

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #327,
Executive Offices of the White House,
November 13, 1936, 10.50 A.M.

Q Good morning. Are those your Christmas cards?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are from the National Committee and have to be signed.

Q Quite a crowd this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are going to be awfully disappointed.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The Thanksgiving Proclamation is mimeographed and Steve will give it to you after the Conference.

Q Yesterday Governor Eccles called attention to the fact that neither the banks nor the stockbrokers were supporting this present market. Have you any comment to make in that connection?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think he put it quite that way.

Q That is what he said.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better see his language.

Q You mean the bankers are not supporting it and the brokers are not supporting it?

Q I think the brokers' loans -- they are not extending --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You see, saying the word "support" doesn't mean anything because they do not support the market unless there is a panic.

Q Will you tell us how far your Budget discussions have gone?

THE PRESIDENT: They have gone, I should think, about two-thirds of the way. We did two more departments yesterday and we will probably do a couple today. We will be pretty well through.

Q Do you announce your Budget and "State of the Union" after the Inaugural or at the opening day of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought about it. My calendar stops the 31st of December and I haven't got my new calendar yet. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there has been some disagreement among the various newspaper people as to how definitely you and the steel companies plan to adopt a cost-of-living basis for steel wages. Will you care to say if you did endorse that system?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what the system is so I cannot either endorse it or favorably endorse it. What I did say and intended to say is that the cost of living is, of course, a factor to be taken into consideration and what I meant, further, was that that applies on the very, very low wages. It merely involves the question, "What is a living wage?" But it should not be taken into consideration in such way as to halt the improvement of wage scales.

Q Your remarks the other day had no relation, did not apply directly to the steel system?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I don't know what it is. I never read it.

Q It has been printed in several papers.

THE PRESIDENT: The cost of living, of course, is a factor, especially when you consider the problem of the minimum wage. But, on the other hand, that should not necessarily be the controlling factor in places where the cost of living is very low because then another factor, that of buying power, comes into consideration.

Q Have you any program for your visit to Greenbelt this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: Just look around. They are going to show me one of the

new houses and I will look at the grounds.

Q Nobody living there yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I understand they won't go in until spring, about April.

Q Have you in mind any amendments to the T.V.A.? To stress other factors rather than power?

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Morgan said he thought there were certain minor amendments, you might call them, to the T.V.A. that would stress a little more the population -- the social factors in the Valley. That is all I know.

Q Do you support that?

THE PRESIDENT: It is needed to improve the conditions in the Valley. Yes.

Q It doesn't mean playing down power?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. Oh, no. There are a great many factors in T.V.A., though, in addition to power. Possibly they do not make headlines so rapidly.

Q Do you find any special mediation needed in the Pacific Coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at the present time.

Q Would you care to say what you discussed with Charles Sawyer yesterday afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: The Ohio majority and that is all.

Q Mr. President, do you have any idea of calling business leaders to Washington with respect to cooperation?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no plans before next Wednesday morning.

Q There is a lot of discussion in the papers about cooperation.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing new.

Q Anything new on Inauguration?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than I said the other day.

Q Simple?

THE PRESIDENT: As simple as possible.

Q Ride an automobile up there and go back (of the Capitol) and take the oath of office and come back without a parade?

THE PRESIDENT: Hitch the automobile to a post.

Q Why do you say you have no plans before next Wednesday?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not seeing anybody before next Wednesday except a lot of people who have to see me. And Wednesday morning I have a very definite plan.

Q Have you made no decision about B. A.?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you been invited to attend a London conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q A report from London is that you accepted an invitation.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you framing what you call "anti-war legislation"?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am not framing a thing. (Laughter) Or anybody.

(Laughter)

Q Are you going to ask for any legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not in a framing mood at all. (Laughter)

Q That was a bad word. (Laughter)

Q Any comment on Rockefeller's letter to Chairman Farley?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I only read the headlines. I haven't read the letter itself.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what Governor Eccles and Mr. Landis

had to say about the securities market?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you anything more than what they said about the securities market. They are much better at language, when it comes to talking about margins and bidding and selling stocks, than I am. I think probably the important thing was what they told me about this very large foreign buying and of course foreign buying, when it gets to a certain point, is a dangerous thing because those same securities can be sold very quickly in case anything happens on the other side. It corresponds to what they call "hot money." You cannot tell when it will go out on you. That is always a disturbing factor in foreign exchange and in the general credit situation.

Q Mr. President, is there any precaution you can take against that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can guess that the thing is being studied; they have just begun to study it.

Q Mr. President, will you leave the country next week even though the maritime strike has not been settled?

THE PRESIDENT: That depends entirely on what status it is in.

Q Is your annual visit to Warm Springs definitely out?

THE PRESIDENT: It is for Thanksgiving Day. But, of course, if I do Plan No. 1, which is just the West Indies -- if I don't go to Buenos Aires -- I would stop on the way back at some southern port and probably stop in at Warm Springs on the way north because you go right past it.

Q How long would you stay there?

THE PRESIDENT: Just a few days.

Q Anything in the S.E.C. or Federal Reserve laws which would bar

foreign buying in the American market?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is.

Q Do you think there is need for it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would probably take legislation.

Q That is for control?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is that a possibility, that legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: All I can tell you is that we have just begun to study it. The Federal Reserve Board has begun to study it and I have asked the Treasury Department to begin to study it when the Secretary gets back next week. So it is in the early stages of study.

Q Have you given any consideration to additional labor legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, none at all.

Q Mr. President, is Governor Winant coming back as head of the Social Security Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. I haven't heard.

Q Have you planned any changes in the Social Security Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There may be clarifying amendments. Isn't that what they call them?

Q On the foreign money in the stock market, would it require new legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would probably take legislation.

Q Have you any estimate of how much new foreign money has come in recently?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I believe the Federal Reserve Board has given out some statistics on that.

Q It shows in their statement of gold coming in.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you any idea of the character of the legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at all. Literally, we haven't done anything more than agreed that it is a subject that ought to be studied and the statement of Eccles to me that he thought it would require legislation.

Q How about a farm tenancy law?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope we will get one. It is a very important thing.

Q Anything being done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Only this conference that has been held in Agriculture.

Q On these foreign securities: Doesn't the Secretary of the Treasury have the right to stop the export of gold, even if they do sell those securities?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Has Secretary Roper told you his plan for the unemployment census?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We won't take that up until I get back, probably.

Q Mr. President, what has been said the last day or two on the subject of securities would tend to give the impression that there is some fear of a runaway stock market.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that was one of the factors.

Q But the impression is given by what is being said.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Nobody has ever talked that phase with me at all.

Q Purely the exchange factor?

THE PRESIDENT: The exchange and the fact -- I suppose the easiest way to put it is this: that currencies of European nations and gold reserves have been affected in the past, as we all know, by

certain private groups. For instance, all you have to do on that is to look back on the attacks made, for instance, on the franc over the past three or four years. There would be a concerted drive by what might be called private syndicates -- simultaneous attacks on currencies which, of course, upset not only the particular currency that was being attacked but also the exchange rate between those currencies and other currencies and then, being a triangular thing, it affects the exchange rate of those other currencies among themselves. It is a disturbing factor. Well, that particular factor seems to have been taken care of by the gentlemen's agreement and that kind of attack on currencies is fairly well under control.

Of course, the obvious thing is to see what other kind of a topheavy situation might exist that, for one reason or another, would cause the same effect as the attacks on gold, or on gold currencies. The accumulation of very large security holdings in any one nation, subject to withdrawal at a moment's notice, is a dangerous factor in the world and it is being looked at from that point of view, as a potential danger not only to our currency and our exchange but to everybody else's currency and exchange.

Q The stock market itself is a secondary thing?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Somebody ought to write a story some day --

I don't believe anybody over here could do it -- on the expert attacks on the franc and the lira and the guilder and the pound -- and the pound, you can smash the pound, if you like. It is a very interesting story if one can find the inside facts with respect to the attacks that were made on those things in the past four years.

Q Who is doing it?

THE PRESIDENT: There are all kinds of rumors. That is why the thing should be studied and written up.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #328,
Executive Offices of the White House,
November 17, 1936, 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a release that Steve will give to you, the appointment of a committee to look into the farm tenancy problem. The Secretary of Agriculture is the Chairman. It is quite a large committee but it is a pretty important one. They are asked to report by the 1st of February. Steve has the whole thing.

The only other thing I have got is that we can announce the appointment of a new Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Charles Edison of New Jersey. We are all very glad to have him. Of course he was in touch with naval things during the old days during the war when Thomas Edison was Chairman of the Naval Consulting Board. He is coming down, I think, probably not for two or three weeks because he has to settle up his own business affairs.

Q Is he President of the Edison Company?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q He is the son of the inventor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q At present he is State Director of the National Emergency Council?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he is.

Q I have been directed to ask you a local question. There are three rate cases pending in the District with no People's Council. That is up to you to appoint.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I will until I get back. There seems to be a question in regard to the whole subject and I haven't had time to go into it.

Q It was recommended that the job be abolished.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will you make any speeches in Rio or Montevideo?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I can tell you that because I think it depends largely on what is decided down there by the Governments of Brazil and at Montevideo.

Q We had a report, Mr. President, that you were expected to address a special session of the Brazilian Legislature.

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the plans but, as I say, I don't think I should give out anything like that. I think that should come from the other end.

Q I see by the morning paper that by a change of mind or weakening you are going to have a big Inaugural. We would like to have it.

THE PRESIDENT: I talked to old Waddy Wood yesterday about the stand out in front of the White House. I suppose there will be a parade of sorts. That will be decided when we get a chairman of the Inaugural Committee, when I get back. I talked to Waddy Wood and suggested to him that it be kept inexpensive, and I suggested that he try to work out something that would more or less copy the Hermitage. Four years ago we had the front of Federal Hall in New York City, where Washington was inaugurated, so I suggested it would be appropriate this time to take the Hermitage.

Q Do you expect to see Commissioner Murphy? I understood he was in town yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: I am and I am not. I haven't talked it over but I will try to if I can. It depends on how I get through the day.

Q Did you give the mayors of the Sea Ports Committee any idea that you would appoint mediation boards or arbitration boards?

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't discussed at all.

Q Anything on the High Commissionership?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There is a lot of talk about a Federal incorporation charter law to be enacted at the next session of the Congress as a substitute to N.R.A. Have you anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't anything except what is in the newspapers. There was a long study of that subject by the Federal Trade Commission a number of years ago. If you are interested in it I think they have a whole volume on the subject.

Q What do you intend to do or accomplish at B. A.?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the trip speaks for itself.

Q Do you believe that commodity prices will have to go any higher in order to keep recovery moving along?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask some Stock Exchange house.

Q I don't suppose your itinerary has been worked out in sufficient detail to say when you will get back to Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: Around the 15th. That is, it won't be probably until the morning of the 15th if I come straight back. If I go to Warm Springs, it will be twenty-four or forty-eight hours later.

Q Anything on the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am all through with Dan -- as far as we can go. He is coming in this afternoon to clean up odds and ends. You see, he has not finished his hearings with all of the departments so I have had to leave certain details to him but the totals are

pretty well set.

Q Did you tell Mr. Sibley anything yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He told me he might possibly -- don't have this come out from here -- he might fly down to B. A. just to take a holiday.

Q He told us so.

Q To return to the Budget, has the District been finished yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Will your Buenos Aires speech be available here or at the State Department?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I don't know how we are going to work it.

MR. EARLY: We will have it cabled to the State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but it would not get up here necessarily in time for release.

MR. EARLY: It depends on the availability there.

THE PRESIDENT: I may not have finished until an hour beforehand. You know, I sometimes do that.

Q Does the apparent suspension of the youth project at Quoddy mean a possible revival of the Quoddy project?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't done a thing.

Q This morning it was announced in a special report that there will be a survey of the Florida Ship Canal to determine whether the amount spent has been justified?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought of it for the last six or eight weeks.

Q Will public works grants be held until you get back?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I approved quite a lot of them yesterday. I can't

tell you the total number of dollars -- you can't put it down until you check with them -- but it is somewhere around twenty-five or thirty millions. These have been confined to projects which can be finished by the 1st of July, 1937, and they include a great many projects which we did not take up before in the areas -- well, in the middle latitude and the further south latitude. You see, during the fall we tried to start projects that were in the snow belt so they could get started before the winter began.

Q Mr. President, some time ago you told us that the re-employment hadn't kept pace with the increase in business. Do you still have that feeling or are they now absorbing about as many as they should during this upturn?

THE PRESIDENT: I might tell you something about that before I go only I couldn't do it extemporaneously. Will you hold that question until tomorrow morning at Charleston?

Q I am sorry; I won't be there.

Q We will fill him in.

THE PRESIDENT: We will take care of you here; it is all right.

Q Are any steps being taken preliminary to the submission of the St. Lawrence Seaway again?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is being studied by the State Department, the Federal Power Commission and the New York State ^[Port] Authority of which Mr. Walsh is Chairman.

Q Mr. President, Harry Hopkins, in a speech before the United States Conference of Mayors today, asked for a census of the unemployed. He says it should be done. Do you agree with him?

THE PRESIDENT: If you will define a "census of the unemployed" I will answer the question.

Q I don't know.

Q General Johnson, in his column, suggested that it be done in the same manner as a draft, such as during the war.

THE PRESIDENT: The subject is being studied at the present time.

Undoubtedly something is going to come out of it. The fact is that a mere census, a door-to-door canvass, is no earthly use because it will be out of date in six months. Nor can I see a constant ringing of doorbells; probably once a month your doorbell would be rung and you would have to make another report.

So, what I am working towards is the self-registration. It simplifies the machinery and saves enormously on the cost. I suppose the self-registration method would cost only 10 per cent of what a continuing census would cost. That is the way it has been worked out in England. Not that we would copy all the details of the English method, but the general method would be self-registration so that on the first of the month they would know pretty well what their figures are.

Q Will that be accompanied by a requirement that everybody must register in order to obtain relief?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. Farley is quoted as saying in his opinion that W.P.A. would be scrapped.

THE PRESIDENT: I'd like to see exactly what Jim said.

Q A registration of that kind, you would be able to tell at a glance by looking at it how many had been employed and if it were periodic?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily. We have got the number that have been re-employed through the present methods of reports by the employing companies. Of course there might be other factors entering into it.

Q Is there any limit you have in mind on the degree of the maritime strike before you will intervene?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you likely to make any move before you shove off tomorrow morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't know until before I shove off.

Q Before I say "Thank you, Mr. President," I hope you will have a nice trip.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it will be a very restful trip except when we cross the Line and the U.P. (correspondent, Mr. Storm) is going to have a gorgeous time because, having crossed the Line, he will undoubtedly be appointed an aide to King Neptune to advise the King as to what should be done to the A.P. and I.N.S.

Q Has he a certificate?

THE PRESIDENT: He finally found it.

This is off the record: Pa Watson tried to get away with it. He produced orders from the Army sending him to Australia. He never went but he produced the orders.

Q Good-by.

THE PRESIDENT: Good-by. Be good while I am away.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #329,

On the Presidential Special Train en route

Charleston, South Carolina, to Washington, D.C.,

December 15, 1936.

This Conference was not stenographically reported.

Inquiries at the time indicated that the article by Charles Hurd in the New York Times, December 16th, 1936, covered in some detail what had been expressed by the President at this Conference, principally his "high hope for gratifying results from the Pan-American Peace Conference."

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #330,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 18, 1936, 10.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Well, you can tell who went south all right. George (Durno) turned out to be a very good sailor.

Q One of the best, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: How has he behaved, Russell, while I was away?

Q The good will secretary (Mr. McIntyre) stayed down in Florida a couple of days.

THE PRESIDENT: I wasn't asking about him; I was asking about your charges.

Q Oh, very well.

Q Isn't that a new watch chain?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have had it about forty years.

Q Is that all?

THE PRESIDENT: Same one. Just been wearing it in the wintertime.

Q That is your heavy weather chain.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: It is good to -- I can't say "see you all" but at least have the feeling of your presence. The Dean (Mr. Young) says that your behaviour on the whole has been satisfactory during my absence. Those who accompanied me I brought through successfully. Some of them wanted the next conference in Rio de Janeiro instead of B.A. -- don't print that -- but otherwise I don't think there is any news at all.

Q Have you decided whether you are going to take your Message up in person, as usual, or send it?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose I will take it up in person. It is a pretty good custom.

Q When?

THE PRESIDENT: Whenever they meet.

Q Before the Inauguration?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q In the evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Budget Message going up also?

THE PRESIDENT: That always goes up the next day.

Q The Public Printer was up yesterday and we all missed him. Do you mind? (Laughter) Would you be a reporter for us?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I talked to him about two things: One was that I am going to have printed the three addresses in South America because a number of people down there would like to have them. The other thing I talked with him about is a growing problem in Washington and that is that the individual departments have been increasingly setting up these multilithographic presses, thereby getting away from their printing appropriation. We discussed the stopping of this tendency of doing a lot of what amounts to printing in the different departments and trying to go back to the centralization of printing which, as I remember it, was put through either in Mr. Coolidge's administration or Mr. Hoover's. At that time he found that there was a great deal of printing going on in half a dozen different establishments. He concentrated it in the Government Printing Office and we are trying to get back to that system.

Q It is cheaper.

THE PRESIDENT: The multilithographing can be done by the Government Printing Office instead of having it done in seven or eight or nine plants at the present time.

Q Are they getting around the appropriation or using the appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: Getting around it.

Q Cutting down on the amount of material?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, also cutting down on the amount of material.

Q Wouldn't there be a good deal of research work that would not get out after it has been produced?

THE PRESIDENT: This is not intended to stop good research work. It is intended to stop the unnecessary printing, which always grows. It is a thing that every government ought to check on every few years. It seems to get out of hand. The same thing happened when I was the chairman of an interdepartmental committee about 1914. Nothing particularly new about it.

Q Did this initiate with you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How did it come about, this shift?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we found various ways. There were a lot of departments that were doing a lot of this work on their own.

Q Mr. President, have you indicated any preference in the House leadership? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think the easiest way to answer that is to restate a little well-known history. Since 1933, the fourth of March, there have been three different speakers elected by the House.

In two cases, as I remember it, there were contests, and the White House took absolutely no part, directly or indirectly, in those elections. There have been one or two majority leaders elected since the fourth of March, 1933, and again the White House took no part, directly or indirectly, in those elections.

It has been the rule and will continue to be the rule.

Q Do you desire a revision of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act at this session?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a new one; never heard of it.

Q Do you expect that the Senate will ratify the Argentine Sanitary Convention?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. On that, you know it is in my judgment a simple question of -- let's put it this way -- of necessity. If there is hoof and mouth disease in another part of the country and that fact can be established, and there is no danger of contamination of meat from that part of the country where there is no hoof and mouth disease, it does not seem exactly honest to bar the meat from the noninfected part of the country. In other words, it is a dishonest discrimination.

Q Mr. President, do you care to make any comment on the war debt situation, apropos of this month's defaults?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

Q Can you tell us anything about appointments?

THE PRESIDENT: Can't tell you a thing because I don't know.

Q Did you intervene to stop the W.P.A. cut?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you have any definite advice as to when or where your visit

might be repaid by presidents of South American countries?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard a word.

Q To return to your Budget Message, will you follow the same procedure as last year and wait until in the spring to send up your emergency (relief) estimates?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean the 1938 relief total?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Will you have the Budget (Press) Conference before you send it up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q When do you intend to ask the deficiency appropriation for the first six months of 1937?

THE PRESIDENT: Very early; within the first week.

Q Do you think your tentative estimate of five hundred million made last summer still holds?

THE PRESIDENT: It is about right.

Q Did you set a date for Louis Brownlow to come in and bring his report?

THE PRESIDENT: Today, at 12:00 o'clock. I don't think it is the final report.

Q It is due pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What will you do in connection with the St. Lawrence Waterway Treaty?

THE PRESIDENT: No news on that at the present time.

Q There have been some reports that you are contemplating a cruise to the Philippines. Anything you can say about it at this time?

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I will tell you all there is in that: At the end of a very delightful cruise, the last four or five days, all of us say, "Where do we go next?" We took a chart and we worked out at least enough cruises to occupy me for the next twenty-five years. Well, it is obvious that I am not going to be here for twenty-five years but out of this large number of delightful cruises -- this is good news for Fred (Storm) -- we ought to be able to find four during the next four years. There is nothing on the Philippines, any more than going to the Azores or anywhere else.

Q You said you were going to take Senator Borah for a ride. Did you arrange that with him?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen him since. But I think as soon as the weather gets warm enough and the little old POTOMAC is back in commission, we will go down the river together.

Q In an article in Liberty called "What Roosevelt is really going to do," I believe that Dr. Stanley High, who is advertised as your adviser by the magazine, said that one of the things you were going to do was to attempt, either by law or pressure of public opinion, to enforce minimum standards of honesty in the press.

THE PRESIDENT: How was I going to do it?

Q That is what I am asking you. Is it at a minimum now? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Of course I never comment on a different profession. I am always willing to comment on my own profession of the law. Of course, in the law the increase of standards of honesty is always a good thing.

Q: Are you going to join this new lawyers' guild of Frank P. Walsh?

THE PRESIDENT: Is he starting a lawyers' guild? That is a new one.

Q: Stanley High's magazine announced that it was an authoritative statement and several people have asked about it -- my city editors, etc.

THE PRESIDENT: Was that the writer of the article or your editor?

Q: The editor.

THE PRESIDENT: That's different.

Q: It is different. We made an inquiry of a White House official and did not get an answer.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it and never saw it beforehand and know nothing about it.

Q: Have you discussed or given any thought to the selection of a successor for Governor Murphy?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q: Any appointments ready for announcement?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't believe there will be any until probably the first of January.

Q: Are you authorizing the Navy to go ahead with the two new battleships?

THE PRESIDENT: I am talking about that this afternoon in Cabinet. I haven't discussed it yet.

Q: Are there any more plans for a self-registering census of the unemployed?

THE PRESIDENT: Talking about that in Cabinet, too.

Q: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I think everything else is all quiet. I am cleaning

up (on mail) over the week end.

Q Anna and John coming over with Sistie and Buzzy?

THE PRESIDENT: Anna and John are not coming. Sistie and Buzzy will come. Anna and John are looking for a house at the present time.

Q Any developments on the Philippine trade conference? They are sending a trade commission here.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it. It is due next year.

Q Have you anything to say about the death of Peter Van Horn in Florida?

THE PRESIDENT: Awfully sorry about it. Very good friend and awfully sorry to hear about. Just heard it this morning.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #331,
Executive Offices of the White House,
December 22, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: My Lord! Who is coming in?

Q Full house today. A big crowd.

Q Lot of visiting newspapermen, too.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is no news. I hope the Spanish at the Gridiron Club was as good as mine. I don't know anything else at all.

Q Mr. President, do you anticipate that your relief expenditures that will go up in the Budget -- in the figures that you hope to submit in March, will be in excess of five hundred million, which is the figure you gave us at the last Press Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q There are some reports on the Hill that it will be in the neighborhood of seven hundred and fifty million?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I haven't checked.

Q Wasn't the five hundred million an immediate emergency?

THE PRESIDENT: But that had nothing to do with March.

Q March would be next year's?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is for the following fiscal year.

Q That would go up in the first week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Are you holding back the P.W.A. power allotments now pending on account of the litigation?

THE PRESIDENT: The P.W.A.?

Q The P.W.A. power allotments?

THE PRESIDENT: They haven't been held up.

Q Pending the outcome of the litigation, they were holding that money
in reserve?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't get the point.

Q Secretary Ickes said he favored keeping it in reserve pending the
outcome of the Buzzards' Roost litigation.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't get it.

Q That is the case the Supreme Court sent back to the lower court.

THE PRESIDENT: The process is this: We have made allocations of
P.W.A. money to municipalities which had conformed to all local
laws and were clearly within their municipal rights in starting
the municipal distribution of power. In a great many cases we
have made allocations to them by the loan and grant method. Now,
in some cases those have been held up by a court injunction and
the money allocated is held, pending a decision by the Court.
It will not be used for other purposes.

Q Could you tell us, in view of the Supreme Court decision on the
arms embargo law, what recommendations you may make for permanent
neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: You are about a month too early.

Q Are you contemplating cutting the W.P.A. by a third?

THE PRESIDENT: Cutting the W.P.A. by a third? That is a new one. I
never heard of it.

Q What I meant to say was that if the five-hundred-million-dollar
appropriation stands, that will mean approximately, for five
months, a hundred million a month or so?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily.

Q Will you explain that to us?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't. In other words, there are, as you know, various transferable funds and I haven't got enough information about those funds to give you any figures at all. Other funds might be used to supplement whatever the sum is that is asked for for W.P.A. work. I don't know what the amounts are or what the funds are but they are being studied now.

Q That is on the basis of the deficiency?

THE PRESIDENT: On the basis of whatever is necessary to carry us through.

Q Is it safe to assume that you will probably make those recommendations in regard to neutrality -- permanent neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: You can assume that there has got to be some kind of new neutrality legislation at the present session because the present Act ends the 1st of May or the 30th of April. There will be a request for further neutrality legislation.

Q Can you give us some further information about W.P.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't enough information.

Q Do you contemplate any conference of business leaders between now and the time Congress convenes, as some reports state?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything down in my books. I don't think I have any appointments except appointments with the Director of the Budget and things like that.

Q Chamber of Commerce and industrial executives?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I haven't had a word about it since

I got back.

Q In what state is your Message on the State of the Union? Are you pretty well through with it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't looked at it.

Q Do you think the Supreme Court's opinion on delegation of authority to you in conducting foreign relations will give you wide enough latitude --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) If I had read it, I wouldn't answer your question, but I haven't read it. (Laughter)

Q Through American diplomatic channels, have you been sounding out foreign envoys with the idea of having a possible world conference for trade revival?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you contemplate naming a second Assistant Secretary of Labor in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't thought of it.

Q Mr. President, have you received a report from your Committee on Crop Insurance?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Henry Wallace said that would be in -- I think he said about next week.

Q Mr. President, anything to be said about reorganization of the departments, coordination of the departments, such as putting R. A. under the Department of Agriculture?

THE PRESIDENT: No. On that -- this is just off the record and for your information: The Committee which has been studying the subject of reorganization of Government has submitted -- they have talked over with me some preliminary, wholly preliminary

suggestions. They are not even in the form of a report. I am going to see Senator Byrd and Congressman Buchanan some time in the next week to talk over these preliminary suggestions and that is as far as it has got.

Now, by way of suggestion to all of you, there is always the tendency in discussing reorganization of Government to assume the factual attitude. In other words, that Agency No. 15 in Department A is going to be transferred and become Agency No. 27 in Department B. Well, of course, that is not the way anybody has ever reorganized the Government.

We have three outstanding examples of Government organization that we know something about. One was Governor Lowden's in Illinois, one was Governor Smith's in New York and the third was Governor Byrd's in Virginia. Those reorganizations were based on the problem of good business management in conducting a very large business. That was the primary objective. I cannot give you the figures in the case of either Illinois or Virginia, but they were very similar.

In the case of the State of New York, in 1923 there were 120 state departments, agencies, commissions, et cetera, et cetera, all of which reported to the Governor. Under the reorganization that was put through in the State of New York, those were reduced as reporting agencies, that is, independent agencies, from 120 to 18. In other words, there were 18 departments of the State Government created and all of the 120 agencies were put into one or the other of those 18 departments. The departments in the State of New York had general purposes. The idea of the reorganization

was that, in so far as possible, the fact would be recognized that from year to year or over a period of years some particular agency would be better off in another department, but the principle was the maintenance of a definite number of departments and all agencies of Government should report through that definite number of departments, one or the other, where they fit in, and which department they fit into is a wholly secondary consideration and that is the principle on which this study being conducted is based, just as in the case of those three state governments I have mentioned. I might add to those three that there was a somewhat similar reorganization of the State Government for administrative purposes in Massachusetts about 12 or 14 years ago. It had the same objective.

Then there is always another tendency and that is to assume that a reorganization results immediately in a great saving of money. Of course the only way to save money in a large way is to stop Government functions and that is a thing that very few people ever think of. You can put two bureaus together and call them one bureau but if the two bureaus, now combined into one, do substantially the same amount of work for the public, there is very little saving in dollars and cents. You may be able to have one bureau chief instead of two and save the salary of one of them, but that is a drop in the bucket when you come down to the total expense. As you know, the salaries of the Cabinet Officers and their Assistants is a drop in the bucket compared with the salaries of the clerks and stenographers and filing clerks and experts all the way down the line. Therefore, the mere saving

of money, while it is most desirable, cannot be assumed, as it so often is by careless people, to be a major item in the reorganization of Government. It is an item, yes, but, as I remember it in the case of those different states, the actual money saving by changing the administrative setup ran somewhere between -- I think it was between one and three per cent. So, unless you terminate the functions of Government, you won't save very much money.

The main objective is to get an organization which, from the administrative point of view, clicks so that you don't have duplications and don't have problems as to who is to run this and who is to run that, giving to your departments, your main departments, a general field of work with the authority in the Executive to make transfers from time to time as changing conditions may call for them. Well, just for example, I think back to 1913 or 1914. I find a lot of bureaus of the Government doing a very different kind of work from what they were doing twenty years ago -- very different work and obviously belonging in some other department. Changing conditions have made it so.

Then, of course, there is always the other thing to remember -- I am giving you this as a sort of background for what is going to happen. There is another thing to remember and that is that the Constitution said that there were three departments of the Government, the Legislative, the Judicial and Executive. The Executive is the President of the United States, who is the only person mentioned in the Constitution as being the Executive Department of the Government. There has grown up in the past, over

the last 35 or 40 years, beginning back around 1900, a series of outside organizations that constitute -- instead of the press being the Fourth Estate, those constitute the Fourth Estate. They are agencies of the Government that are not under the President and not directly responsible to the President. The original theory was that they were quasi-judicial, and they were, but gradually a good many of the quasi-judicial agencies of the Government have assumed Governmental functions. We are now trying to place the administrative functions of outside agencies under the Executive, where under the Constitution they have to be, leaving them with their judicial functions and subject only to appeal, as it is today, to the Circuit Court of Appeals, thus drawing a line between the Judicial and the Executive.

Q Do you recall how many of those agencies there are?

THE PRESIDENT: Over a hundred.

Q Can you give us some example of what kind of agencies you are referring to?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, all of the commissions; practically all.

Q All of the commissions, would you say?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends a little on the language. You have the Mexican Boundary and the International Joint Commissions and the Interstate Commerce and the Maritime Commissions. It depends a little on the language of the statute in each case. A great many of them report directly to the Congress.

Q Are you considering the formation of an administrative court as suggested by the American Bar Association? Are you familiar

with it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would you care to give us an illustration of the kind of agency or bureau that, as you say now, has changed so materially in the last 15 or 20 years?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It does not occur to me at the moment. For instance -- I will give you an example: Procurement. When I was here in the old days, all procurement bids -- in fact, it was not called "procurement"; I don't know what it was called then. It was in the Treasury Department and they bought our pens and ink and paper and office supplies. Gradually that has been built up and they are now building post offices and I don't know what -- all kinds of office buildings -- and it is a tremendous organization. They are building public works of all kinds and, obviously, it does not belong in the Treasury Department.

Q Am I correct in recalling that this Brownlow Commission or Committee is not to report but simply to suggest to you? They are not to make a report to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they have a sort of dual or triple function. I think Harry Byrd is working with them; I am working with them; I think Buchanan has talked with them. I don't know the exact status but we are all working together.

Q Will there be a report?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q When you began your discussion, you said this was off the record.

Are we to assume --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I would not know how to write a story

on it, because I haven't given you anything that was factual. The only thing I have given that was factual is the fact that this Committee has talked the thing over in the preliminary stage and I am talking it over with Harry Byrd and Buck (Congressman Buchanan), and that is about all. I don't know how I could write a story on the rest of it, except that you can put it this way, as I said before, that the principal objective is to make this a good business organization.

Q—And the rest is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Just for your information. What can you write on it?

Background? That is it.

Q Then it can be used without attributing it?

THE PRESIDENT: Use it as background, yes. But don't try to make it factual because you will be all wrong. And keep away from saying that this is going to be transferred there and the other thing somewhere else, because, heavens, we haven't even approached that and haven't a thought on it.

Q Can you name any item of Government work of the so-called permanent kind and character that could be discontinued with benefit to the Treasury or the public?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, for instance, you take two forms of relief we are running at the present time. One is P.W.A. and the other is W.P.A. We have two organizations; eventually we can combine the two. We would save a certain amount of overhead on the study of projects but only on the study of projects. Now, the actual cost in W.P.A. projects and P.W.A. projects -- the actual proportion of the cost that goes to the study of the projects is only

two or three per cent of the cost, therefore you are not going to make much saving. You may make a saving of two or three per cent.

Q Would that be eliminating a function? I understood him to say some function?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got to the point of recommending the abandonment of functions except, of course, in the carrying out of relief / we are not spending as much money but we haven't abolished the function.

Q How about Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: About what? (Laughter)

Q If you were to combine Army and Navy in a Department of National Defense, that would not abandon any function but would save the same amount, two or three per cent?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it very much. Knowing the Army and Navy extremely well, I would like you to show me how to save two or three per cent by putting them in one department. I don't know.

Q There is a third phase of relief: the agricultural ring which, apparently, is beginning to kick up a little fuss with the formation of a bloc in Congress to see that agriculture gets relief. How is agricultural relief to be considered as a function?

THE PRESIDENT: That isn't a thing one would abandon at all. Agricultural relief depends entirely on what function you mean by it. If you take the case of the farmer who needs rehabilitation, that is one thing. That is agricultural relief in the strictest sense of the term. Now, whether that should be administered by the same people who give work relief or not is a question which, of course,

does not have to be decided at this time.

Q This question seems to have arisen on the Hill in respect to drought relief?

THE PRESIDENT: That is exactly what drought relief is. There are several things you can do with respect to the fellow in the drought area: You can improve his farm, conserve his water and dig his soil and lend him seed money on a loan and try to tide him over on his own land, or you can pay him a dole or take him to town and put him to work on a project. Or you can do all three. There is an awful lot of loose terminology. Agricultural relief might be anything.

Q This would indicate to me that if you built this new organization there would have to be new departments of Government and new Cabinet officers. Is that a correct assumption?

THE PRESIDENT: That is merely in the study stage. In other words, you are trying to become factual.

Q As you have spoken to me that has grown in my mind. But, as to the two forms of relief, there is no existing channel of Government in which they could function?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true.

Q Can a new department be created without a constitutional amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Heavens above!

Q A Cabinet position?

THE PRESIDENT: If you read the Constitution you will find what I say is true: There is no position in the Government except giving the Executive Branch of the Government to the President of the United States. There isn't a Cabinet position mentioned. There

isn't a department that is mentioned. Congress creates them.

Q The Republicans were all wrong in the campaign, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Congress appropriates --
(interposing)

THE PRESIDENT:/ Congress appropriates and Congress can abolish a department tomorrow. Congress could abolish the State Department tomorrow or create a brand new one.

Q Congress creates the department and outlines its functions?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q In your study of this Government as it existed prior to March 4, 1933, have you found any item of work going on at that time and still going on that can be discontinued advantageously?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't gone through it lately enough to be able to answer your question. I should say that there might be a number of things we could discontinue but not meaning a large amount.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #332
Executive Offices of the White House

December 29, 1936, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Hello Fred (Storm). Pretty good crowd today.

MR. STORM: Pretty good audience, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think Christmas cannot have been so very severe, there are so many.

MR. STORM: They are all on their feet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: If anybody wants to write a feature story on Liberia, I have a memorandum from the State Department which is quite interesting. I did not know very much about it -- as much about it before I read it as I do now. It is quite interesting. I am not having any copies made but I will let Mac take it out to the Press Room if any are interested to read it over and write a story. The occasion for it is recognition of the new Liberian Government by Great Britain. You know, they went through a good many vicissitudes and we sent McBride over there and he tried to untangle it and then we sent Governor Winship over there and he tried it. They put in a good many reforms and they are paying their debts and the thing is going quite nicely.

Q Over in the State Department, we found over a period of

thirty-five years, that whenever the State Department has some story they want to cover up, they usually put out a Liberian story (laughter) and, Mr. President, this story was given to us last week when they were keeping quiet the story that the Erie was fired upon. I am wondering what story they are trying to cover up now. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I have had it for about a week. It is probably the same story. I am not trying to cover up by that. I am probably the only person who did not see it. However, you can check.

The only other thing we have is that the Times had something about an unscheduled conference to study the size of the deficiency relief appropriation, that the President called in Cabinet officers and heads of the New Deal agencies to cover, to discuss the problem. That is not strictly true. As long as we had all three groups here, we did have them in and discussed relief besides their own individual problems. There is no news. It is still in the discussion stage.

The only thing which we have decided, and most of you people who write financial stories will appreciate this, we decided that we are going to put in the budget message, in the 1937 figures -- that is this next fiscal year -- the deficiency bill figures which we will ask for so that we will have the whole picture. Now, the

actual budget message will go up probably on the 8th which is a week from Friday.

MR. EARLY: A week from Thursday. Incidentally, how about the Budget Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I go up on the Annual Message on Wednesday. I thought I would send the Budget Message up on Friday, the 8th, and that we would have our sit-down-on-the-floor conference with the financial people on the 7th. If that is all right for all of you let us put it down for the late afternoon of the 7th, which is Thursday afternoon. That would give you plenty of time to write your overnights on it for release when the Budget Message goes up the next day.

Q Mr. President, has the figure been set that will be asked for for the deficiency --

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is what we have been talking about this morning.

Q And that will show in the budget estimate?

THE PRESIDENT: That will show in the 1937 column so that the estimate of receipts and expenditures and deficit for the fiscal year 1937 will include all the items requested in the deficiency bill.

Q And the emergency item for the 1938 fiscal year will come later?

THE PRESIDENT: That will come later, yes. You can put it this way: That in regard to 1938 there will be estimated

receipts and expenditures and surplus or deficit, whichever the case may be, and that those will be complete except for the relief item, which will go up in March.

Q May we ask one other question about that? In theory that should be balanced, the 1938, or show a surplus, should it not?

THE PRESIDENT: That is why I was very careful to say there would be either a surplus or a deficit shown.

Q This figure --

THE PRESIDENT: That was an awfully crude question. Did you think you could catch me on that? (Laughter)

Q Do you have any District appointments or local appointments? Have you made up your mind on Commissioners, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not.

Q (Mr. Storm): Is Jim (Roosevelt) coming down to Washington to become a member of the Secretariat?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he is coming down to Washington to do a lot of odd jobs for me. As to the question of title, etcetera, nobody has given any consideration to that.

Q Are you shutting down on allocations for the \$300,000,000 revolving fund for the Public Works projects?

THE PRESIDENT: The whole thing is still in the study stage.

Q Are they still being made?

THE PRESIDENT: The study is still being made.

Q I meant to say whether the fund is still actively being disbursed.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the last disbursements were made ten days or two weeks ago.

Q Will that be the last for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Can you say whether you are giving any consideration to legislation that would strengthen the Arms Embargo Act, particularly in the case of Civil War?

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously, there should be a further discretion vested in the President with the appropriate penalties to take care of internal strife. I leave out the words "Civil War" for the perfectly obvious reason which is illustrative of why no Act can possibly take into consideration every future contingency.

In other words, ask yourself the question, Fred, what is a civil war and you see how impossible it is to define it.

The Confederate States, as I remember it, most of them seceded from the Union in the winter of 1861. Most of them had seceded some time before Sumter. Well, what was the status then? Was it a civil war?

Then, in the late April of 1861, Sumter was fired on. Hostilities were confined at that time to Charleston Harbor. Was there a civil war going on? I don't know. In the North, they called it a Rebellion; in the South,

they called it a War Between the States.

For a good many years we fought in this country a series of wars with the Redskins. They were recognized as wars because of the fact that special decorations were given to people who fought in them. They were the Indian Wars. Was that a civil war in the United States or not?

Further back, there was a Whiskey Rebellion, soon after the Revolution. Was that a civil war? I don't know.

In other words, civil war means anything or nothing and the ^circumstances and the particular case must be decided on by somebody who has authority 365 days of the year. That is about the easiest answer.

Of course it seems obvious that today, in this particular case in Spain, there are two organized groups of armies and the normal person trying to define the Spanish situation would normally call that particular situation a Civil War. There isn't much question about that.

In this particular case of the sale of these planes and engines, it is perhaps a rather good example of the need of some power in the Executive. It is, furthermore, an example of cooperation by business. As the State Department has told you, they have ^{had} a number of applications from American citizens and firms to sell munitions

to the belligerents in Spain, one side or the other, and the State Department told them, they specifically and definitely requested them not to engage in the transaction on two grounds, the first that it was contrary to the Government policy and secondly that it was endangering, even if only to a slight degree, of our desire to be neutral in this unfortunate happening in Spain.

Well, these companies went along with the request of the Government. There is the 90 per cent of business that is honest, I mean ethically honest; there is the 90 per cent we are always pointing at with pride. And then one man does what amounts to a perfectly legal but thoroughly unpatriotic act. He represents the 10 per cent or less of business that does not live up to the best standards.

Excuse the homily, but I feel quite deeply about it.

Q Supposing that the Government would not grant this license, or whatever you call it, for the exportation of those munitions?

THE PRESIDENT: We have to under the law. The law says we must issue them.

Q There are some persons who say that you have discretion under the law and that it could be refused?

THE PRESIDENT: Couldn't do it. Absolutely not a chance.

The law says that this Committee in the State Department shall grant the license.

Q A mandamus could be obtained?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, there is the other phase of the case. If legislation is passed extending even the present Neutrality Act to civil wars and I find, by an executive finding, that a Civil War exists in the same way that I would under the present Act that a war between two nations exists, and that Act should become law within the next two weeks and after Congress meets, we could then clamp down on this particular shipment under this particular contract or commission.

That immediately raises the question as to whether this particular individual could go to the court of claims and seek damages for the ^[profits?] promise which he otherwise would claim he could have made.

The best way of answering that is to ask you to read the Supreme Court's decision in the Neutrality case the other day. There is an intimation in there, while it is only an intimation -- nobody can guess what the Supreme Court would rule in a case like that -- but the intimation is there to the effect that it being an act contrary to the request of the Government, and the conduct of foreign affairs being in the Executive, that the Courts would not grant reimbursement to this individual for a loss of what he otherwise would have made as being

contrary to public policy. But, as I say, you cannot tell until the case is decided.

Q This manufacturer who obtained this license was quoted today as saying that his planes were not to be used for military purposes at all and he claims he had a perfectly valid right and that he would provide employment for 1500 skilled workmen. He says they are not to be used for war purposes at all.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course that particular plea was made in 1914 and 1915 and 1916, just the same way. They said that the export of machine guns would give work to Americans. It does not mean it is the right thing to do.

Q Mr. President, did you see the story this morning that there was a recommendation forthcoming, asking that a Central Press Bureau be established under which all the press relations would be handled?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Off the record, the Times Bureau had a brain storm. I never heard of it until I read it in the Times and I don't want to hear any more about it.

Q There has been a suggestion made that this Jefferson Memorial should take the form of a national auditorium. Is that right, Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That would be in the jurisdiction of the Congressional Committee which has been asked to report.

Q | I think you have to O.K. the design.

THE PRESIDENT: No; Congress has to decide on what kind of a memorial they want first.

Q Have you given any consideration to the O'Mahoney Bill, the Federal Licensing Bill, as a substitute for N.R.A. to achieve the goal set by N.R.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the many, many bills being studied by the Department of Justice at the present time. There is no news on any of them yet.

Q Some of the Senators are complaining that they cannot make recommendations for Judges for the Judgeships that Congress created because of the 60-year age limit. My understanding was that the Department of Justice and yourself would not waive that 60-year age limit.

THE PRESIDENT: That has been an Executive prerogative for four years and I don't think I have sent to the Senate the name of any new Judge over 60 years old and I think I will stick to it. It is a pretty good rule.

Q Can you tell us what Sidney Hillman dropped in this morning for?

THE PRESIDENT: We discussed a lot of things. Among others, we discussed the breakdown of both the maximum hour provisions that we enforced until a little over a year ago and the minimum wage provisions that we enforced in those days. There seems to be a general consensus of opinion and statistics -- you might try to get a story out of the

Department of Labor on that or out of the Central Statistical Board showing the breakdown of the child labor provisions and also the minimum-wage, maximum-hour provisions.

There has been very little printed about it, but the fact remains that the breakdown has been constant and increasing.

I had one experience in the Campaign -- I don't think any of you who were with me saw it that particular day because it was half a mile back, I mean you were half a mile back. It was on that hectic ride from Providence to Boston.

We got into New Bedford and in that park there was the most awful jam. There must have been 20,000 people where there was room for only about a thousand and they were jammed around my car. There was a girl six or seven feet away who was trying to pass an envelope to me and she was just too far away to reach. One of the policemen threw her back into the crowd and I said to Gus (Gennerich), "Get the note from that girl." He got it and handed it to me and the note said this: It said, "Dear Mr. President: I wish you could do something to help us girls. You are the only recourse we have got left. We have been working in a sewing factory, a garment factory, and up to a few months ago we were getting our minimum pay of \$11 a week (I think it was \$11 a week) and

even the learners were getting \$7 or \$8 a week. Today the 200 of us girls have been cut down to \$4 and \$5 and \$6 a week. You are the only man that can do anything about it. Please send somebody from Washington up here to restore our minimum wages because we cannot live on \$4 or \$5 or \$6 a week."

That is something that so many of us found in the Campaign, that these people think that I have the power to restore things like minimum wages and maximum hours and the elimination of child labor. That was just one example of a good many in the Campaign and of course letters keep coming in all the time that just say that by Executive Order or action I can take care of these individual cases and, of course, I haven't any power to do it.

Q: Have you received that report from the Committee that has been studying the effect of N.R.A.? I think it is a Committee on labor that George Harrison is on and --

THE PRESIDENT: Major Berry's group?

Q: I think Miss Perkins and George Harrison are on it. They are stating the effect of N.R.A. upon industry and making certain recommendations.

Q: Do you think something should be done to restore minimum pay and maximum hours by the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely. But don't write any story saying that the President is going to restore N.R.A. That is

the easy, sloppy method of writing a story. Anybody can do that. What I would like to have you do is to point out the fact that something has got to be done and don't go beyond "something." Don't get out on the limb, because you know how often you have sawed off your own limb. Say that something has to be done about the elimination of child labor and long hours and starvation wages. That is as far as I could go. If I were writing the story I would stick to that.

Q What did you do with the letter you got in the crowd?

THE PRESIDENT: I sent it to the Department of Labor and I sent a copy to the Massachusetts Labor Commissioner. What happened, I do not know.

Q Did you send a copy to the Supreme Court? (Laughter)

Q Can we look for a specific recommendation from you some time early in the Session on this proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not a prophet or the son of a prophet today.

Q Did you see where Senator O'Mahoney has inserted in his Federal Incorporation Bill a new section which would give States the right -- for instance, a State which has approved the Child Labor Amendment, it would give them the right to bar from within its limits goods produced in States that have not approved the Child Labor Amendment. He bases that on the convict labor case. He says if it can be done on convict labor, why

not on child labor?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is, see if you can get two lawyers to agree. I don't know.

Q Do you think the situation can be handled by State action without Federal help?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did Sidney Hillman have a suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Was anything said by A. F. of L. counsel about the strike?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you come to any conclusion as to whether it can be done without a Constitutional Amendment?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are asking me to guess something I don't know.

Q Can a sweat shop, by offering to take men on for jobs paying \$7 and \$8 a week, force them off the WPA rolls in order to do it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a difficulty we face in a great many localities. People on the WPA rolls have been offered jobs on such a low weekly or daily wage that we simply, in good conscience, could not throw them off WPA rolls to take what we considered an inadequate daily wage.

Q Can you give us the subject of the call this morning by Senator Guffey and Mr. Walter Jones?

THE PRESIDENT: I would, if I could remember it. (Laughter)
I cannot remember what we talked about.

Q That is a good answer.

Q Did your conversation with Governor Murphy yesterday extend to ~~neutrality~~ in the Philippines?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q When are you going to name his successor?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't gotten to it yet.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (To the conference) Oh! Happy New Year!
I had almost forgotten that.