects that were actually approved, where we have a moral obligation to go through with them -- but on 99 out of 100 the new principle will apply. Let me put it another way: The Government will reimburse the municipality for every dollar they spend by way of wages in taking people off the relief rolls. If they want to use their own money to any extent putting people not on the relief rolls to work, that is all right. We are paying them by reimbursement.

Q You are reimbursing them up to 45%?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are there any loans to be made to take care of those municipalities that can't finance themselves?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; they will go ahead in the usual course.

Q They can't spend money that is not borrowed money.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The objective is two-fold: First of all, to help those municipalities that cannot get adequate bank credit for one reason or another. And the second is to enable municipalities that cannot get money at less than five or six per cent to get it at a more reasonable rate.

Q There is no restriction placed upon the borrowed money?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, will the P.W.A. have priority over the W.P.A. in getting people off the relief rolls where there is only a certain supply of skilled people?

THE PRESIDENT: P.W.A. has this priority, that if they go to W.P.A., they look through the card index for that particular locality and if they find X number of people available from those cards, they

are immediately to be transferred from W.P.A. to the P.W.A. project.

Q I understood those Texas people to say that they had 35,000 people on the national unemployment rolls -- not on relief -- and wanted it modified to take care of those?

THE PRESIDENT: They have 35,000 people?

Q On the national unemployment rolls.

THE PRESIDENT: What has happened to them now?

Q They are out of work.

THE PRESIDENT: The Conference of Mayors says there are 500,000 in the country.

Q Mr. President, it has been reported there have been some disputes between W.P.A. and P.W.A. over what relief labor is available. Whose word are you going to take in those cases? Is Hopkins going --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Give me a specific case.

Q There are a certain number of cases in Michigan and W.P.A. said there were no people available and P.W.A. said there were.

THE PRESIDENT: Give me the specific cases. I suppose that W.P.A. is doing its best to get these lists in such shape that the contractor or the municipality will be able to find what kind of labor it has. It is a thing that has been developing now over the past six months. In the first two years, a skilled laborer was classified as a "skilled laborer" and you couldn't tell from that whether he was a contractor or a bricklayer. Now that is being put down more specifically to tell what kind of skilled laborer he is.

Q On the question of subsistence wages and prevailing wages: There

have been a number where prevailing wages were paid whereas the regulation under W.P.A. said "subsistence wages."

THE PRESIDENT: You will find they are practically identical in almost every locality.

Q If labor was taken from W.P.A. lists, are they to be paid subsistence or prevailing wages?

THE PRESIDENT: They would be paid the prevailing wage. They would have to be. There are, of course, certain cases where the question of wage does enter into it. For example, I have had a report made to me of a case down on the Mexican Border. The subsistence wage -- that is to say, the total paid in a week for the subsistence of a relief family -- is higher than the local people can meet if they import Mexican labor, and they have complained that they cannot get people off the relief rolls at Mexican labor prices. We are studying on that because we don't propose to pay Mexican labor prices. And the same thing is true of certain portions of the northern border. They say, "We can't get the people off the relief rolls," and then we find they won't work for them at the rate they can get French Canadians to come in and work for them.

The same thing has been true in some of the canning areas where they won't take people off the relief rolls -- this was in (New) Jersey, I think -- the people won't go off the relief rolls for ninety cents a day. And so they complain, these labor contractors, that they can't get people off the relief rolls, that they won't work.

In a great many of these cases the answer is simply that

they don't want to pay a fair subsistence wage, according to the standards of living. When you come right down to the case, you find that that is the Ethiopian in the woodpile.

Q On the drought question, in view of the report that there is a food shortage, is there any likelihood you will do what was done in 1934 and that is to remove the tariffs on certain foodstuffs?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I heard of. That is the second time I was asked. I don't know who starts it.

Q Was there any particular phase of foreign affairs which prompted you at this time to make a speech on foreign affairs?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only reason you can advance is that I haven't talked on foreign affairs since San Diego on the fourth of October, 1935. They are about due for it.

Q Has your itinerary for the trip to the Northwest been worked out?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q When do you think you are going to start?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will start the evening of the twenty-fifth.

Q From Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: From here. We will get out there -- I have forgotten the running time but, roughly, sometime during the morning of the twenty-seventh.

Q Leave here or Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Here.

Q Mr. President, --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Shoot.

Q Have you decided what to do with Quoddy Village yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Have there been any reports at all from the French Government with reference to the possibility of our taking part in the non-intervention pact with reference to the Spanish situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I had seen everything up to last night; nothing then.

Q There is a dispatch from Paris saying they have been keeping close touch with the Embassy here and there is a matter --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I talked to Phillips last night and he didn't mention it.

Q When are you going to name the Maritime Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as soon as I can make up my mind. No prophecy.

Q How about Alcohol (Alcohol Control)?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing on Alcohol.

Q How about the "Interim Power Commission?"

THE PRESIDENT: What is the situation?

Q It was understood you were going to name a commission to negotiate on the sale of power until the legislation --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think you are right. I hadn't heard about it since I went away. We will name somebody in the next month or two to work at it during the winter. You see, we can't do anything until we get legislation and our thought was to get the proposed contracts into such shape so that when we get legislation we can sign them before the Board is actually ready.

Q Could you outline the attitude of the United States toward this non-intervention French program and what steps are to be taken toward American neutrality?

THE PRESIDENT: I said I haven't heard anything from the French

Government. On the other thing, hasn't the State Department given out something today on the sale of airplanes?

Q No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: They may have something for you.

Q Are you going to involve yourself in the various controversies over the Postmastership of West Point?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it.

Q Miss Harrington is the Postmistress of West Point and the Army is becoming involved. (Laughter)

There is considerable talk going on in the neighborhood. It seems she is eligible for reappointment without taking the examination. An examination has been called so that the presumption is that she is not going to be reappointed.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You have got me. It is all right. I will take that matter up. It sounds interesting.

Q Mr. President, did you talk to the Governor General of Canada about coast air defenses?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I can truthfully say, "No."

Q Have you an engagement with the Mayor of Philadelphia before you go west?

MR. McINTYRE: We got a message from him at Hyde Park but no appointment has been arranged as yet.

Q Any conclusion you might have reached about T.V.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: T.V.A.? We discussed that program. The present contract goes out sometime in November and I am negotiating.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #315,  
In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 18, 1936, 11.30 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest in the next Administration we put up a very nice little hotel here in at the gate and then you won't have to go up and down.

Q They are liberal spenders, too. We would have to take out a license, too, for the tap room.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news today at all.

Q That's how you started the last conference. I have forgotten how many but I had to write about 2500 words.

Q Have you formally invited Governor Landon to the conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't asked anybody yet. I am starting on a scrap pad to work out dates and we are doing a lot of telephoning to find out distances and time to get from one place to another. I think I will probably have something by day after tomorrow.

Q That will include the suggestion that you take the Mississippi River --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think there is any chance.

Q No chance, you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q I would like to ask a local question: Before leaving, I talked to Bell and he thought that you might be ready while up here to announce that committee to study the fiscal relations (of the District of Columbia)?

THE PRESIDENT: Bell is coming up tomorrow in the afternoon and I will talk to him about it.

Q Is there anything new you can tell us on the foreign situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nothing, except what you have had in the papers.

It is running along the same way.

I think you can -- if I were writing the story I would say this about the Mississippi, that any thought of making at this time any very lengthy trip is probably out of the question because I feel I ought not to be too far away from base.

Q With reference to foreign affairs?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Only don't attribute that to me.

Q While on the subject, we hear some rather discouraging reports about Secretary Dern. Have you heard anything overnight?

THE PRESIDENT: A report yesterday afternoon. We checked up and he had a good day yesterday.

Q Still in serious shape?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything this morning. We would have heard if there was anything serious.

Q On Bell: It is very likely you would be able to announce that committee after talking with him?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Any reaction to the tax story -- also this Chautauqua speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we got a lot of telegrams. I think they are all favorable. I don't think there has been an unfavorable one.

Q Would you like to add anything else to the tax story we had the other day -- the one about Morgenthau's letter?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything more. I understand the joint committee of the Senate and House are going to meet right after Labor Day and start in their survey.

Q I notice that Roy Howard was up here. Are you going to have an exchange of letters with him?

THE PRESIDENT: No. One of the grand things was that U. P. photographer. He took a picture of the ladies sitting on the wall yesterday. He walks up to one of the ladies he did not recognize and says, "Can I have your name, please?" She said, "Mrs. Roy Howard." I almost died. I thought it was awfully nice.

We have a list (of callers) but it isn't ready yet. Kannee has to do a lot of telephoning.

Q Did you read Ernest's (Lindley's) story? Mr. Landon is coming here with a very powerful brain trust, according to Lindley. It includes a gas station operator, a local automobile dealer --

THE PRESIDENT: I think one of the loveliest things is the human interest stories being written by the representative of the New York Times.

Q Jim Haggerty?

THE PRESIDENT: A picture of Jim catching fish, et cetera. It's a scream.

Q I think Jim is a little fed up. They haven't had a real news story in weeks.

Q That's an odd thing. We will sit around here and talk and usually, somehow, a story develops. Another person will talk for hours and nothing seems to suggest itself.

THE PRESIDENT: They are up against it. And then again, a governor of a state has very little national news. I have a lot of national news, and that makes it easier. In 1932, up in Albany, before the Jimmy Walker hearing started, I tried to sell all kinds of stories about what the State was doing in the way of the use of land and

things like that and it got awfully boring.

Q Can you tell us anything concerning your plans next month?

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I haven't anything at all for next month except those two firm dates. I don't know whether you have used them already. One is the tenth of September, in Charlotte. That is the tenth, the Green Pastures Rally.

Q It is a Democratic Grass Roots meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my, no. It is thoroughly non-partisan. (Laughter) That is on the afternoon of the tenth of September and then, on the next day, I have two parties in Washington. You had better announce only one of them; the other one isn't definite. The definite one is the International Power Congress. The other one is that we may have a meeting of the drive for Human Needs. We are not sure of that yet.

Q Since you are talking about dates, I thought you also told us on a previous occasion that you had one for September 17th or 18th.

THE PRESIDENT: Those are the only dates I have.

Q When you go west, is it toward Pierre, South Dakota, you will head first?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Very bad town. Rapid City is very much better.

Q Will you go down through the Tennessee Valley?

THE PRESIDENT: I will go to Knoxville and through the Smokies.

I have one thing: I might go to this Charlotte meeting by way of Knoxville and the Big Smokies, which means only twelve hours out of the way. But don't announce it yet.

Q Are you going to Washington before going to Charlotte?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You are leaving this Sunday night?

THE PRESIDENT: This coming Sunday night and we will probably leave definitely on Tuesday night for the Dakotas.

Q (Mr. Storm) I hope I have enough money to get my dog out of hock when I get back. He has spent six weeks in the kennels so far.

THE PRESIDENT: Did Bob Kintner ever get taken care of on his loss?

Q They are beginning to suspect something. Kintner is the second one. On a trip up here some time ago Jack O'Brien got taken for a hundred dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to speak to Ogden about it.

MR. McINTYRE: Where did he lose it?

Q At the Commodore that time.

Q We went to the Rhinebeck Fair and lost some more.

MR. McINTYRE: Probably find it listed (on the expense accounts) as a contribution.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I am going to miss the Rhinebeck Fair this year.

Q Too bad. It has one of the best stock shows I have ever seen.

Q I want to go back and get the fourteen dollars I dropped.

Q You haven't given us a story yet.

THE PRESIDENT: It is bad today and will be all the rest of the week.

Q Anything in this conference this morning, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will Mr. Farley be up during the week?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably before I leave Saturday night.

Q There's the story.

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any conference.

Q Any others of the Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: From now on it is perfectly obvious that if he has things he wants to take up with me that are too voluminous for telephoning, he will probably run up.

Q Did you read anything in the editorial about Jim's one big job?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You had better read that.

Q Isn't it likely that some of the State leaders will come down to see you?

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

MR. McINTYRE: We haven't any appointments so far.

Q (Mr. Young) I hate to break up a nice gathering.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #316,  
In the President's Study, Hyde Park, N.Y.,  
August 21, 1936, 4.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't believe I have any news. I have seen every one who has been here.

Q Very good itinerary.

THE PRESIDENT: Good story.

MR. McINTYRE: The only thing that worried Steve (Mr. Early) was that it is as hot as the hinges of Hell.

THE PRESIDENT: Needn't worry about that.

Q Mr. President, this foreign situation looks rather alarming. Have you any reports on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing, except what I read in the morning paper.

Q Any move on the part of this country in following Great Britain in placing an embargo?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to talk about it off the record.

Q Can we use it for background?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you can't. That's the problem and I don't know what to do about it. Frankly, I don't know why the State Department shouldn't tell you a little more about that thing they discussed with you two weeks ago. You will remember that I spilled the beans on them at that time and they gave you a story. That story was true as far as it went but they didn't tell you the exact language that was used. They didn't do it because they didn't want to give the name of the company. I don't know of any reason why they shouldn't give it to you now, so I am suggesting that you shoot through a query to Washington. I think that is the most

practical way of handling it. "Can't the State Department be a little more specific in regard to the letter that was sent to an American manufacturing firm or firms?" They don't have to give up the name of the company but it is about the American shipment of munitions to Spain.

MR. McINTYRE: Do you suggest they use this?

THE PRESIDENT: I suggest they query the State Department in Washington; I haven't got a copy of it here.

MR. McINTYRE: Couldn't I get hold of Bill Phillips or somebody and ask him if they can't give it to us?

Q I would like to break it out of here.

MR. McINTYRE: I frankly think it ought to come from the State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't break it out from here because, not having a copy of it I can't tell you the language and it is one of those things where you have to follow the language, word for word. But it is damn good and it went out two weeks ago.

Q Anything on your callers today?

THE PRESIDENT: You have seen them all.

Q We saw Mr. Sawyer of Ohio and that is all we saw.

THE PRESIDENT: There was an English clergyman -- and that is no news.

Q What time does Jim get here?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. What time? Six o'clock?

MR. McINTYRE: He didn't know himself.

Q How long will he stay?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. We have two or three beds ready in case they should wish to stop over but I don't know that any

of them are going to.

Q What is the nature of the conference tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, just a general report; that is all.

Q Now that you have your itinerary out of the way, can you give us any indications of your campaign trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because there isn't any campaign trip scheduled.

Q After you come back from the West?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no schedule and I don't believe there will be any speeches scheduled until after the famous speech at Harvard on the eighteenth of September.

Q After that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there will be any after that for some time.

Q How about that pretty radio voice? Isn't it going to do a little?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be plenty of chances, but not politically.

(Laughter)

Q I said in today's paper that you would have about six. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, isn't this Charlotte gathering more or less political?

THE PRESIDENT: They assured me it is not and I assured them my speech would not be. I don't see any way of making it political.

Q What would seven states be getting together down there for?

MR. McINTYRE: It is a kind of homecoming.

THE PRESIDENT: It was planned a year ago and they have been asking me for a whole year. Bob Doughton and Bulwinkle.

Q Are you sure it is seven states or three states?

MR. McINTYRE: No; there are five, at least, Russ (Mr. Young).

Q That's a yearly event?

MR. McINTYRE: No. I think this is a special occasion. Just general get-together in the South.

Q "Green Pastures" what they call it?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes.

Q As I understand it now, there is not apt to be a political speech until October?

THE PRESIDENT: Not the way it looks now. I don't think there will be any political speech until October.

Q Have you received an acceptance?

THE PRESIDENT: When did the telegrams go out?

Q You didn't receive any formal responses yet?

MR. McINTYRE: From two or three only. Landon's would have to be forwarded, anyway.

Q He told reporters he would accept in accordance with the statement a week or two weeks ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q Isn't it rather unusual to delay campaigning until October?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q On the campaign with Al Smith in '28 -- I was with him -- and he got under way in mid-August.

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but he wasn't President of the United States.

Q I know that. But I think his opponent got under way at the same time.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he?

Q Brother Durno could give you a little history.

MR. McINTYRE: You didn't get under way until September.

Q When Brother Roosevelt got under way, Brother Hoover said it was

time to get going.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't time to prepare speeches. I had an awful time getting that speech at Chautauqua ready. I sat up four nights until one o'clock in the morning and got bored to death preparing speeches.

Q Has the Maritime Commission been appointed?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q When do you expect the Commission that went abroad to study cooperatives to return?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't heard.

Q I had an inquiry as to whether Charles Edison had been offered the post or was under consideration for the Assistant Secretaryship of the Navy.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing done on any appointments.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I was afraid last night that we were going to get queries from New York because yesterday afternoon, with Henry Wallace, I took a great many of the neighbors' children and Sisty and Buzzy across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge. We went up through the Catskills across the River and we stopped at a hot dog stand and, by gosh, there must have been 500 soldiers all sprang out of the bushes and surrounded us while we were getting hot dogs and things. I suppose somebody telephoned in to New York that the President was in the middle of the Catskill Mountains.

Q On the expense account, when it goes in next week, it will show that we followed closely behind you. (Laughter)

Q Where is the Rip Van Winkle Bridge?

THE PRESIDENT: Up at Catskill. It was opened a year ago. I had never been over it and I wanted to see it and go across and see this "Seven States View." It is called that but you can only see five. It's all right.

Q How far up the river is that?

THE PRESIDENT: About thirty miles.

Q Where did you put Henry (Sec. Wallace) on the train?

THE PRESIDENT: At Hudson.

MR. McINTYRE: Is Henry going to start out with us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Who else will be in your party?

THE PRESIDENT: Hopkins (Mr. Harry Hopkins).

Q How about a Reclamation man?

MR. McINTYRE: One going but he has not been selected.

THE PRESIDENT: Then, of course, we meet that Great Plains Committee, which has people from all those agencies on it. We meet them out there.

Q Where?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't know yet.

Q Anybody from Ickes' office?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but he has a man out there on the Great Plains Committee.

Q Where do you plan to meet the Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Bismarck or Pierre.

Q Is Cooke the chairman of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q They are working up through there now.

MR. McINTYRE: Yes. I wired him yesterday and told him when we would be in Bismarck.

Q What are you going to do at Mount Rushmore?

THE PRESIDENT: Spend a quiet Sunday. Then that puts us back here Saturday morning. And, of course, if it is necessary to go to Washington instead of from Indianapolis to here, I will go straight from Indianapolis to Washington. But, if things are quiet, as they are now, I will probably come here.

Q How long will you stay here? Just over the week end?

THE PRESIDENT: Just for the week end, and go back on Monday.

MR. DURNO: Thank you again, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #317,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
August 25, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

(Senator Black was present at this Conference.)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you going along, Russ (Mr. Young)?

Q (Mr. Young) No, I am not.

THE PRESIDENT: You could.

Q (Mr. Young) George and I spent three months with Coolidge and we  
are afraid to go back.

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q (Mr. Young) Rapid City.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you say "Rapid City"?

Q (Mr. Young) Yes, Rapid.

Q (Miss Fleeson) What is that man doing there? (Referring to Sena-  
tor Black)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, yet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I happen to have two or three things today. In the  
first place, I think you probably know about the 1936 and 1937  
crop production loans. We amended the Order the other day to  
increase the limit from \$200. to \$400. on winter wheat, which  
will be sufficient to take care of the winter wheat planting  
this fall. The farmers in the drought areas are being taken  
care of through three different organizations -- the emergency  
crop and feed loan offices, which is what they call the seed-  
loan thing, will loan funds for crop production purposes to  
those farmers who have no other source of credit and are not

clients of the Resettlement Administration. The Resettlement Administration will make loans for crop production purposes to those farmers who are being assisted by the Rural Rehabilitation Division and will make loans for pasture and forage crops throughout the drought area for farmers who need such assistance. The problem is complicated by the fact that a good deal of grain being harvested has to be fed by farmers to livestock, that grain being grain that ought to have been held for next year's crop planting, which means that we will have, in the spring of 1937, without much question, to make additional grants for the spring crops, which will be done.

Q In the spring of '37?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It will be done?

THE PRESIDENT: It will be done.

Q By whom?

THE PRESIDENT: The Congress. I got you there.

On the employment situation, I have allotted a million, five hundred thousand dollars for the use of the U. S. Employment Service in the Department of Labor. This is to provide for the immediate checking up of and bringing down to date of the occupational classifications of workers who have been employed under the program of the Works Progress Administration and I think there will be, probably, a further general announcement to everybody on that. The easiest way to put it is that the Employment Service has been increasingly useful in providing people for private employers but they have found that the records in the individual cases have not

been satisfactory. It is to improve the individual record of the individual W.P.A. worker that this money is to be spent, so that the prospective employer will get a better picture of the man that he wants to employ. That involves, of course, what they call "re-interviews." Some of those cards are a year or a year and a half or two years old and, in the meantime, an individual may have gained a good deal of experience in trade occupation and be a much more valuable man for private employment than the card, which is out-of-date, would show.

Q Wouldn't that also offer an opportunity to check on people who don't deserve to be on the relief rolls, in connection with this report from New York?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and that seems to be properly the function of the U. S. Employment Service working in conjunction with the State Employment Service in those states that have state employment services.

Q Have you any idea of how many employees will be involved in this check-up business?

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody on the W.P.A. rolls.

Q How many?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to get the figures on that. Roughly, 2,400,000.

Q How many people employed in this work?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Regular employees of the Department of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask the Employment Service.

Q Has there been any time set for the completion of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Going right to it.

I am sorry to have to tell you that Ambassador Straus has been compelled to resign because of his health. He is to take a complete rest for six months and Steve has his letter to me and my letter to him.

On the question of filling his place, don't do any guessing because, as I told you all a little while ago, it is an exceedingly embarrassing thing on account of the necessity of getting what they call an "agreement" from the other side. It would be awfully difficult if an individual's name was sent in and he happened to be turned down and it was known that he had been turned down. In other words, it is always a confidential matter. You will hear about his appointment in the next two or three days.

Q I would like to ask for enlightenment about all this speculation about the recent conferences with Morgenthau about the fiscal condition of the Government, and taxes, and also the rather peculiar speculation as to the sincerity of the tax program?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the source of the speculation as to the sincerity is obvious and needn't be mentioned again. The fact remains that the letter from the Secretary was written in good faith and meant, in plain English, what it said. No further comments on that.

However, the general picture of the finances is increasingly better. I might say that each week or each month they are definitely better than the estimates of last January and definitely better than the estimates of last June. That was one of

the things I talked to Senator Glass about when he was in here today.

Don't begin to speculate on figures because nobody has any figures. It is a simple plain fact that the tax receipts are coming in in larger volume than we had expected and that the expenditures of the Government are going out in less volume than we had expected. That is all to be said on it, one way or the other.

Q That is the subject you have been discussing with Morgenthau and Bell?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In that connection, do you expect to submit a revised budget estimate, as you did last year?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, there will be in the course of the next week or ten days the usual checkup. That is not a budget estimate. That is an estimate of the expenditures and receipts for the current fiscal year. I think Bell will give them out in the course of the next week.

Q There has been a lot of guessing and uncertainty as to the Public Works program -- the three hundred million dollars -- on the regulations. Can you tell us what the new regulations are?

THE PRESIDENT: Just finished a conference on the next step. We are going ahead rechecking every project. This is the first step of two principles. I think I mentioned them both before. The first relates to those communities which, in good faith, held municipal elections to authorize the expenditure of city money or the issuance of bonds for a new project in expectation that P.W.A. would

furnish the grant. There are a number of communities which went through those things in good faith and we feel there is a moral obligation to carry that through.

The second category relates to those municipalities that can take, for the amount of the grant, people off the relief rolls substantially to the amount of the grant. For instance, I just went through a book and we have approved -- we didn't total the figures but I should say, offhand, this week, between three and five million dollars of projects where the grant will be spent practically in toto 85%, 90%, 95% for the payment of wages to people taken from the relief rolls. There are a number of other projects which may come into that category on a recheck. That ties in with what I have just talked about on the reclassifications of, especially, the skilled workers because a community that wants to build a schoolhouse, for instance, may not have enough first-class carpenters on the relief rolls of its own community but, by going to the Employment Service they could find the additional number of carpenters on the relief rolls of a neighboring community. And, as fast as those communities can, on a recheck, show us that they will take a substantial proportion of all the grant money to take the people from the relief rolls, these projects will go through.

Now, as I say, today we approved roughly between three and five million, which will go through.

Q Ordinarily that is on the 45% they will have to take off the relief rolls.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. For instance, on a hundred thousand dollar project

they will pay 55% and we will give them 45%.

Q Provided they spend that on wages for people?

THE PRESIDENT: For people from the relief rolls.

Q It has been figured that the total cost of labor on a public works job runs about 35%, I believe that is the figure, and therefore it would be impossible to use perhaps more than 10 or 15 per cent of the total cost for relief labor.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, if it runs 35% for labor, should it only run 10%?

Q Because that would be divided between the Federal contribution and the local contribution.

THE PRESIDENT: Why shouldn't the Federal contribution go entirely to the 35% of labor?

Q That is what I have been wondering about. I never heard it discussed from that angle.

THE PRESIDENT: After all, if they take our Federal money, which is a gift, and spend all of it for paying the wages of people on relief rolls, we don't care where the 55% that the city puts up goes to. They can spend it on concrete and steel and anything else. All we are worrying about is the labor that comes from the relief rolls.

Q You said you discussed that, as one thing, with Senator Glass.

What were the other things you talked about this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about the failure of the Congress to pass the legislation I suggested creating, in the Mint, a division for making commemorative medals instead of fifty-cent pieces.

Q Did you discuss the possibility of his making a campaign speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about lots of other things.

Q You say there were other things besides that?

THE PRESIDENT: There were lots of them.

Q It would be interesting to know, if it is proper to ask.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Mr. Essary), at another time I will have to have a stenographer present. I don't remember them now. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you going to have the Maritime Commission for us pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Think you will have it before you leave tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q The New York papers today have you going to address the Convention in Syracuse on the 28th of September?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. The 28th of September? That is the date I am due here to watch the Gold Cup motorboat races. I don't know. I haven't thought of the 28th of September.

Q Hull was scheduled to have lunch with you today. Did you talk about --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just about a great many things. Daily checkup.

Q Mr. President, have you given any attention yet to the personnel of the group going to Buenos Aires for the Pan-American Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No; haven't discussed it at all. Probably won't until well on towards the end of next month.

Q It was Secretary Ickes himself who suggested that a maximum of 35% could be used for labor. Under those conditions, won't it be possible to have a 45% grant?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It depends on the project. For example, we have

given money to sewer projects where the total amount of labor was 60% of the total cost of the project. On the other hand, a steel bridge -- the cost of actual labor may not run to 20 or 22 per cent.

Q The Secretary, discussing it this week, said that the average grant under these regulations, taking in all classes, would be only a 10% grant. That, on the average, there could be no 45-55 per cent grant; that on the average it would be 10%.

THE PRESIDENT: Somebody's arithmetic is wrong on this. I think there is a misapprehension somewhere on that. There are certain projects, it is perfectly true, where our contribution might be as low as 10%; a project, for instance, where common labor was the only supply on the relief rolls in the vicinity, where there was nothing other than common labor within 500 miles and that common labor amounted to only 10% of the project. That is perfectly possible.

Q Do you feel confident that the entire three hundred million dollars can be used under these regulations?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I am only going ahead with it as they qualify.

Q Were the Governor of Michigan and Senator Vandenberg among those invited?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Do you know when the Great Plains Drought Committee will be able to make a report on the Great Plains drought?

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as they report to me at Bismarck on Thursday.

Q Have you any comment to make on Senator Couzens' statement urging your election?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter)

Q Did Secretary Ickes express confidence to you today that a program could be carried under these regulations? He expressed extreme doubt last week.

THE PRESIDENT: All we can do is to go ahead with the projects as they qualify.

Q Have you taken any action on the proposal of four Senators that surplus crops be purchased to distribute in the West?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard of it.

Q The Senators of Florida and Texas.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't California come into it? Weren't Hiram Johnson and McAdoo in it? It's a new one on me. I never heard of it.

Q Was Senator Dickinson one of those invited?

THE PRESIDENT: I assume so. All Senators supposed to have been invited.

Q Any specific reference to the coin thing?

THE PRESIDENT: There is only one thing that can be done in the absence of a law: If they will pay for the cost of the die and the cost of running off the medallions, the Treasury can do it without any further legislation. But, if they want a coin, they will have to get legislation in January.

Q That's right.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #318,  
Executive Offices of the White House,  
September 8, 1936, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

Q Mr. President, you had a conference recently with Mr. Willkie, of the Commonwealth & Southern, and Arkwright, of the Georgia Power Company, regarding the TVA contract which expires in November?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about two separate things: One was a proposed conference a little bit later on in regard to the possibility in the whole TVA area of working out some kind of grid system of transmission. It is only in a very much preliminary stage, even as to conversation, but we are talking of the possibility of a grid system for the transmission of power.

The other one related to the specific contract between the Tennessee Power Company, I think, and the TVA which expires -- I have forgotten when -- the end of October or the first of November.

Q November third.

THE PRESIDENT: And we talked about the possibility, because the thing is more or less tied up in the larger question, of extending the contract temporarily until we could go into the whole thing more thoroughly.

Q Would your grid system tie in with private utilities?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q Was any agreement reached for extending the contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I said I would take the matter up and send a memo to the Tennessee Valley Authority. I don't think I have

heard anything since then and it is about ten days ago.

Q Wasn't that the Alabama Power Company -- not the Tennessee?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are right. It was the Alabama Power Company.

Q Do you expect to visit any part of the TVA project on this trip?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Not even the Hiawasseee Dam?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q It is on the way to where you are going and they expect you to visit it.

THE PRESIDENT: Then I probably will.

Q (Mr. Storm) I see, Mr. President, you are studying "Waste."

THE PRESIDENT: It is well worth reading; it is an awfully interesting little book. I was reading it last night. I've got various books here, one called "Bedrock Borer" but I haven't got to that yet. This little book, "Waste," has got some significant passages in it, but I will have to read aloud. For instance, here's one --

Q (Miss Fleeson) (interposing) Is this "Waste" or "Borer"?

THE PRESIDENT: This is "Waste." (Reading) "Money comes not only out of doing more business; money comes also out of not suffering losses." This is a gem of speech. And then he (the author) talks of human waste. (Reading) "In the same way, the cost of giving a young man good health and good training is paid out of not having to lock him up in an asylum or a jail at public expense." That is something we can all remember -- one way of keeping out of jail. (Reading) "The money to pay for good things comes out of not having to pay for loss and disaster. Soil erosion losses to date are

over ten billion dollars in money values."

Of course, he is awfully low on that. In the course of 300 years, the soil erosion loss is infinitely more than ten billion dollars.

Q Who is the author?

THE PRESIDENT: David Cushman Coyle. (Reading) "When we look ahead to the future of our country we are forced to decide whether we are willing to invest money in building up the strength and security of the nation. Or shall we insist on holding tight to our money -- even though the wealth it is supposed to represent slips away from us?" It is a grand book. You ought to read it.

Q Wasn't Mr. Cushman one of the gentlemen named by Dr. Wirt?

THE PRESIDENT: Who is he?

Q (Miss Fleeson) That's right. (Laughter)

Q He is the dinner guest.

THE PRESIDENT: That's years and years ago.

Q Can you give us some of your ideas on the subject of waste?

THE PRESIDENT: There are some pretty good lines in there. We have had an experience the past ten days trying to stop waste.

Q Any of the diplomatic appointments any closer? The Under Secretary (of State) or an ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't thought of them at all. I hope I shall have that Shipping Board (Maritime Commission) going inside of a week.

Q The reports that you would hold that off until after Election are not serious?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There was a report that Secretary Marvin Hunter McIntyre was going to be named to that Commission. Can you clear that up for us today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I could say this: that he has proved to me many times that he does not know the bow from the stern of a ship and therefore he might be thoroughly valuable. However, he does know where the roll is. (Laughter)

Q I think he ought to be allowed to talk back.

Q There was a report that Marvin Hunter McIntyre might sing in the Press Club "Showboat."

THE PRESIDENT: "Showboat." That's it! That is part of his candidacy. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you discussed with the State Department the plan of bringing the American warships home from Spanish waters?

THE PRESIDENT: The OKLAHOMA is on the way home, isn't she?

Q Yes, the OKLAHOMA is on the way home.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the only thing I have heard.

Q We still have four over there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I haven't heard of any change.

Q Governor Landon said, after meeting you in Des Moines, that he thought you were a very fine gentleman. What do you think of him?

THE PRESIDENT: I reciprocate.

Q Have you had any further conversation with Secretary Ickes regarding PWA selections?

THE PRESIDENT: Another long list approved today. I think it is about seven million dollars.

Q Have you taken any action in the last few days concerning the defects

in battleships?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard a word about it.

Q These projects today and the ones before came from the old money?

THE PRESIDENT: I think some of them today came from the new money.

It depends; for instance, suppose we take a hypothetical case:

I approved the seven million today to come out of new money.

Suppose next week we canceled four millions of old allocations.

We would transfer four millions of the new money over to the old, the object being to use up the old money first.

Q Anything you can give us about your campaign plans?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Essary), I haven't the faintest idea, literally.

I have another date, the 29th of September, at Syracuse.

Q 28th or 29th?

THE PRESIDENT: 29th, and then come back here that night.

Q Starting west then, from there?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q You will make a speech at Syracuse?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you go to Syracuse from Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q That speech will be political, won't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. (Laughter)

Q Non-partisan? (Laughter)

Q When will the political phase of the campaign start?

THE PRESIDENT: That may be January 3rd. (Laughter)

Q January 3rd?

THE PRESIDENT: Doesn't Congress meet then?

Q It is the 4th (of January) this year.

THE PRESIDENT: Fourth; that is right. I am wrong; it is the fourth.

Q Did you read Walter Lippman's column this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Did he start this morning?

Q I am afraid he endorsed Governor Landon.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know he had started again. He must have had a good holiday, then.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be back Friday and we will have a party Friday morning and I will tell you all about the Great Smokies.

Q Ten o'clock?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.