

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #382

Executive Offices of the White House

Tuesday, July 20, 1937, 4.10 P.M.

Q We are still minus the Dean (Mr. Young) today.

THE PRESIDENT: (Motioning to one of the ladies of the press to take the Dean's chair). For the sake of the people behind. Your hat may disturb them.

Q I usually take it off.

Q I see the new tarpon is mounted.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish you would talk to Ross McIntire and Pa (Watson) about that tarpon because they swear they caught a tarpon about five feet long and the ones that came up are only about four feet long.

Q He is a pretty big fellow.

THE PRESIDENT: Why they mounted that little minnow there, I do not know. It is perfectly silly.

Q That is the one that Elliott caught?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is the one that Elliott caught, but it does not measure up to Elliott's fish. His measured 5' 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " and as far as we can measure this, it is only about 5' 2".

Q The little one looks like a nice sized mountain trout.

THE PRESIDENT: Poor old Pa (Watson) is fit to be tied. He says they got the wrong fish.

Q That is why he hasn't been around.

THE PRESIDENT: He has the wrong fish and he has to pay for it, 25 bucks.

Q I think he is giving it to the country club.

THE PRESIDENT: You know, as a matter of fact, none of us wanted the fish mounted, but there was local pressure.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything at all.

Q Mr. President, there is a report on the Hill that you are going to confer later this afternoon with the Vice President and Senators Harrison, Barkley and Pittman.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, they are coming down at half past four.

Q At what hour did you say, Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: At half past four, Fred (Essary). That will give you a chance to get some supper.

Q Will you clear up the confusion over the court issue at this particular time? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That, I might add, is a classic. (Laughter)
Kannee, will you embalm that in your notes.

Q What is the answer?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a classic.

Q Is that the answer?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. A classic question.

Q Would you tell us what you told Senator Harrison about your neutrality in the leadership contest?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing to tell you. It is very obvious and has been from the very beginning. It is the same thing as usual.

Q That is a matter for the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, just like the Speakership and Majority Leadership of the House. There is no change.

Q Mr. President, have you read the letter sent by the Governor of New York to the Senator from New York?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it when it came out on the ticker and I don't think it was all down. I have not read the full letter yet.

Q Will you comment, Sir, on what you did read?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will you comment on Senator Copeland's remark that Mayor La Guardia should be the candidate of the New Deal?

THE PRESIDENT: No; it is a local matter. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what this conference at four thirty is about?

THE PRESIDENT: No; affairs of the Nation.

Q Mr. President, do you intend to press for a bill affecting the Supreme Court along the lines of those presented originally?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing further to add; no further news today.

Q Will there be a White House Conference, a White House statement, after the conference this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You can get what you can out of them.

I think it will probably be very little. (Laughter)

Q Less than we are getting here? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: None. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there has been a report from Kansas City that Tom Pendergast and James Aylward, who is State Chairman there, have, at the White House request, wired Senator Truman, asking him to support Senator Barkley for Majority Leadership.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it, except that Steve told me about ten minutes ago and I said the same thing to Steve.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the Farm Bill that Congressman Jones presented to the committee today?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not seen it. He told me he was working on it last Saturday. We haven't gone into the details yet so I cannot tell you anything about it, not having seen it.

Q Speaker Bankhead said yesterday that there were four Administration measures, the Farm Bill, the Government Reorganization, the Loopholes Bill and the Wages and Hours Bill, that they wanted considered before adjournment. Do you think all those bills should be passed this session?

THE PRESIDENT: You know what I said all along about legislation. I think I have recommended certain objectives

on all those subjects as desirable. There is no more "must" legislation now than there was the last time I talked about it in February and March and December and January.

Q "Must" legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I said, "There is no more 'must' legislation now than there was then." They are all desirable objectives.

Q You told us to stop using that word, "must". It is a "preferred" list.

THE PRESIDENT: I said, "desirable".

Q Would you consider Housing Legislation desirable too?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is the Court still in the first preferred class?

THE PRESIDENT: I never mentioned "first preferred class."
I said, "desirable".

Q Preferred class?

THE PRESIDENT: It is all desirable legislation and has been recommended. In fact anything recommended, from the point of view of the recommendor, is desirable.

Q Do you consider appointing anyone to the vacancy on the Supreme Court?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Any comment on the House mutterings on the cost of the Earhart search?

THE PRESIDENT: What was that?

Q On the House mutterings on the Earhart search.-- request for investigation and what not.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know there was any mutterings. I saw a U.P. dispatch from Honolulu yesterday which said that the cost of the search has been \$4,000,000 to the Government.

Of course, a thing like that is just plain prevarication. That is the politest term to call it, a so-called news dispatch.

Actually, as you probably know, every Navy plane on a ship like the Lexington or a ship like the Colorado has to do so many hours in the air during the course of a year. Well, this counts towards the number of hours in the air. Therefore there is no additional cost because of the cost of keeping the plane in the air because the money would be spent whether they were doing a search problem of this kind or whether they were doing a maneuver.

It is the same way on the fuel oil. The Navy had a very skimpy -- from the point of view of efficiency -- a skimpy allowance for fuel oil. They have to be very careful how they spend it and they have to stay within the allowance of fuel oil in the course of a year. Each ship, as a general proposition, is limited to the amount of fuel oil she is supposed to use -- within its

quota of the appropriation from the Congress. While the search entailed a slightly faster use of fuel oil than they would use on ordinary cruising, it is not any faster use of it than they would use on the annual maneuvers where the Lexington has to proceed at full speed, where a whole battleship squadron has to move at 19 or 20 or 21 knots in regular maneuvers. So the cost to the Government is absolutely no greater on the use of fuel oil than it would have been had they not made any search.

There are two other points, of course. A mission of this particular kind is a sad mission to have to go on, especially when it results in not finding Miss Earhart. But, at the same time, it is pretty valuable experience and training for the Navy. The Lexington did a perfectly amazing job in getting away, the way she did from Los Angeles. It was quite a feat. It was practice, very excellent practice, and it was a good thing. She took all of her planes on board and took on all of her officers and men and got under way in sixteen hours from the time the order was given. It was a good job.

The only other point to make is that the Navy would do this in the case of any American, rich or poor, where there was some chance of saving life and they knew where

to go. In this instance we all thought we knew where to go. We would have done it for the poorest citizen.

So much for that and the U.P. dispatch.

Q In connection with that phase of the situation, I think Assistant Secretary of Commerce Monroe Johnson has said that there would be no more stunt-flying permits granted. It is not necessarily on account of the Earhart disappearance. Do you believe that is a good policy? Will that policy meet with your approval?

THE PRESIDENT: What he told me -- it was not spot news quite of that kind. It takes a little explaining and that was that we are supposed -- the Department of Commerce is supposed to keep on the ground any plane that does not seem entirely fitted, both in mechanism and its personnel, for a flight. That is all there is to it.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference yesterday with James J. Walker?

THE PRESIDENT: He told you about it. We talked about the old matter of a bridge which started back in 1890 and it has not been built yet. They are still talking about it.

Q Did you talk about old times, Mr. President? (Laughter)

Q Are you contemplating making any radio speeches in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you giving any consideration to applying the Neutrality Act between Japan and China?

THE PRESIDENT: Why should I?

Q The question arises whether they are fighting and it is up to you to determine.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think there is any question arisen yet.

Q In connection with the legislation you class as being "desirable", the fact that some of it might be put over until possibly the next Session of Congress would not lessen its desirability, would it?

THE PRESIDENT: You are getting into the "iffy" realm.

Q I meant should there be a postponement.

THE PRESIDENT: It is still "iffy".

Q Is there anything we have not asked you that you could suggest? (Laughter)

Q We would like to get a little pay-dirt here today.

THE PRESIDENT: Let's see. I said to Steve at 3 o'clock, "Have we got anything on our chests?" And he said, "No".

Q He was kidding you.

THE PRESIDENT: I almost said, "Have we anything on our minds?" He might have said, "No", the same way.

Q May we say, "Thank you, Mr. President." (Laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #383

Executive Offices of the White House

July 23, 1937 - 10.40 A.M.

(Former Senator Simmons of North Carolina attended this Press Conference, being seated behind the President.)

MR. YOUNG: Good morning. What did you think of that Jefferson picture yesterday by old Kosciusko?

THE PRESIDENT: Very interesting. I had been trying to find out what it was.

Q It looked very much like a hand-colored print.

THE PRESIDENT: There was an engraving done by a Frenchman about the same time.

Q This one had him with red hair and a wig.

THE PRESIDENT: He may have dyed it.

Q Did you ever see one with a white wig on?

THE PRESIDENT: Sometimes, when they had a lot of hair, they dyed it.

Q Was it a good portrait?

THE PRESIDENT: Very good.

Q Did it look as though it was by somebody who had seen him?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Kosciusko was an artist in his younger days.

Q Did you read where he eloped with one of his pupils?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q We had a tough time with his name. One book said his name was spelled with a "z", and one book said his name was spelled without a "z".

THE PRESIDENT: With a "z", I think.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Some of you older people will be very glad to welcome an old Washington friend of ours, Senator Simmons of North Carolina. He has not been down here for a long time. (Applause)

Outside of that I don't think there is any particular news. I am going down the river at ten o'clock tonight. Senator Barkley is going with me and I think Bob LaFollette and his wife.

Q Do you plan any further campaign with regard to the Supreme Court?

THE PRESIDENT: Further campaign?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't made any campaign; I sent a message to the Congress.

Q Do you have any further efforts in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: They are still working up there.

Q Can you give us a comment on the situation, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know that any comment is necessary.

I think it goes back, just for background, to fundamentals and objectives just the same way we talked about right along. There were, as you know, certain original objectives.

Well, go back to the days when Senator Simmons was here, in his early days, even.

There was a lot of feeling back in T.R.'s time about the need for judicial reform and it took the form, in the 1912 campaign, of the Progressive Party asking for all kinds of things like recall of judges and overriding of decisions by popular vote. Well, the interesting thing was that for about fifteen or twenty years that demand on the part of a very large group of Americans had an enormous effect on the courts, as you all know. Even as late as 1924, the elder Senator LaFollette and Senator Wheeler, on the LaFollette-Wheeler ticket, ran on a platform that demanded all kinds of drastic things. And, during those years when there was agitation for judicial reform, there were some pretty effective results. The courts listened and they legislated

-- (laughter) I mean they decided -- (laughter) it is the same thing, they made their decisions more on judicial lines than on legislative lines and of course later on, when the cry had died during the Coolidge administration and the Hoover administration, there was a great deal more in the way of legislative action on the part of the courts. Of course, the people of the country have always realized that courts should be judicial and not legislative.

The same thing had to be done again this year. The result was a message for the improvement of the whole judicial system and it is rather interesting that a large, a good part of that objective has already been obtained, temporarily. I say, "temporarily", but I hope permanently. I was getting a rather interesting check on what has happened, a comparison between what has happened and this past term of the Supreme Court. Before the 5th of February, the Supreme Court held the Triple A unconstitutional, limiting the Federal spending power. After the 5th of February, through the Social Security case, they, in effect, overruled the Triple A case. It was a new interpretation of Federal spending and taxing power.

Before the 5th of February they held the Guffey Act unconstitutional, limiting the Federal commerce power, and after the 5th of February they held the Wagner Act constitutional, reversing the Guffey case. It was a new interpretation of the Federal commerce power.

Before the 5th of February they held the New York Minimum Wage Law unconstitutional, limiting the states through the Due Process clause. They reversed that in the Washington Minimum Wage case, overruling the New York Minimum Wage case, which was a new interpretation of the Due Process clause applied to the states.

The net result is that we have obtained certain objectives, talking in the large.

The country still wants assurance -- I put it this way -- assurance of the continuity of that objective, and the country, of course, wants a better judicial mechanism by giving maximum justice in minimum time.

On that, of course, bringing it down to the current situation, there is nothing more that I can say except that the general purpose back of the Barkley letter last week -- put it this way -- naturally, it is the duty of the President to propose and it is the

privilege of the Congress to dispose.

There has been another very great gain, and that is that the country as much as and probably more than in the 1910 to '12 era, is not only Court-conscious, but it is Constitution-minded, which is a tremendous factor, and understands pretty thoroughly today, the great majority, that the Constitution is not intended to block social and economic reforms through Court legislation, if those social and economic reforms are necessary to the Nation for its general welfare with changing times.

So, that is the current situation -- again looking at the forest and not the trees.

Q Are you satisfied with it, sir, as far as it has gone?

THE PRESIDENT: With the progress so far?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are getting somewhere, but we have a long ways to go because the country, I think, really pretty well understands what it is all about.

Q How much of that is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: You can use it all for background.

Q On a local matter, Congress has passed that bill repealing the so-called "Marriage Clause". Are you familiar with it?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to sign it today.

Q Today?

THE PRESIDENT: I understand it is on its way.

Q On the Supreme Court question, do you intend to send the nomination of Justice Van Devanter's successor to the Senate shortly?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Have you, sir, had any satisfactory conversations with Congressional leaders as to what further legislation might be desirable?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Fred (Essary), I think the only thing one can say about that is that if you go through the messages you will find that there are quite a number of recommendations that have been made. Again, that is up to the President to suggest and to the Congress to act on, one way or the other. They have three methods of acting on it. One is not acting at all, which is an Irish way of putting it; another is to reject it, and another to put it through.

There are quite a number of those things which, again for background, are rather essential to the future of the country. There is a certain element which need not be named, you know them, I might say, better

than I do, who say, "Let us go home and do nothing."

I had a very prominent publisher come in the other day, and he said, "What do you want anything new for? Why, everybody is so prosperous, they don't know what to do. The crops are big and the prices for crops are fine and there is more employment, re-employment, all the time in industry than ever before."

And I said to him, "You are an old man, like me. You remember as far back as the Coolidge administration. You remember the attitude in those years of 1927 and 1928 and 1929, the first three-quarters of 1929: 'Everything is lovely, boys; don't rock the boat. Everything is fine. Everybody is making money. Look at the Stock Exchange. Everything is grand. The first thing you know we will have one chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage, if we just let everything alone.'"

Well, of course, there are a lot of things, but I will just cite one simple example. Suppose, for the sake of argument, we do not do anything about cotton crops. Well, this year Nature has been good to us and we are raising, I don't know what, fourteen and a half million bales of cotton -- something like that. Now,

we have the cotton carry-over cut down to a pretty reasonable point so that it is not hanging over the market, it is not depressing prices. Well, if this fourteen and a half million bale crop materializes -- they still have to pick most of it, all of it in fact -- we probably can not possibly use for export all of that crop. It means we will add a lot to the surplus. Suppose Nature is good again next year, and, by the way, they put cotton into the ground in Southern Georgia and Northern Florida around the end of February and beginning of March. Suppose they raise another fourteen and a half million bales next year and the Government does not do anything about it? It is always possible we might see 8¢ cotton again or 7¢ cotton or 6¢ cotton. Now, that is very hard to answer, and this particular publisher found it hard to answer. He finally said, "Well, let Nature take its course." I said, "Yes, you see what happened in 1929 when Nature was allowed to take its course."

I just cited that as an example. You can go on with that in relation to all the other crops, to wages and hours, reorganization of Government, housing, all those things.

There is the situation. It is in the lap of the

Legislative Branch of the Government. It is tied up with what the future of the country is going to be, whether it is going to be uncontrolled with the possibility of 1929 over again, or reasonable legislation that will seek to prevent a crash.

Q Mr. President, with Congress figuring on getting away in the middle of August, is it too early for you to say whether you have any plans for yourself?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got a plan -- not a plan.

Q Do you feel you could safely wait until the next session for this legislation to which you have been referring?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a question we haven't come to yet; it is a bridge we haven't crossed.

Q Mr. President, why do you pick on ten o'clock tonight as the time you are going to leave? Is something keeping you in town?

THE PRESIDENT: I just want to get my basket clean before I go.

Q Do you think it is desirable that Congress adjourn at an early date?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say that was entirely within the discretion of the Congress.

Q There are some reports of a special session should they adjourn early.

THE PRESIDENT: I just answered that, in effect; we cannot cross bridges until we come to them.

Q Mr. President, have you gotten from the Board of Army Engineers their recommendations on the flood control projects to be undertaken this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. You mean on the general thing?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I understood yesterday, on the New England States Compact that they have consulted with the Federal Power Commission and are making a report on the Compact.

Q You are returning Sunday night or Monday morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I am returning Sunday, late afternoon. It is all dependent, my going away, on whether the foreign situation breaks loose again. It is quiet for the moment. I will not go if it gets worse.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President. (Mr. Young whispered to the President, "I was going to ask you what kind of a shirt the publisher wore.")

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #384

Executive Offices of the White House

July 27, 1937 - 4:05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Dean, I haven't seen you for a long time. How are you and how is your behavior?

MR. YOUNG: Wonderful, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you know that you are taking a chair away from a lady?

Q He did not know that. They were afraid to put anybody else in his seat.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you notice that he did not get up and let you have it? Seven people can see as long as he sits down.

Q What is that? (Referring to print which the President was examining)

THE PRESIDENT: A fellow sent them to me. They are terribly crude but they are two original old prints showing the Hudson Highlands. They are more than a hundred and ten years old. They are water colors.

Q Is that a steel engraving?

THE PRESIDENT: It is some kind of a wash drawing. It must have been pretty early because the speedboat is of the 1815 period.

Q Even the Narrows would be wider than that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you think you can get away this week-end, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Charlie Michelson whispered in my ear that there isn't any other news today and here is a chance for a good story but he did not give me enough notice.

Q Mr. President, do you share the views of the Federal Power Commission with respect to the Connecticut Valley flood control?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a terribly mixed up thing. I cannot tell you offhand.

Q The Commission made a report to the Senate Committee today which was unfavorable, but the Committee disregarded it and reported the bill out favorably.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; it is a very technical matter. I cannot comment on it intelligently now.

Q Still on power, can you tell us more about your meeting with the Rankin group today?

THE PRESIDENT: That again was a technical matter. It is a question of this proposed contract between T.V.A. and the Arkansas Power and Light. It is so technical you will have to get it from somebody else. It is a question that probably eventually will have

to go to the Attorney General.

Q Mr. President, have you withdrawn your opposition to the Millard Tydings Retail Price Maintenance Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it since I wrote some letters a long time ago.

Q Have you satisfied yourself, Sir, that you must make a Supreme Court appointment while Congress is still sitting?

THE PRESIDENT: I asked the Attorney General for an opinion and I haven't had it as yet.

Q It has not come in yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you know the history of that; have you looked at the history?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think, Fred (Essary), that other Presidential appointments can and have always been filled at a recess even where the vacancies existed during the session of the Senate. That is the general rule that has always applied in the past and I don't think it has ever been questioned. I am not talking about the Supreme Court, I am talking about other appointments. They take the oath of office and serve legally and then their names are sent to the Senate the next session and if they are turned down by the Senate, obviously they are out originally, but as an

act of grace, the Congress has been in the habit of giving them their back salary. I think that has been the usual rule.

Q I was thinking in terms only of vacancies that occurred while Congress was sitting. Of course such a vacancy --

THE PRESIDENT: It has been done time and again with respect to other vacancies. I don't know about the Supreme Court.

Q How would that affect the legality of opinions in case --

THE PRESIDENT: Just the same way it would affect the administrative acts of an administrative official - entirely legal.

Q Though they were not -- (interrupted)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q Do you think the Wagner Housing Bill is in satisfactory shape in the form the Senate Committee reported it out?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I cannot keep track of all the changes that occur in the various bills.

Q Has the successor to Justice VanDevanter been chosen yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no change from the last meeting. We will have a sign made, it is all right.

Q Do you hope to make the appointment before Congress adjourns?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't given it any thought.

Q Have you received any report from the Departments yet on any savings in relation to your recent economy communication?

THE PRESIDENT: They are coming along very well.

Q Mr. President, as to your decision on the War Department building and the Jefferson Memorial, is that an indication that you are going to go ahead down the line of public buildings?

THE PRESIDENT: What ones are there?

Q Social Security building, Sir.

THE PRESIDENT: We did not mention the Social Securities building the other day.

Q We have a Jefferson Memorial at St. Louis. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: We only mentioned the War Department here and Cliff Woodrum was very anxious to put that off until next year. I explained to him that of all the Departments, the War Department was the most diffused around Washington - 19 buildings - and, when we come to housing some more of our people who are in rented quarters, we all felt the War Department ought to be taken care of because they are all split up all over

the place. We did not mention anything else.

Q Any possibility you will make that Pacific trip to the Philippines this year?

THE PRESIDENT: No; there never has been. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you acted yet on the War Department recommendation for flood control projects this year?

THE PRESIDENT: Have I?

Q Yes, Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I don't think so, but I don't know.

Q Would Steve know, if I asked Steve?

THE PRESIDENT: Steve shook his head, that is one reason why I said I did not know. (Laughter)

I was talking with Steve and he asked me and thought it would be helpful, as a result of last Friday's press conference, if I would make one thing a little more clear in regard to background news, so I think this can be made clear so there will not be any question again:

Background news is for your use and you may attribute it to me, provided it is written in the third person. That will make it much easier for you to write most of your stories.

Remember too, of course, direct quotes may

only be used when special permission is given or when the statement is released in written form.

Then, in order not to confuse this word "background" that we have used on a number of occasions, I think we could put in for very occasional use the category of "information, not for attribution." You know, every once in a while, pretty rarely, I do tell you things which you can use as long as you do not have it appear that it came out of the White House. That will be very, very rare, only a couple of times a year, if there is anything of that kind. We will not call it background, we will call it "information, not for attribution."

And then, of course the "off the record" stuff is confidential. You do not have much of that.

Is that alright?

Q That is fine.

Q In connection with your proposed trip down to Mant^o, can you tell us whether you intend to make any stop in Norfolk?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I will have any time. It comes in the middle of the week. I think I will probably motor back to the Norfolk Navy Yard -- that is, the Portsmouth Navy Yard. I think I will motor back from Mant^o to the Portsmouth Navy Yard and go

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aboard the Potomac and be back here the next morning.

Q Going down, you do not know whether you will go to Norfolk or not?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will probably go down by train so as to save time.

Q Some of the trains go through Norfolk.

THE PRESIDENT: It will be in the middle of the night.

Q Oh, it will be in the middle of the night; I am sorry.

Q Mr. President, have you any comments on the criticisms voiced by Senator Nye and, I think, by General Johnson in regard to the alleged partiality of the Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Only for -- what did I call it? -- background. There was another story, I don't know who wrote it. The situation must be, on the whole, a pretty fair one because some of the labor people are saying we are leaning over backwards "agin" them and Hugh Johnson says we are leaning over backwards towards them. So that means the position we are taking is pretty fair.

Q Would you care to discuss your opinion of an amendment to the Wagner Act making unions and employers mutually responsible for signed contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is too difficult a subject.

I will tell you what would clarify things if you could read British acts in regard to that. Their unions, you know, are not incorporated and yet they are pretty responsible. They have a pretty good system.

Q They have penalties.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we could copy their system in toto or anything like that but there is a fair degree of mutual responsibility. Of course, if you look back into the records for the past ten years you will find that there have been a great many violations of agreements on both sides. That is a factor which a certain type of newspaper publisher does not like to have in his paper or in his editorial, but there have been a great many violations of agreements by employers in the past ten years, speaking as a general, simple fact. It is not, by any means, lopsided.

Q This is in England, Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, here.

Q Do you think the Wagner Act could be clarified in that respect to make it stronger?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I would not care to comment because I have not studied the details.

Q Didn't you get a report from some branch of the Government in respect to the responsibility of labor?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so; who from?

Q I don't know.

Q Have you discussed the possibility of holding off the recess of Congress so that the Farm Bill might pass?

THE PRESIDENT: That is up to the Congress.

Q I am not exactly clear on the War Department matter. Do you expect to authorize the beginning of the War Department building under this Third Deficiency Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No; Cliff Woodrum wants to defer that until next year's bill.

Q And these others?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I only talked about the War Department building.

Q He mentioned the Jefferson Memorial.

THE PRESIDENT: I told him what was perfectly true, that if he could save a violation of the budget figures by eliminating the War Department this year and thereby eliminating a lot of other projects outside of Washington -- we were talking about the ones outside of Washington -- it is alright. I want to try to keep the budget balanced.

Q Referring back to the Labor Board matter. There was a story this morning that you had asked the Board to

give you a report on its work. Is there anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I haven't even read it.

Q Can you tell us if your conversation this afternoon with the two Navy Admirals had any bearing on the survey you are having made regarding the Navy's capacity to build ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Never mentioned it.

Q Can you tell us what you did mention?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, we talked about the creation of four adequate Naval Reserves, both of officers and men, on the general theory that we discovered in the World War. We went into the World War without any reserves at all to speak of and we had to take into the Navy during the World War three hundred and fifty thousand additional officers and men and we had to train them in the middle of the War.

Therefore, we are working on a plan to have a larger Naval Reserve, both of officers and men. We are working on the general theory that there are a great many boys of high school and college age who would like to get some training during the summer-time, active training at Naval Stations and aboard ships, without pay, free board, free lodging and free clothes. So, in case of war, they would fit in

logically -- (Interruption)

Q Similar to the Army Camps?

THE PRESIDENT: -- in a definite place.

Q Similar to Army Camps?

THE PRESIDENT! Rather a different system.

Q Did you have in mind the number of reserves?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not tell you.

Q Was it less than three hundred and fifty thousand?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my yes. Well under a hundred thousand.

Q How do you figure on this plan?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a question of getting started in a small way and if it works, build it up. Practically the only cost to the Government would be board, lodgings and dungarees and possibly paying their way to the training station or ship from their homes.

Q I was on that Civilian Naval Training Cruise in 1916.

THE PRESIDENT: You were on that famous one? I was on that too.

Q Would it be anything like that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, the idea -- (Laughter) did you like it?

Q We did not have very much to do.

THE PRESIDENT: That is just it; that is just it. It was

a nice, yachting cruise.

Q But, in outline, it was similar to this.

THE PRESIDENT: No. The idea is that there are an awful lot of boys in this country who are sixteen, seventeen, eighteen years old. We would give them a chance during their summer holidays, during their holidays while in school, give them a chance, without any actual expense, to go to one of the Naval Training Schools -- on the West Coast, like the California one or the Great Lakes or the two or three on this coast.

Q Don't forget Newport.

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of the three on the coast that I mentioned. We would give them a month in the training station to teach the rudiments, teach them how to keep clean. Of course, that is the first essential. It takes about a month to teach them how to keep clean.

Q Can you do that -- (Interruption)

THE PRESIDENT: And teach them a certain amount of seamanship -- (Laughter)

Q They thought I was going to say, "Can you teach them how to keep clean?" I was saying, can you do it without an act of Congress? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You see, the cost would not be very great.

We would buy their railroad ticket from their homes to the training station and back to their homes. If they liked the work, they would fit in for a further cruise the second year where they would specialize, going in for small boat engines or large boat engines or deck duty or ordnance duty or signal duty and then they would get a rating so that the event of war they would have a chance to go right straight into the Navy with a definite position.

Q Did you go beyond personnel?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you discuss increases in the Fleet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Getting back to this training, does that take into consideration any increase in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q This would be for men rather than officers.

THE PRESIDENT: Officers is a different thing. We were talking about officers. There are a great many youngsters, college age, who are going through the Officers Training Corps, which means four courses and then a cruise and then they get a commission as Ensign. We were talking about

those boys who do not want to drop out in college - we would give them two summers of six weeks each, which is the equivalent, because it would give them a total of three months intensive training in navigation and so forth.

Q Can you figure now the scope in which you want to put this out, how much it is going to cost?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Heavens, we haven't even considered that yet. It will cost a great deal less than the bills which have been introduced in Congress because they are all based on the theory of paying boys to go into the Reserve. This is based on the idea of giving them free board, lodging and dungarees and their tickets from and back to their homes, without pay.

Q Can't you do that with just an item in the Appropriation Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I [can] think we can do it merely with an appropriation.

Q Will the success of the trans-Polar flights hasten the creation of Navy air bases or Army air bases under the Wilcox Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to consult the Ouija Board, I don't know. (Laughter)

Q This plan to increase the Naval Reserve looks like

another in a series of steps towards preparedness.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q No such thing?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a bit. It goes back to an old effort of mine after the War in 1919. The Army had not been prepared before the War with any reserves, outside of the militia. Neither had the Navy. I was very anxious to prevent that from happening again. The Army went ahead in grand shape and started their regular trained Officer Reserve. The Navy has done practically nothing about it during these eighteen years and it is time to get some kind of Naval Reserve started.

Q Will both of these lead to commissions?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course those boys who have college education or its equivalent are obviously officer material. That is one class. The other, that goes to the training station, will be mostly of the high school class. Of course, later on, after they have gone through the training station course, then they can go on up the line through the different ratings to Chief Petty Officer and then take the examination for Ensign.

MR. YOUNG; Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #385
Executive Offices of the White House
July 30, 1937 - 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: How is the Ouija board?

Q I wrote an awful piece about that; did you see it?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your week-end visit with Governor Frank Murphy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I haven't seen him for a long time.

There isn't any news on it.

Q Are you going to discuss labor?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it; just a social week-end.

Q Have you decided on your cruise for the week-end?

THE PRESIDENT: Not definitely; I am going aboard tonight and staying pretty close to Washington on account of the Far Eastern situation, ready to get back in two or three hours at any time. I will get back-probably Sunday noon anyway.

Q Where is the boat, here at the Navy Yard or at Annapolis?

THE PRESIDENT: Here.

Q Why is it necessary to be so close to home on that situation? Of course, I know what it is, but --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it is a very disturbing situation with two great nations getting into trouble.

Q I know that. But the fact that you have to keep your foot at first base interests me. I wonder if there is anything to it.

THE PRESIDENT: It is pretty vital.

Q The Millard Tydings bill is through the Conference Committee. I understand there was another development on it downtown yesterday but it has not been uncovered as yet.

THE PRESIDENT: When, today? I had not heard it.

Q Yes, sir.

Q Has the Department of Justice advised you, sir, regarding the recess appointment of the Supreme Court Judge?

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Essary), I think it came in late last night, but I am not dead sure. Anyway, I have not read it yet. I have a recollection of seeing it late last night.

Q If you read it in the course of the day, would you mind letting us have the substance of it this evening? It would be interesting.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have to read it first. I am not going to buy a pig in a poke. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you taken action on the War Department recommendations for flood control projects?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Frankly, I do not know what the status is. Have I got them?

Q I understand you have, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have. Have you seen it?
(Turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: I don't remember.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got them. Will you check on it and let me know, or let Steve know. I don't think I have got them. (Laughter)

Q Will you make me one of your anonymous assistants?
(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Did you say "anomalous"? (Laughter)

Q Would you care to comment on the report published in one of the newspapers this morning that the United States had joined with other nations in asking for a five-day armistice on the Japanese-Chinese situation? I have already asked the State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the State Department again.

Q Have you heard any comment from William Green and from the Federation of Labor on the Wages and Hours Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Only his statement of last night. I think that they are not satisfied, as he said, with the Bill as it was yesterday afternoon, but they hoped that it would be improved in the House and they hoped it would go through. I think that is substantially what he said.

Q Do you have an appointment with Mr. Green today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, he is coming in today at 11 o'clock.

Q Is it on that subject?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so; I think it is on something else.

Q Will you comment on the visit of the Italian Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: He is just going away. Came in to say "good-bye", and will be back about the 15th of September.

Q Mr. President, are you planning a trip to Hyde Park next week?

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe. It is just one of those things; maybe.

Q Short trip, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; two or three days.

Q Do you expect Congress to adjourn --

THE PRESIDENT: But I do not know whether I will go or not. It depends a good deal on what they do up on the Hill, whether they decide to go on through or go home.

Q Do you expect them to adjourn?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference with Congressional leaders on the general legislative program?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what they told you.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish there was some news, but there isn't. It is a very dull day.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #386

Executive Offices of the White House

August 3, 1937, 4:05 P.M.

(Before all of the members of the Press attending the conference got into the office there was a little informal discussion around the President's desk about fishing. The President told about some small pan fish, what appeared to him to be small black bass, which he had caught and which had made delicious eating.)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: We were talking about the relative merit of different kinds of fish. I think that is about all the news I have.

Q Do you care to comment on Senator Borah's contention that no vacancy exists on the Court?

THE PRESIDENT: Only off the record, now that you know what that means. I read in in the yellow slips (United Press Reports) that Steve (Early) brought into me and I said to myself, "When I get back home tonight I am going to get out my copy of 'Alice in Wonderland', "because the colloquy between Brother Ashurst and Brother Borah reminded me of nothing so much as 'Alice in Wonderland'."

Q Off the record also, as far as your off the record or on the record or whatever it is -- (Laughter) according to your opinions from the Attorney General, do you believe that you may make an appointment to the Supreme Court to succeed Justice VanDevanter?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, undoubtedly; absolutely.

Q Is that on the record or off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: That is on the record.

Q Would you care to indicate, Sir, about when that appointment may come?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will tell you. When it comes you are not going to have any notice of it at all. The first that will be known probably is when it actually goes up to the Senate.

Q When it goes up to the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, when it goes up to the Senate, you will know. (Laughter) Don't go off the deep end on that, either. There are lots of things. That is probably the first you will know about it.

Q Is that remark deliberate, that part about when it goes to the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you can use that. 7

Q In all seriousness, does that mean there will be no recess appointment in this case?

THE PRESIDENT: It is just as I told you. I cannot write your story for you, Fred (Essary). (Laughter)

Q Will you discuss your Supreme Court reorganization program in your Constitution Day speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Constitution Day Reception?

Q September 17; Sol Bloom's party.

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is that I have forgotten that I was making a speech on Constitution Day until you reminded me of it.

Q Now that you do know of it, will you -- (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What do you want, just a snap judgment on something I had not thought about at all? No, I cannot give it to you. I have not thought about it at all.

Q At the last conference you were contemplating a trip up to Hyde Park this coming week. Is that more definite?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing is definite in this life. If everything is all quiet on the Far Eastern Front and on Capitol Hill, I am leaving on Friday, midnight, and getting there Saturday morning and probably coming back Sunday night and getting here Monday morning. But even

that is in the lap of the Gods.

Q Mr. President, there is quite a bit of agitation in the South for the Commodity Credit Corporation to make a twelve cent loan to check the decline in prices of cotton. Have you any comment to make on that?

THE PRESIDENT: If you want me to talk about cotton, for background, I can tell you what I have said before on so many occasions.

We inherited, in spite of - what was it called - the Farm Board in the Hoover Administration, we inherited in 1933, five cent cotton and a thirteen million bale carry-over. Then we adopted a policy in 1933. The first was to curtail crops until we got that carry-over down to a reasonable amount which we figured out, as long ago as that, to be around five million bales. Also, as a part of that policy, we started in to buy cotton to increase the price and maintain the price.

Obviously to go ahead and buy -- in other words, to loan money on cotton, which is the same thing -- if you do that without curtailment of surpluses you will bust the Treasury and the longer you keep it up the worse the Treasury goes broke. That is obvious.

The two things went hand in hand. We loaned money to take cotton off the market immediately but with the definite idea of the curtailment in crops. In that way you would be able to sell that surplus when the total of the carry-over was reduced to a normal point. The thing culminated this year. The past Spring we got the total carry-over down to about five million bales and the price was up over twelve cents. Everything hunky dory, lovely and everybody happy. And the price would have stayed around twelve cents if we had had a continuation of surplus control. That however was eliminated -- we know how and when. There has been no surplus control since then. Q.E.D.

This year you have one of the biggest crops that ever happened, fourteen and a half million bales of which about, in all probability, about four million bales will go into surplus on the basis of the present consumption and export. The result is that we face about a year from now, about the end of this year, about a nine million bale carry-over. Now, I have no intention of asking Congress for the right to lend money on that crop unless at the same time we have legislation

restoring surplus control, otherwise you are just selling into a bag or buying out of a bottomless sack, which is a better description.

Q It was brought out on the Senate Floor that you have thought in mind that the Commodity Credit Corporation would make these loans now without any additional legislation from the Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot make loans until we have some solution in the future of the surplus problem.

Q With equivalent figures, can that same thing be applied to other crops?

THE PRESIDENT: It applies absolutely the same way, with different figures of course, to wheat, corn, hogs and a number of other major crops where we used surplus control in the past. When we get it back, as we are bound to, without any question we will be able to resume our efforts to get a decent price with reference to cotton and a reasonable assurance that price will be maintained year in and year out.

Q Does that indicate that your Soil Conservation Program is not working out?

THE PRESIDENT: On the contrary, the Soil Conservation end

of it is working out very well, but, as you know, the
-Soil Conservation does not go into control over surplus.

Q I thought it did.

THE PRESIDENT: To a very small degree.

Q Mr. President, there has been a very comprehensive sea
safety measure which has been before the Congress since
March. Have you given it any thought?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about the details. What
is it?

Q Safety at sea. It has to do with the construction and
the whole business -- fire protection and fire control.
It is the bill which grew out of the study made by
a technical committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I don't know enough about it to
speak intelligently. I think that on this new con-
struction the Maritime Commission is working along plans
that have been outlined for fire prevention on ships.
I could not tell you anything more because I do not know.

Q Getting back to agriculture. In addition to this cotton
pressure, there is also considerable agitation beginning
to come up from the corn country with corn dropping to
almost half. Does this indicate that you are going to

ask Congress to pass a control bill this Session?

THE PRESIDENT: I just told you that crop control is inevitable unless we are going to wreck the economics of the country because everytime that cotton goes down to under ten cents or wheat below eighty cents, the purchasing power of one half the country dries up and the wheels of the factories slow up. It is the same old story. There is nothing new in it. We started in the Spring of 1933 with a perfectly good economic program and it is going to go through. The country is going to demand it.

Q What we would like to know is whether you are going to ask Congress to pass that bill this Session?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you any spot. I am talking general principles. I cannot give you dates and messages.

Q Can you tell us if you approve Mr. Green's amendment for the Wages and Hour Bill today?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not read Mr. Green's amendment. I think he made it clear when he went out that he told me about three matters of principle. Now, three matters of principle, that is a very different thing. I don't know what the amendments are. I am in favor of retaining

collective bargaining. I am in favor of retaining the provisions of the Walsh-Healey Act and I am in favor of doing nothing to fix wages lower than the going rate in the vicinity. Now, those are matters of principle.

Q Mr. President, have you asked or do you contemplate asking the various government lending agencies to increase the liquidation of their assets in accordance with your reduced budget message of last April?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing other than what we have been doing right along. It is coming along very well. You know, it does not rest entirely in their own hands. For instance, if we have loaned money to a bank and it is due on a certain date and the bank does not want to pay it back until that date, they have a perfect right not to pay it back until that date.

Q Mr. President is there any chance that you will be going to the Philippines this year?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q There was a bill introduced by Senator Pittman prohibiting the picketing of government buildings and the buildings of foreign embassies in the District. It was represented as being an administration bill. Can you tell us --

THE PRESIDENT: I have not read it. All I know is what I read in the papers.

Q Mr. President, have you signed the National Cancer Institute Bill yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I am waiting for two of the gentlemen on the Hill to come down and watch me sign it.

Q Mr. President, have you signed the Interior Bill yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I am studying it.

Q I understand that Wayne Coy is here from Manila. He is secretary of the High Commissioner. Can you comment with relation to his report, if any?

THE PRESIDENT: He just came in to say, "how do you do." No report.

Q Do you care to comment on your letter in regard to dollar stabilization?

THE PRESIDENT: In regard to what?

Q Dollar stabilization.

MR. EARLY: That is your letter of May 20th which was released today. It is in the Record.

THE PRESIDENT: It is so long ago I would have to see it again. I don't remember what I said.

Q There was no date in the release.

MR. EARLY: May 20th, I think is the date.

Q The House has approved the Tydings-Miller rider.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes?

Q Any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will you sign it?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not come to my desk.

Q You said that you are studying the Interior Department Bills. Does that mean there's a possibility that you may veto it?

THE PRESIDENT: I am only studying it.

Q You mentioned the Far East situation again as a factor in your week-end plan. Is there any background you can give us?

MR. TROHAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There has been no particular change in the last four or five days. Still a pending question, very much so.

What did you say, Russell?

MR. YOUNG: That was Trohan trying to end the meeting.

(Laughter) Thank you, sir.