

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #387  
Executive Offices of the White House

August 6, 1937, 10.40 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: My, Russ, you are handsome this morning.

MR. YOUNG: The same to you, Sir. We did not get any chiggers, either. (Referring to inspection trip of hospital sites.)

THE PRESIDENT: No chiggers? You were lucky. Which site do you like best?

MR. YOUNG: Wait until you go down to Fort DuPont. That is best. When are you going over?

THE PRESIDENT: I will drive out next week if I find a spare hour and a half. I thought I could do the whole thing in one morning.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, it takes too much time. Of those two sites, Foxhall Road looked the best of the two, the one nearer the city.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is nearer.

Q That is pretty small.

MR. YOUNG: Sixty-two acres is plenty of room, I think.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. I'm going to leave, unless something happens between now and 11.00 P.M., for Hyde Park and come back Sunday night.

Q Do you care to say anything, Sir, about the District tax bill with the Tydings-Miller rider attached to it?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not arrived.

Q You don't care to predict?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you give us the subject of your talk the other day with two members of the National Bituminous Coal Commission and Mr. West?

THE PRESIDENT: The principal topic was the procedure to cover them in or bring them in under Civil Service regulations like we are doing with the HOLC.

Q Will that require some legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did Mr. Hossford inform you, Sir, that he had tendered his resignation as a member of the Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you received assurances, Mr. President, satisfactory assurances that crop-control legislation will be passed sufficient to justify a resumption of commodity loans?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Not yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you tell us of the visit this morning of the Attorney General?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, just talked over a number of things. Nothing specific.

Q Mr. President, are you in sympathy with this move in the Senate for a Special Session in October?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that up to the Senate?

Q You can be in sympathy with them. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, the flood-control allotments for which the golden triangle at Pittsburgh and other flooded sections are anxiously awaiting are still among the missing. Can you tell us where they are?

THE PRESIDENT: Last night, I think it was about half past five, just before I left, we tried to find the papers. Strictly between ourselves, that is. They may have been found during the night but I haven't got them on my desk. They are around somewhere.

Q Are you sending to the Senate soon the nomination of the successor to Judge Molyneaux of St. Paul?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that, the district out there?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I have quite a number left to fill.

I hope to fill most of them but won't guarantee to fill them all.

Q Have you completed your study of the Interior Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. It is still here.

Q There was a report from London this morning to the effect that a loan of 100 million dollars is being prepared to be loaned to China, and this report said that J. P. Morgan & Company had been given part of the loan or were trying to get themselves in on the loan.

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

Q To return to the District Offices Bill, will you follow the usual custom of sending it out to the different Departments to be read?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; it is somewhere now. I think Danny Bell has it.

Q A large number of Americans are reported to have enlisted for service in China. Is the Government going to permit them to fight in that war? There are over 1,000, I think.

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

Q Are there any reports on the Far Eastern situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read the reports this morning, but at 11.00 P.M. last night there was nothing that had not appeared in the papers.

Q Are you considering calling the Senate into session the day after adjournment to consider the Supreme Court appointment?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no; that is easy.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**Press Conference #388**  
**Hyde Park, New York**

Sunday, August 8, 1937, 12.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. How is the behavior at the Nelson House?

Q We were a little bit late for church, but got there just in time.

THE PRESIDENT: For the last psalm? What more do you want? Did Ernest (Lindley) sing well? He has a lovely voice, you know.

MR. McINTYRE: Starling said that we missed one number.

THE PRESIDENT: One number? (Laughter)

MR. McINTYRE: I meant No. 276 in the Hymn Book.

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THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have even got a lead for you. There isn't a thing. I don't know of anything. I simply haven't got a lead.

Q Are you going to inspect this Post Office site again?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will go down there this afternoon if the rain lets up. I want to see it.

MR. McINTYRE: The architect of the Treasury (Mr. Simon) is up here. I told him that it would be about 3 o'clock or a little after.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, if it does not rain.

Q Are you planning to have anyone else?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you planning to go back tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: I am expecting to call up in five minutes.

I talked last night and things seemed fairly quiet.

I cannot tell you anything about the Japanese-Chinese situation but, off the record, it looks like negotiations are continuing.

MR. McINTYRE: It looks comparatively quiet according to the press dispatches.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, all I have is what has been printed this morning. It is fairly quiet.

MR. McINTYRE: I think, to be perfectly honest, we all hoped you would be a little indiscreet on the great issue this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughing) I slept awfully late. I have only had a chance to glance at the headlines, that is all. I have not even read Arthur Krock this morning.

Q Neither have I.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read Mark Sullivan this morning. I haven't even read the candidate for 1940, Dorothy Thompson, this morning.

Q Do you think you will be able to drop in at the dinner at the Raleigh Tuesday night?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have not heard yet.

Q Any chance that you will stay here until Tuesday night?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is a question of tonight or tomorrow night.

MR. McINTYRE: Do you think you can let me know within an hour or two? It is a question of train movements.

THE PRESIDENT: I will let you know by one o'clock. But I could not write a story myself. Generally I could write a beautiful story.

(Some discussion about the possibility of a swimming party)

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I don't think I will be able to go and look at the Post Office but I will meet you at the swimming pool.

THE PRESIDENT: I will probably be there and if the sun comes out I will go in myself.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: It will be very nice to have all of you who want to swim.

(A little discussion, social)

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't there somebody else I was going to see?

MR. McINTYRE: It is this fellow, Bober (Sam Bober of North Dakota). I think it would be a quite nice thing if you would see him for a minute and then have somebody else show him the farm.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I will.

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MRS. ROOSEVELT: Poor Ackert is very anxious to know about the Home Club meeting. Every time we go down to Hyde Park, he asks me about it.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how we can possibly give them a date.

MR. McINTYRE: You can, right after Congress adjourns.

THE PRESIDENT: Tell him we will give him a date as soon as Congress actually adjourns but cannot do it until then.

Q Are you planning to come up here in September?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. There are fifty things I can do and I haven't got the faintest idea, and I am trying not to think about it until the time actually comes.

Q They are talking about the 21st for adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and they talked about the 14th and also about September.

(Mrs. Roosevelt spoke about a boy who wanted to get into the newspaper business or become a sailor)

THE PRESIDENT: There are no regular hours in either occupation. The only difference is that in the Navy they have 4-hour watches and you have 24-hour watches.

Q We have 24-hour watches and one hour of work.

Q In the Navy you get low pay, but you get supported.

THE PRESIDENT: You are sure of eating.

MR. McINTYRE: We all know that General McCoy and his wife are coming up for dinner. Are there any other guests?

THE PRESIDENT: Just neighbors.

(Social conversation)

MR. McINTYRE: John O'Donnell wanted to know whether the neighbors included any mayoralty candidates.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #389

Hyde Park, New York

August 9, 1937, 2.45 PM

(Mrs. Roosevelt was present for the first part of this conference.)

Q (Mr. Trohan) Thou canst not shake thy gory locks at me and say that I did it.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read your story yet.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I think it is a question of good imagination.

THE PRESIDENT: The trouble is that a good imagination is all right as long as it does not affect me, but when it affects me, a good imagination is a serious thing. Washington today is buzzing because the UP story on the wire -- I hope it did not come out of here but of course it must have come out of here. Steve (Early) ticks up, "United Press says, 'President Roosevelt has put the New Deal behind the candidacy of Jeremiah T. Mahoney, New York City's Democratic nominee for Mayor, today. The action came in a semi-secret political conference between the President and Edward J. Flynn, Party leader of the Bronx.' Newspapers make much of the fact that Flynn's visit was unannounced and that he was discovered to be a Presidential guest, et cetera." The UP statement may be okay, but I

think you should know it. It goes strong -- much beyond the Lindley and other stories published today."

I believe Senator Copeland has come out with some kind of a reply.

Now we will come down to what I read this morning, which was Ernest Lindley's story. I will read it out loud. It is a serious thing. I think there has got to be a showdown, a statement from you fellows who did it, or a statement from me. I read the Post story; that is all right.

I am going to read Lindley and comment on it as I go along:

"Hyde Park, N. Y., Aug. 8 -- Edward J. Flynn, Democratic leader of the Bronx and of the Roosevelt wing of the Democratic organization in New York City, conferred with President Roosevelt here today."

Lie number one, he did not "confer".

" Neither the President nor Mr. Flynn would say anything about their talk."

That is a statement and it is a lie. You never asked me.

"In fact, some effort was made to keep Mr. Flynn's presence here a secret."

The effort was made by bringing him down in my car to a place you were all going to be. That was the effort. That was a lie just as was the UP story. The same holds true, it just is not true, Ernest.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: So far we have had three of them.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Would you like to give me a chance to reply?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me read some more. Let us see if there is anything else in it.

"But as to Mr. Flynn's purpose, there was no occasion for doubt. As in the 1933 Mayoralty campaign, he is again seeking intercession of the national administration in behalf of the Roosevelt section of the Democratic set-up in New York City in a campaign against Mayor F. H. LaGuardia."

If that is based on anything that happened yesterday, it is a lie and, obviously, it does refer to what happened yesterday. There is not one word of truth in it. He (Mr. Flynn) sought no intercession.

Then it goes on about what happened in the past (The President looked over the rest of the article), and of course the headlines follow the lead of the story. Don't blame the headline fellow, they are

merely just as bad as the story. All the rest is about what happened before and about Mr. Flynn and Mr. Farley and Senator Wagner. That is all. But there are the first three sentences.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Well, Mr. President, the word "confer" is certainly open --

THE PRESIDENT: Don't quibble; "the word 'confer' is certainly open". When I told you that people were coming on a social visit I told you the truth and I told you the whole truth. I said that people were coming on a social visit. Ed Flynn's family and his wife and boys are all out West. Ed, who was all alone, came out for a social visit and that is all there was to it. I will tell you off the record, and this has got to be off the record during the entire conference, he was talking about his family and various things. The only thing I said was, "Ed, when in God's name did they decide to make the switch from" -- what is his name?

Q Whalen?

THE PRESIDENT: "Whalen to Mahoney?" "Oh," he said, "that is a long story. They got a headache and Grover got cold feet because the Fair people told him" -- this is off the record so don't use it -- "the Fair people told him

that if he ran in the primaries he would have to resign as head of the Fair and he wanted to stay on the Fair."

That was the beginning and end of any discussion about the Mayoralty campaign. I said, "Ed, will you tell me why Grover got out?" And he said, "He got cold feet; he wanted to keep his Fair job and he found he couldn't." Now, that was not a conference. We did not confer. That was number one.

Now, number two, you go ahead.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Well, what is the next statement there?

THE PRESIDENT: "Confer" is number one. Number two, "Neither the President nor Mr. Flynn would say anything about their talk." Did you ask me? Did anybody ask me?

Q (Mr. Lindley) No, sir; I think you would probably have some ground for criticism there.

THE PRESIDENT: You stated the thing as a fact.

Q (Mr. Lindley) We made an effort to get in touch with Mr. Flynn for some time last night and I conferred with my office before I wrote that story.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't see how you got, "Neither the President," that the President would not say anything about that talk. That is just a plain lie. Now admit it -- do the big thing and admit --

Q (Mr. Lindley) Very well, sir, I will admit it, but I should like to point out --

THE PRESIDENT: "In fact, some effort was made to keep Mr. Flynn's presence here a secret." I took him down and showed him to you.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Mr. President, when we were up before lunch --

THE PRESIDENT: I said, "Several people are coming," and some neighbors did come and Ed Flynn was one of the neighbors.

Q (Mr. Lindley) You must know, sir, that Ed Flynn, from our point of view, is not just whatever he is to you. He is also a political figure.

THE PRESIDENT: But I told you it was not on politics; it was social.

Q (Mr. Lindley) If you had said Mr. Flynn was coming and that it was social --

THE PRESIDENT: Don't quibble again. I told you that a great many people, people who have various kinds of significance, are coming here for a social visit. There were literally dozens of people who were here and who have newspaper significance. But they came here socially and I did not tell you who they were because they were only here socially. Ed Flynn came here on a social visit and only a social visit.

Q You did not tell us he was coming here at all.

THE PRESIDENT: You don't know who the other people were. You don't know now who the other people were, the people who came here last night. But they have no news importance because they came here socially. Now you come back to the same old story. I won't tell you about anybody who is coming here and you can go out and watch the gate if you want to go back to that kind of thing. I have not misled you. You get the news, but I still insist if I want to see God Almighty socially, it is social news and not political news.

MR. McINTYRE: This is all off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: This is all just between us. There isn't any story. But I am going to find out what you are going to do about it.

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) Speaking for the (New York) News, I should have a considerable share of the blame that is thrown on Ernest. I was the one who spoke to Flynn in the car and I talked to him about Jeremiah Mahoney. I was surprised to see him there and I walked over --

THE PRESIDENT: If there was anything secret about it I would not have taken him down and shown him to you.

Q Our source of information is to ask Mr. McIntyre and we do

ask him specifically if anybody is coming down of news importance. He knew only of John Mack.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw several other people of news importance but they all came socially.

MR. McINTYRE: What was it you asked him, John?

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) I said, "How is the Prophet Jeremiah going to make it in Manhattan?" And he said, "Don't you worry; everything is all right for Mahoney."

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how about the UP?

Q(Mr. Harkness) Just for myself, I wrote that story as Steve (Early) relayed it back. I wrote it as I saw it. If I was wrong, I was wrong.

THE PRESIDENT: We have to do something about it. What are we going to do? What do you suggest? Here the UP and the Herald-Tribune are guilty of starting something which happens to be completely untruthful, with all sorts of things popping as a result of it. I don't think it is up to me to write a story, "The President denies." It is the same old game, "The President denies," "The President is accused of beating his wife and the President denies that he is beating his wife." Now, how are you going to handle it? You cannot put the denial up to the President.

Q May I make a suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: Remember, Ernest (Lindley), this has happened before. "It is reported" or "it is assumed". I know your difficulties. You have to turn in so much stuff a day. When you have no news you are still supposed to turn in so much news. I appreciate your difficulties but what the hell can you do when there isn't any news? You know, I can lock the gates. What are we going to do about it in the future? We are going to be here quite a lot from now on.

Q (Mr. Lindley) I am under no compulsion to write news for my paper. As a matter of fact, I tried to pass the whole Flynn piece back to our office in New York. I called up and said that he was up here but I did not talk to him, that I did not see him because he was at the Post Office. I have kept in some touch with New York politics and I have not seen Ed Flynn personally for several months. I have talked to any number of people who have seen him and others and I think I know a little about what he would get from the National Administration through Jim Farley, which is what most of that story is about, and the fact remains that Mr. Flynn is a factor in New York City politics and his visit to you is a matter of extreme news interest.

THE PRESIDENT: Not a social visit, when you were told before that it was a social visit. There is no news interest in it then unless you fabricate news, which is in direct contravention of what I told you.

Q As I recall what was said yesterday, you said that there were neighbors coming.

THE PRESIDENT: Two people here yesterday came from across the Connecticut line. They had to drive further than he did. Somebody else came all the way from Ulster County.

Q I am not criticizing that terminology at all but, nevertheless, I think this whole thing, with all due respect, would have been averted had you told us that Mr. Flynn was coming, because we have a keen interest in his presence here --

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you why, because I saw a great many people socially about whom you would write a story.

MR. McINTYRE: In that particular instance, if I had told you, you would have written your story just the same.

Q Except for the secret part.

Q May I suggest that Mr. Flynn set the scene by saying that it is Mahoney all the way?

THE PRESIDENT: That is no tie-in.

Q Some of us thought so.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what he said out of the car. I haven't the faintest idea. There is no tie-in there.

Q It was the mere physical closeness.

THE PRESIDENT: As a matter of fact, he shifted to his car afterwards and if he wanted to say anything, it was perfectly all right. In view of what I said in the morning --

Q (Mr. Lindley) May I point out that there was nothing in that story that puts you in the position of taking any action at all or any position in the New York City campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't quibble, Ernest. Be generous and say, like the UP, that it was a mistake, the whole thing.

Q (Mr. Harkness) I beg your pardon, I said that I wrote it as I saw it and if I am wrong, I am wrong.

THE PRESIDENT: That was all right. He wrote it as he saw it and he is sorry. "Conferred with the President," that ties it in with me. He conferred with me on something. "The President would not say anything about his talk." That is obviously a tie-in with me. Again, as to his visit here, "An effort was made to keep it secret." That is another tie-in. There must be a reason for keeping it a secret. "There was no occasion for doubting the purpose of the visit" -- that is another tie-in.

Q (Mr. Lindley) I certainly don't like to be taken over the

coals by the President, but I really --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if you have a perfectly clear conscience about it, all right. I will then know how to act in the future. What are we going to do about the stories? I still haven't the answer from you. Merely saying that the President denied it does not go. That is the old adage, unfortunately used too much. I would like to see somebody say, "This assumption was not true. This assumption was not based on any fact and it became perfectly clear today that the visit was a purely social visit, as the President said it would be."

MR. McINTYRE: That would be like committing hara-kiri.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, I would like to see some newspaper editor or some news association admit they are wrong, absolutely. I have never seen it happen except on some very, very few occasions in the past. If it is necessary, I will come out with a statement, but I will have to tell the story.

Q I don't think, sir, that I could agree to make such a statement without contacting my New York office because I am paid to tell the story as I see it.

THE PRESIDENT: I understand. You fellows are placed in such position very often. Every newspaper man is. We can talk

about it in the family and off the record. I can appreciate what you are told to write.

Q (Mr. Harkness) I was not told to write that. I would like to keep the UP clean on that point.

THE PRESIDENT: There are lots of occasions -- we were not born yesterday.

Q (Mr. Trohan) Some of us wish we were.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q (Mr. Trohan) A few of us wish we were born yesterday.

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what are we going to do about the situation? It is broadcast all over Washington at the present time. Copeland is making answers and the Lord knows, I suppose they will begin answering from New York and, so forth and so on.

Q (Mr. Pearl) There is one difficulty in the situation as I see it.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not read your column.

Q (Mr. Pearl) Mine was worse than Mr. Lindley's.

MR. McINTYRE: He went down, too.

Q (Mr. Pearl) This may not have been true yesterday. As you say, it was not true. But, as you know, we are watching things develop around and as they develop I would get to

believe certain things in connection with political situations and, of course, what may not have been true yesterday may have been true the day before or may be true tomorrow. If we say nothing of that sort was done, when we know that certain gentlemen may be running for a political office, or we know or think that certain gentlemen are running who may not be looked on with favor by certain members of the Administration who may reflect your attitude, naturally we will go strong --

THE PRESIDENT: And therefore that makes it legitimate --

Q (Mr. Pearl) I don't say it is legitimate, but if we say, of our own volition, that it was completely not true, our office says, "Everybody knows he is not in favor."

THE PRESIDENT: But then you have to be very dumb or very crooked, one or the other.

Q (Mr. Lindley) Since we are talking in the room, may I say one thing more? I tried to point out that social visits often do have political significance. I recall discussing the New York situation and how Ed Flynn felt and what was going to be done in this campaign in view of the fact that in 1933 Jim Farley had come out, and that sort of thing, and the answer I received was that you had had quite a time keeping Ed Flynn in a happy frame of mind

in 1933 and would have this time --

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know who you might have had an answer from but, anyway, I would say that you are barking up a decidedly wrong tree.

Q (Mr. Lindley) It is a tree I found quite solid.

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) Speaking of what is the next step to be done, what would be the reaction to the average New York City reader who picks up the newspaper and reads this morning that Flynn saw the President at least at lunch and spent a few hours with him and then he reads, tomorrow morning, that it was strictly a social visit and that the question of politics never came up?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it didn't.

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) Admitting it is true and that it did not come up, what is going to be the reaction? Isn't he going to say, "What is this that I am asked to read in view of the fact that Flynn, after all the excitement in Tammany, still goes up there?" What would be the reaction in the mind of the reader?

THE PRESIDENT: What would the reader say if he picked up the newspaper tomorrow morning and reads something like this, that the President unfortunately found it necessary to take some of the writers over the jumps yesterday in

regard to the wholly unfounded stories that went out without any basis of fact from Poughkeepsie, the story, for example, in the New York Herald-Tribune, the stories, for example, in the International and the UP, that they were made out of the whole cloth?

Q (Mr. Durno) International, did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: You are all right; I meant Universal. George, I apologize, you are all right.

Q (Mr. Trohan) We are not saying anything.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, your hands are clean.

MR. McINTYRE: Merely as a suggestion, how would a statement from Ed Flynn tonight serve the purpose?

THE PRESIDENT: There you get denial. You come back to the same old story, denial.

Q As I understand it, this is all off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: This is just a family gathering to discuss ways and means not only with respect to what happened yesterday but with respect to what is going to happen in the future.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I have an interest in the future because I would much rather spend my time in the tap room than at the gate.

THE PRESIDENT: I might have a refrigerator put in the box

out there by the gate.

But there you are; what are we going to do about it? It is not very encouraging; of course we haven't any ideas. How about it, George (Durno)? You are old and wise in your generation.

Q (Mr. Durno) I don't want to be in the position of making any suggestions when you are discussing somebody else's story.

Q (Mr. Trohan) We have to worry about the future, George.

Q (Mr. Durno) It seems obvious you are disturbed and annoyed --

THE PRESIDENT: It is not just a case of being disturbed and annoyed, but you started something on a story that is not true. In other words, there are columns in all the newspapers based on an original, not misleading story, but an utterly false story. That is not good newspaper work. That is not news. If you write a story that I do something and it is made out of the whole cloth, absolutely out of the whole cloth, as this is, and you get a discussion of that story for a week, that is not news. None of it is news. Not only the original, but everything else that follows. It is not news and you are supposed to be writing for the newspapers, with emphasis on the "news" and not the "paper".

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) The original cause of all this was the act

of Mr. Flynn coming up to see you and being with you at this particular time when New York City politics were in the particular situation they are in now. It is the bringing together of time, the individual, and the circumstances.

THE PRESIDENT: I told you beforehand that everybody that was coming was coming purely on a social visit. They all arrived at lunch time. I did not see any of them until we came together in the dining room. After lunch we all went down into the big room. There were about nine or eleven and we sat and talked there until a quarter past two, and then I said, "I am late, I have got to get down to Poughkeepsie." Then I came up and as I came up I said, "Eddie, by the way, if you are driving down why don't you drive down with me?" You know how long it takes to go from here to Poughkeepsie. We talked about his family and then that Whalen thing.

Q But his presence here could be construed as a political as well as a social act.

THE PRESIDENT: I told you he was here socially.

Q I have no recollection, sir, of your saying -- you just said that the neighbors were coming in, but not having mentioned Mr. Flynn's name -- you did not make any reference --

THE PRESIDENT: I also told you that there was not any news then and that there would not be any news. Now I would not have given you a bum steer. I have never given you any bum steers of that kind. I would not have deliberately gone out of my way to say that they were just neighbors coming in socially.

Q (Mr. Lindley) To speak very frankly, sir, you have the political right and everything else, as Chief Executive, to see anybody privately if you wish to do so.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but I have the political right as Chief Executive to ask that the news stories be at least 90% correct. I have a right to protest when they are 100% wrong. So there we are.

Q (Mr. Trohan) Keeping it on a legal basis, I have to put an exception in that for Colonel McCormick.

MR. McINTYRE: Exception noted.

THE PRESIDENT: You are a joy. You never got into that, but I have seen some of your stuff.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I am glad somebody noticed them.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I know an awful lot more things about your lives than you think I do. Why wouldn't I? And it does not take away, in any way, from my affection for the group of you. I know what you are up against. It

is darned tough in many, many ways.

Q (Mr. Harkness) If my story was wrong, it was not wrong because I was up against anything tough. I could have written very easily and probably satisfactorily to the United Press for the morning papers that the President prolonged his stay for the day. That Flynn was down. I did it because I had two New York morning papers, one covered by Lindley and the other by John (O'Donnell). The Flynn story was relatively unimportant out in the country. But, on the other hand, where I do have New York newspapers, the Sun and the Telegram, which have no special correspondents, I thought that was my story to write.

THE PRESIDENT: That was "President Roosevelt has put the New Deal behind the candidacy of Jeremiah T. Mahoney, New York City's Democratic nominee for Mayor, today."

Of course you know another thing, and that is that I have been pretty scrupulous to keep out personally and in every way from this New York City thing. I said "very scrupulous", Ernest (Lindley) to the contrary notwithstanding, because he is of the frame of mind of wanting to do what is called a polite word, "assuming". He "assumes" that because in the 1933 campaign I did not take part in any shape, manner or form, and he "assumes" that

because Ed Flynn is a friend of mine and did this and because Jim Farley, Chairman of the Democratic National Committee did that, that I was behind it, which actually did not happen to be so. It is an assumption that is not based on the facts of the case and in writing stories, of course, it comes very nearly down to the practice of columnists and interpretive writers who assume a great many things that are not based on fact. All you have to do is to read columnists' stories out of Washington. Two-thirds is assumption and when you start to write news stories interpretively, the way Ernest has to and the way John sometimes does, it is a pretty tough proposition not to do it on assumption. That is why the newspapers today -- I know the country and some of you do too -- that is why the newspapers are losing the influence they had ten years ago and they are doing it largely because of interpretive stories that do not hold water. Some day somebody is going to run a straight newspaper and people are going to eat it up because it is straight news without interpretation. That is not your fault. It is the fault of the owners and managers of the papers. It is not your fault at all. It is just a phase that journalism is going through and unfortunately during that phase

it is beginning to lose its effectiveness.

Take the Hearst papers; their advocacy or opposition to any policy today is not worth the paper it is written on because the Hearst papers, through many, many years, have blown hot and cold, and old man Hearst today -- he is in his dotage -- knows he has guessed wrong, not only this time but a good many times. He is losing his influence and his papers because of the policy of his papers. The circulation went down and down and down. Phil (Pearl) knows that. It does not pay in the long run.

Q (Mr. Lindley) That is the question I raised in the story, whether Mr. Farley could participate in the Mayoralty campaign without having it interpreted as an endorsement of the National Administration.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you have to be interpretive?

Q (Mr. Lindley) In 1933 you did not make any statement --

THE PRESIDENT: I made half a dozen in that campaign.

Q (Mr. Lindley) To say that you were keeping out of it, but Jim Farley made a strong endorsement.

THE PRESIDENT: Jim Farley at no time and in no way said that I was in it in any shape, manner or form.

Q (Mr. Lindley) It was interpreted --

THE PRESIDENT: I made the simple, flat statement that I was

not in it in any way, which happened to be true.

Q (Mr. Lindley) But Jim Farley knew the effect of that endorsement and that it would be so interpreted.

THE PRESIDENT: And I suppose some of the ward leaders did too. Lots of people did all kinds of things. Some ward leaders interpreted it one way because they thought it would help them, and other ward leaders interpreted it another way because they thought it would help them. But you can't pin that on the White House. The trouble with assumptions of that kind is that they are so often wrong that the public catches on to the fact that the assumption is wrong.

Q (Mr. Lindley) When I say, "assume", I have a fact to base it on.

THE PRESIDENT: And you have been wrong an awful lot of times in your assumptions, Ernest.

Q (Mr. Lindley) I may have been, but they are not based upon sheer imagination in most instances, I can assure you.

THE PRESIDENT: No, somebody told you something, buzz, buzz, buzz. What is the name of the fellow that writes Mallon's column? Is it Ira Bennett? What is his name?

Q Ira Bennett is with McClure. It must be Baukhage.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Baukhage was better than his predecessor but that is not saying a hell of a lot. Things that

purport to be news stories ought to be, in my judgment, about 90% right. That is as far as you can go on the percentage of error. On Baukhage's and Bennett's columns, a careful check shows that they are somewhere around 40% right on the average. Of course, that is terrible. It is just destroying the press, absolutely destroying the press.

I think that probably the best thing to do, if you cannot think of anything else, is for me to give out a statement, semi-humorous, about two or three of you.

Q (Mr. Harkness) I'm afraid I won't appreciate it. I'm afraid it won't make me laugh. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And phrase it along the line that two or three of the boys at the Nelson House yesterday afternoon went haywire. That is the only way I can think of doing it.

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) The thing to be driven home in the mind of the reader is that neither before this date or at the present or in the future, during the campaign, will the White House or the President take any part in the New York City Mayoralty situation. That is number one.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, put it that way; that is all right. Let me give you some example about the future, between now and November. You know, I live up here and I never voted

in New York City in my life. I am keeping hands off this campaign, completely and absolutely. Now, here is an example of things that may happen. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that LaGuardia comes down to see me. Now, there is every reason in the world why LaGuardia should come to see me between now and November. There are three reasons: The first is his allocations for WPA money. It is obvious that he will come down for that. Number two, this Housing Bill, if it goes through. He and Post will probably come down and see me together on it, if the thing goes through.

Now, somebody probably will write a story that he is coming down on the Mayoralty campaign. It won't be true.

Another thing which may bring him down is the fact that he is head of the Conference of Mayors and, as occupant of that position, would want to talk about housing and WPA funds. There is no political story in any of that, but it is awfully hard for you fellows not to write it that way.

Now, Jeremiah Mahoney is a very old friend and I have known him for years. It is perfectly possible because Jerry Mahoney on the AAA -- not the German thing because he was on it long before the Nazi thing came up -- he may

come down to see me on the games, et cetera, because I am awfully interested. But there wouldn't be anything political in that.

Suppose Grover Whalen were to run. Grover Whalen is head of the New York Fair. I have to see him.

Ed Flynn is United States Commissioner of the Fair. He will be down to see me again on that. He will be setting up the Government exhibits. He has three million dollars to spend.

Q (Mr. O'Donnell) Why wouldn't it be a proper part of the statement to say that LaGuardia will be down to see you, that Jeremiah Mahoney might be down, and that it is quite possible that Senator Copeland will be in to see you on the Food and Drug Bill, and that there would be no political significance in any of these visits? That would be a statement.

THE PRESIDENT: But I cannot phrase it in the form of a denial.

Q I am afraid it must, in some form or other, sift into a denial.

THE PRESIDENT: No, attack -- sift into an attack. It has got to be in the form of an attack. In other words, instead of being put on the defensive by you, I have to lay the blame on you. It is very unfortunate but necessary.

Let me try my hand at it and see if I can work out something that is semi-humorous.

Q Without names, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: And I will try not to make it offensive to Walter and George. Thank you for those kind words.

(Laughter)

Q (Mr. Trohan) If you put me --

THE PRESIDENT: I might start it this way: "Walter Trohan said this morning" --

Q (Mr. Trohan) You had better put "Mr." in front of it.

THE PRESIDENT: "As Mr. Trohan told me this morning, they had a good time in the Nelson House tap room and here is what happened."

Q (Mr. Trohan) Red light for the expense account. I would have to put in there two hours for the time you spent castigating the press so as to make up for the waiting time of the cars. That would be at three dollars an hour, which is dollars.

Q (Mr. Lindley) For myself, Mr. President, I would say that I would be delighted to be one of the targets for your well established humorous gems but I think, from the viewpoint of seriously getting results out of this for the purpose you want to accomplish, it would be well to do what John

suggested -- give some particulars of the fact that you are keeping your hands off, that LaGuardia will probably have reason to come to you between now and November, that Jeremiah Mahoney may have reason to see you in line with his AAA activities, that Copeland may have reason to come in to see you, but that, so far as the New York City Mayoralty campaign is concerned, you are going to keep completely clear of it.

THE PRESIDENT: That does not take care of the error. Let Mac put his mighty mind to work on it and we will see if we cannot work out something.

Q You are not going to rely on Mac for humor?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, he is the softest hearted fellow in the world. If it were Steve -- Steve<sup>is</sup> standing on his ear. You are lucky you aren't there. You are awfully lucky it is Mac who is up here.

MR. McINTYRE: I have been afraid to call him (Mr. Early) on the phone.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve can hardly talk straight this morning.

Q (Mr. Oliver) Meanwhile, the very fact that this conference was held is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sure, keep it off the record.

I am trying to think of some other news. If it stops

raining, I am going for a swim.

Q (Mr. Trohan) You can turn this press conference over to Sam Rosenman for publication. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Sam Rosenman hasn't been down this time.

You know, it is funny about this book that Sam and I are editing in five volumes. It has been going to the printer and the make-up of the book so far has consisted of not one word of writing. We have just been using a lot of glue and a pair of shears.

Q (Mr. Trohan) That is the way I write my stories.

THE PRESIDENT: And Sam is going to come down the next time I am here and we are going to do the forewords.

Q Have you practically got the whole job finished?

THE PRESIDENT: All except the fill-in. There will be little introductory notes or explanatory notes at the bottom. For example, there will be a message to the Congress with a note at the bottom saying that this relates to such and such a Bill. It is somewhat difficult to do because it takes a lot of checking up on the records.

Q I can think of only one thing and that is, "Thank you, Mr. President."

THE PRESIDENT: Mac, what time do we leave?

MR. McINTYRE: Twelve midnight Daylight.

Q (Mr. Harkness) While this press conference is off the record I would want to call my editor in New York, Earl Johnson, and tell him about it and that there will be a statement of some kind coming out later on.

MR. McINTYRE: That there may be.

Q (Mr. Harkness) There may be. I would want to do that and I think I should.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you can tell him you were not alone in making assumptions.

Q (Mr. Harkness) Yes; of course they read the morning papers.

Q (Mr. Durno) Are your reports from the Far East of any significance?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing that has not been in the papers this morning. There was concern over the occupation of Peiping but, of course, the fact is that there were no Chinese troops in Peiping and it was an undefended city, therefore it does not seem to create much change in the situation. That is all they had. There were not troops there and therefore they have not interfered in any way with the legations. I think it is just as it was yesterday.

Q (Mr. Trohan) George (Durno) and I will have to be listening all afternoon to what they could have told you. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think if anybody wants to swim this

afternoon, it will be fine if they will come over.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #390

Executive Offices of the White House

August 10, 1937, 4:05 P.M.

Q The Dean is missing today.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is Russ (Young)?

Q On his vacation.

THE PRESIDENT: (To a lady correspondent) Have a chair.

Q Pro ten.

Q Trying to hide something, I guess, like the Ouiji Board.

Q I tried to swap the Ouiji Board for a dunce cap, but Fred would not swap.

Q (Miss Fleeson) Hello, Steve, I am glad I did not go to Hyde Park, aren't you? (Laughter) We got a break, pal. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It is all right; I am going to have one of those photographers again.

Q (Miss Fleeson) That is right; I am vulnerable. I take it all back. I forgot.

Q That is our Club picture.

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to have it at the next Gridiron dinner. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am told there is no news.

Q Mr. President, does that Morgan's Saturday Evening Post story on the T.V.A. represent the Administration's power policy? Do the views expressed in that story represent --

THE PRESIDENT: I did not even know, I am sorry to say, that he had written a story in the Saturday Evening Post.

Q Will you say anything on the visit of the Civil Service Commission today?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about various -- lots of things. It was general discussion about the civil service and its extension as fast as possible. What was the term? Inward, outward and downward.

Q Along the lines of the subject you discussed with the Coal Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Same idea, yes.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference with Senator Harrison on sugar?

THE PRESIDENT: Only in discussing the general problem and having Interior, Agriculture and State up there this afternoon, before the committee meeting, to discuss it further.

Q Can you tell us what you are going to take up with Senator Black at this conference this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: What was it he wanted?

MR. EARLY: Agriculture.

THE PRESIDENT: Agriculture.

Q Have the Southern Democrats offered to use their influence with the Rules Committee to get out wages and hours legislation if you will give them a **cotton loan**?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard of it.

Q It is a good idea.

THE PRESIDENT: I did read something about it in the paper this morning.

Q Have any terms been reached or are they in sight on sugar legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No; still talking about it.

Q Can you tell us what you think that Senator Harrison's proposed compromise?

THE PRESIDENT: You see, he has not had it drafted. I told him that I would be very glad to study what he had on paper after they talked this over this afternoon.

Q Have you anything on cotton surplus control?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have any ideas been advanced at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, not since I got back; still talking about it.

Q Have you considered former Justice William Clark of New Jersey for the Supreme Court?

THE PRESIDENT; Your old Clubmate? (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Post) Clubmate?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, Bill Clark was in the Fly Club.

Didn't you know that?

Q (Mr. Post) I know he held Prohibition unconstitutional.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, he was a member of our Club. (Laughter)

It is all right.

Q Do you know what reaction the British and French would have to the proposed lease of destroyers to Brazil?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Of course, one thing on the lease of destroyers to Brazil that should be emphasized: in the first place, the destroyers are absolutely out of date and, in the second place, they are intended purely for training purposes.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what was discussed at your meeting with Mr. Ickes this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Ickes and I and the Director of the Budget

held our second session in going over firetrap school houses. In going through the list in two sessions we have had up to now, we have gotten down through -- let me see, what is the next state?

MR. EARLY: Missouri.

THE PRESIDENT: Missouri.

Q What did you decide?

THE PRESIDENT: We have o.k.'d a great many. This is the first going over of the list, giving approval only to those schoolhouses which, in accordance with what Mr. Rayburn said on the floor, as you will remember, -- when the bill went through it was said that this first money would be used for grants to those school districts where the schools have burned down or where the schools represented a serious fire hazard and at the same time the local communities could not afford, without government aid, to replace them. -- Now, that is on a replacement basis. It does not seem that there will fall under that rule, let us say, the good solid brick school houses in the community which have inadequate fire escapes or wooden staircases, because those obviously are what might be called repair jobs, things that amount to only

a few hundred or a few thousand dollars at the most. The Government is not in the business of giving grants for repairs and betterments to structures which are fundamentally sound and could be made perfectly safe by the expenditure of a very small sum of money.

What we are doing, is o.k.ing the applications where the building is a firetrap, not only beyond peradventure of a doubt but could not be made safe and would have to be replaced.

We are going through this list, that is the first thing, and probably after two more sessions, we will have completed all of the examinations of that particular type of PWA project. Then the list will be given out.

Q Where did you get the lists? Were they sent in by the States?

THE PRESIDENT: They were sent in by the different districts.

I should say, off hand, that so far we have approved about half the projects that we have been asked for.

Q Can you give us a rough idea of how much money will be involved in that?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not, no.

Q Is that the list of buildings that was furnished as a government document?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that?

Q That list was furnished as a Government document, was it not, some months ago?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q By "half" you meant up to Missouri?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q There is a report to the effect that PWA has taken the stand that the California earthquake schools do not come under this emergency. Have those been thrown out, do you know?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think I have approved one or two in California; that is, where the buildings cannot be strengthened or repaired so that another earthquake would undoubtedly topple it over.

Q There are some of those?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there are some of those. I think I approved a couple last week. They would come under the same category as a fire hazard that could not be cured.

Q Has there been a suggestion in the War Department that what troops we have in China should be withdrawn?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is it true that Mr. John Biggers of Toledo is to be named

to the Chairmanship of the Communications Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not taken up the Communications Commission thing at all. Mac (Mr. McIntyre) gives me two or more suggestions every day that I am going to take up in the course of the next week.

Q Do you expect to fill those vacancies before Congress adjourns?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q When Luther Steward and Jacob Baker came through here, they said you were going to send to Luther Steward's Convention a letter setting forth your views as to the organization of Government employees.

THE PRESIDENT: I will try to have it for you this afternoon. Can they have it?

MR. EARLY: Mr. Steward will release that, when it is ready, to the Convention. They handle it.

THE PRESIDENT: That is right. When is the Convention?

MR. EARLY: It is the first week of September.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they want it held up until then?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

Q Is there anything else you wanted to say?

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THE PRESIDENT: No. I said to both of the other gentlemen,  
Mr. Baker and Mr. <sup>Rhine</sup> Ryan, that this covers the situation  
for all three organizations.

Q You made some statement to us some time ago as to your views.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it follows that line.

Q Nothing to add to it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Any word on the District Tax Bill yet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not come to me yet.

Q It appears that the gold inflow from abroad is virtually at  
an end. Can you tell us whether any consideration is be-  
ing given to a study of the gold sterilization program?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not heard anything about it.

Q Have any of the New England Governors been in touch with you  
about flood control up there since your talk with Governor  
Cross?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had anything. There may be letters  
in this afternoon's mail that I have not seen yet.

Q How about Senator Copeland -- (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the boys who were at Hyde Park with me.  
They will tell you. (Laughter)

Q Will you tell us anything about your conference this morn-  
ing with Secretary Wallace and Marvin Jones?

THE PRESIDENT: The same old thing; the whole crop problem.

Q Anything on loans?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The only thing I said on loans was that I used the illustration which I could use with any of you.

For instance, I could say -- suppose Earl (Godwin) came in and said to me, "I am making ten thousand dollars a year now but I want you to lend me a hundred thousand dollars."

Q (Mr. Godwin) Fine.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, right. I would say, "That is fine, but I don't know whether on a ten thousand dollar salary, I don't know whether you are good for a hundred thousand dollar loan." And he would say to me, "I have got an awfully good prospect of getting a twenty-five thousand dollar job in next January." Well, I would say, "Have you a contract?"

He would then say, "No, I have a hope." And I would say, "As much as I love you, I cannot lend you a hundred thousand dollars on a hope."

Now, that is a pretty good illustration of my position at the present time on crop loans. I cannot make a very large crop loan not only on cotton but on corn, hogs and

maybe wheat, because of declining prices, on the hope that next January there is going to be some kind of better security behind the loan than there is today.

I have used that illustration a couple of times this morning. I think it is probably the easiest way to explain the difficulty of making crop loans without a positive assurance of the job next January.

Q Mr. President, to whom did you use the illustration?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, to Marvin Jones and I am going to use it to Hugo Black this afternoon and (Laughter)

Q What did Mr. Jones say?

THE PRESIDENT: He said, "Well, I don't blame you."

Q You said that you could not make any large crop loans. Could you make a small one?

THE PRESIDENT: The same thing applies. It would not be just a hundred thousand dollars; that would be a small one but it is just as dangerous.

Q Mr. President, do you have in mind, perhaps, a Democratic caucus by the membership of both Houses?

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

Q What would you regard as a satisfactory assurance?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, suppose the other fellow starts that

instead of me. In other words, I am in the position of the lender. It is up to the borrower to give me the security.

Q In the Earl Godwin analogy, what is the solution? Is it crop control?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we have got to come to it, as I said before; only, so not use the words, "crop control". Use the words, "crop surplus control", because it is a bit more accurate.

Q Do you want a contract with the farmers?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't let us get into Supreme Court decisions.

(Laughter) Now, there is an interesting point: In those decisions they said you could not make a contract with a farmer.

Q You could make a conditional grant.

THE PRESIDENT: But they said that you could make a conditional grant. There was some language to the effect that you might make it a conditional grant. It was a conditional condition. In other words, if they were free to accept something later on, on certain performances, they would get the money.

Q I thought they said that an outright grant was constitutional but that a conditional grant was unconstitutional.

THE PRESIDENT: Marvin Jones, who knows his Constitution, said that they made the distinction between the contract and the conditional grant. So you had better read the decision over again. It is beyond me. I cannot see much difference between a conditional grant and a contract, but, if the conditional grant is the constitutional way of doing it, it is fine.

Q You discussed the attitude of the Court then with Mr. Jones?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, sure; I asked him about it.

Q May we infer the Godwin parable as meaning that there would be no loans until the Crop Surplus Bill has been passed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, using the same analogy, the next move is Earl's.

Q The next move is that of Congress?

Q Do you intend to hold out on hope for the farmer until I get a twenty-five thousand dollar a year salary? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, I am afraid some of us failed to understand your answer. Your position is that there will be no loans of any size --

THE PRESIDENT: Until we get adequate security.

Q And the security must be something more than a promise that a law will be passed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In other words, the security will be the passage of a law?

(The President did not make any verbal answer, although he may have nodded his head.)

Q Has a gentlemen in Mr. Godwin's position made any proposals to you that they thought might be accepted as assurance?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Do I understand you to say that there would have to be a control law before there would be any loans made?

THE PRESIDENT: Either a control law or let me put it this way -- no, I don't think it is a good way of putting it -- a bank acceptance. If there was some definite assurance -- I don't know of any yet that they can give. That answers your question. If I could get some definite assurance that would be so clear that I could lend money on it, that would be all right, but I do not know of any proposal that could be made that could be considered an adequate endorsement on paper.

Q You mean no member of Congress --

THE PRESIDENT: How can a member of Congress, how can an individual or two or three individuals guarantee what the Congress will do in the future? I don't see how they can do it.

Q Are you going beyond that and say that they cannot guarantee what the Court will do after the law is passed? (Laughter)

Q The upshot is that nothing but an act of Congress would provide adequate security?

THE PRESIDENT: That is the point, Fred (Essary). If somebody could, by some method, furnish adequate assurance, that would be all right, but nobody has discovered it yet.

Q What about the caucus. Couldn't you work it through a caucus?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q If there is no legislation before January, there would be no loans before January.

THE PRESIDENT: That is right. Isn't that right, Mark? I haven't seen Mark (Sullivan) for a long time. I see him through the crowd -- I see the top of his head. He is an old farmer like myself. (Laughter)

Q Have any estimates been made by the Commodity Credit Corporation as to what that might entail -- how much money would you have to pay out if you did make these loans now?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you received reports from any of the Government departments as to possible savings so as to enable you to formulate any conclusions?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not asked Danny Bell yet. Will you remind me? I will ask him that question as to what he has had in reply to his letters. I don't know.

Q Thank you Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #391  
Executive Offices of the White House  
August 13, 1937, 10.30 AM

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything this morning.

Q Anything new in the crop loan movement?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard anything since yesterday.

Q When did you decide on Senator Black, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on that. I cannot tell you how I made the decision, but don't go out on a limb.

Q How did you manage to keep that so secret? In other words, seriously, the story about it is that you wrote the nomination with your own hand.

THE PRESIDENT: That is right.

Q Would you mind telling us something about that?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a very simple procedure -- not telling anybody.

Q Did you short-circuit your staff, the clerical staff?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely.

Q Did you short-circuit Senator Black too?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. (Laughter)

Q Did Steve Early know about it before his press conference?

(Laughter) That is the question I wanted to ask you yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: That is why I am late for the conference this morning. Steve and I have been telephoning each other.

(Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there have been published reports that you are thinking of pressing for a Constitutional Amendment on the Supreme Court problem. Is there any truth to that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you made up your mind as to whether you will sign or veto the District Tax Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got it in my basket and I can tell you, for your information, that there are several different kinds of recommendations on it. I think it went to about seven different agencies of the Government and they do not all agree.

Q Are they on any one particular phase?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you those details.

Q What did the House leaders tell you about the prospects of wages and hours legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: They didn't. I have not heard anything since yesterday morning.

Q Will they bring it up under suspension of rules, do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q Do you have an appointment with a delegation from the Hill to discuss farm legislation today?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe so and frankly I don't know what they are going to talk about.

Q I understand Governor Hurley of Massachusetts has suggested that the New England Governors -- the Governors of the four States concerned -- have a flood control meeting with you.

THE PRESIDENT: I was told just before we started that the Federal Power Commission is going to talk things over with any of them that want to come down.

Q Individually or as a group?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Then they are not planning to come to see you?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I think the first people they are to talk to is the Federal Power Commission.

Q Anything on appointments to the Radio Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, but I hope soon.

Q Have you any plans for the week-end?

THE PRESIDENT: I think if everything is all quiet I will go down either tonight or tomorrow morning and come back Sunday afternoon. I will clean up the basket and keep in fairly close touch because of the Far Eastern situation.

Q That means that you leave from here?

THE PRESIDENT: From Annapolis this time, but I don't know.

Q Is there anything you can tell us about the amendment to the Sugar Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not read the actual language of the amendments.

Q Can you tell us anything or can anything be said of your day conference the other/with Ambassador Dodd?

THE PRESIDENT: Just as usual, we talked over the affairs of the world as I do with almost all of the returning Ambassadors and Ministers.

Q Has the Attorney General given you any opinion as to the eligibility of a Senator to appointment to the Supreme Court in view of the Retirement Act on emoluments?

THE PRESIDENT: Only informally and verbally.

Q Can you tell us what that opinion was?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly legal in every way and Constitutional.

Q Some time ago you signed an Executive Order with respect to postmasters, their eligibility, and so forth. A number of those have been nominated. There is a report that there is going to be legislation or an Executive Order changing the present policy with respect to appointing postmasters.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot say anything on that now because the House Bill is still pending in the Senate and I don't

know what action is going to be taken. I won't even give it any consideration until after action or failure of action.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.