

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #471,
At the site of the President's new home,
Hyde Park, New York,
July 1, 1938, 2.30 P.M.

5-2-55
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THE PRESIDENT: Right there, that little vista (indicating) is the north of the Catskill Range. This (indicating) is the south of the Catskill. This (indicating) is the Shawangunk, through there. That (indicating), south through the field is the Hudson Highlands and northeast, back here, is the Berkshires. I can actually see into Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Q How did you pick this particular site?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been looking for it for twenty years. I was only able to buy it last year.

Q This is part of the forty acres you acquired?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is just north of it.

Q How much of this particular property is yours?

THE PRESIDENT: Fifty acres this year and then, in that field you just came across, is a hundred and twenty acres.

Q Mr. President, have you set a date for receiving bids?

THE PRESIDENT: Bids have been received and awarded to the lowest bidder and the contractor is on the job today.

Q What is his name?

THE PRESIDENT: Adams-Faber.

Q What is the price, if I may ask?

THE PRESIDENT: \$15,000.

Q It is going to be of field stone?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have a lot of old walls in the woods that were

put in there about a hundred and fifty years ago to keep the cattle in and I am just using the field stone out of those walls.

Q Is there enough there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. It will take about half a mile of wall.

Q When do you think it will be ready for occupancy?

THE PRESIDENT: About November, when it will be closed up.

Q Ready for the housewarming? (Laughter)

Q We will be up here Election Day, ready to celebrate.

THE PRESIDENT: We may do that.

That is the front porch (indicating) where those strings are and you are standing in the living room.

Q Are you going to clear out any of these trees?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, just like this (indicating).

Q And down there?

THE PRESIDENT: They are opening it up just gradually, only one tree at a time, so it won't take too much.

Then, over there, at the farther string are the two bedrooms and these strings are the kitchen and pantry. That is all there is.

Q All on one floor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You do not recall the dimensions?

THE PRESIDENT: The rooms are awfully small, all except the living room, and that is awfully big. The living room is 34 x 22. You see, that is the only room there is. That is the dining room and living room (combined).

Q Fireplace in both?

THE PRESIDENT: One big fireplace on the middle of one wall.

Q How high is this, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: 410 feet above the river.

Q Who owned this property and whom did you buy it from?

THE PRESIDENT: It was my neighbor, Mr. Newboldt, but I bought it from his neighbor.

Q What are you going to name it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Dutchess Hill. This hill up here (indicating) is known as Dutchess Hill. Don't leave out the "t".

Q There is a spider on you, Fred (Storm).

THE PRESIDENT: Don't hurt him. It is bad luck.

Q Were there any Poughkeepsie bidders on the job?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, two, but they were not quite low enough.

Q Do you know who they were, if I may ask?

THE PRESIDENT: I have forgotten.

Q What is the architecture of the cottage?

THE PRESIDENT: Old Hudson River Dutch. The front roof sort of eases out over the porch in a curve. The porch is really a continuation of the roof.

Q Who is the architect?

THE PRESIDENT: I was and I had an associate, Mr. Henry Toombs, but his name had to go on the plans because I have not got a license to practice.

Q He is from Warm Springs, is he not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, he has an office in New York and an office in Atlanta and an office in Warm Springs.

MR. McINTYRE: Will it be possible to get a copy of the plans for the

photographers?

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Henry Toombs to make a little sketch and he will probably have it by the time we get back and then, by the time we get back, the walls will be about half way up and, if you want a story, they can get a picture and a photograph of the walls.

Q Is there going to be a cellar?

THE PRESIDENT: Only big enough for a heater.

Q Will there be outdoor picnic grounds?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Will you have a swimming pool up here?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; we need one.

Q Where is the well?

THE PRESIDENT: Right over there, by the house. We went down 180 feet and got very good water.

Q Is that an artesian well?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How far is it from the other cottages?

THE PRESIDENT: About three quarters of a mile.

Q How are you going to keep the road open in the winter?

THE PRESIDENT: That problem has not been discussed yet.

Q And there isn't going to be a telephone out here?

THE PRESIDENT: Right. No.

Q Harkness (referring to Mr. Richard Harkness of the Philadelphia Inquirer) and I were confused; maybe we don't know. An artesian well is a flowing well, is it not?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this well does not flow. It comes to about 15 feet

from the surface. It is a bored well. It is 180 feet deep through solid rock. Whether it is artesian or not, I do not know.

Q The artesian wells I knew were self-flowing and just piped out.

THE PRESIDENT: You had better look at it in the dictionary. I do not know whether artesian wells flow or not.

Q (Mr. Storm) Can we have a little Press Conference here, now?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, what do you know?

Q We would like to know whether you would give us an itinerary of the western trip today. Mac (Mr. McIntyre) told us it is in shape and it would help us.

THE PRESIDENT: It is all right, if Mac would show it to me first.

(The stenographer was directed to produce the draft of itinerary. While he was so engaged one of the reporters asked a question with respect P.W.A. allotments.)

THE PRESIDENT: They have to the first of September to get their applications in and then they have to be in a position to start the work before the first of January.

MR. McINTYRE: I think we will have to change the date for the Fleet Review. Fred (Storm) and some of the boys put it on the fifteenth and we have got to back them up.

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to consult with the Commander in Chief of the Fleet first.

Did this old sailor put them (the Fleet) up in the Yosemite in his story?

MR. McINTYRE: I have not seen that one.

Q (Mr. Storm) I figured it out that we go to Yosemite on the fourteenth and review the Fleet on the fifteenth and then head down the line

on the sixteenth.

THE PRESIDENT: The new plan is to put them in the new Hetch Hetchy Lake.

Q I have an inquiry on that. It says San Francisco is asking if there is anything from you replying to Mayor Rossi on Hetch Hetchy. Apparently there is a complaint to you about Secretary Ickes deferring further grants on this power project.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask them down there (meaning to wire Washington).

Q This is what is called a double check, Mac (Mr. McIntyre) (referring to the fact that he had asked Mr. McIntyre the same question before).

MR. McINTYRE: As long as it was not a double cross. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Mac (Mr. McIntyre), at Oklahoma City there are two places, the stadium and the fair grounds. Which is it?

MR. McINTYRE: It is the fair grounds.

THE PRESIDENT: I could not have done it better myself.

Q (Mr. Storm) A judgeship for you there, after that. (Referring to Kannee)

Q District Police Judge. (Laughter)

MR. McINTYRE: You are not ready to announce that.

Q I noticed that copper went up to $9\frac{1}{2}$ cents a pound. All the mines are closed. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any plans for the Fourth of July?

THE PRESIDENT: Work.

Q All day?

THE PRESIDENT: No holiday for me. I have four days down there, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and we will try to make some appointments. I am going to have a bad four days.

Q If my wife heard I was working, she would say I was taking a runout.

THE PRESIDENT: All right, we will give you a workout on July fourth.

Q By the way, we have local appointments down there?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I have signed or vetoed every bill.

Q I have a query here, too. Someone wants to know if you want a new Mount Rushmore Memorial Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Getting back to this Gettysburg address we were talking about yesterday, is it going to be 252 words long, like Lincoln's?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I would say, at a guess, it will be about ten minutes or less than that.

MR. McINTYRE: It will be a brief address.

Q Tom Healy, who used to be a White House reporter, was telling me one time that they sent him up to Gettysburg in 1917 to cover the Fiftieth Anniversary --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Were the veterans there then?

Q The veterans, being spryer then than they are now, they reenacted the Pickett charge, the idea was to get up to little Round Top, where the stone wall was, and stop and shake hands. Some of the veterans started to climb over the wall and the Union men said, "You never got over there," and they started to picking up rocks (and throwing them) and they had to call out the police.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I hate to spoil a story, from an eyewitness, but they did get over the rocks.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you remember it.

Q (Mr. Trohan) I was there. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Are the brakes on the cars good? It is a terrible hill here. You will have to go down on the brakes.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #472,
Executive Offices of the White House,
July 5, 1938, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a large crowd today and good news.

Q (Mr. Storm) There is a big crowd out there.

THE PRESIDENT: And still they come.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Any news?

Q Mr. President, would you wish to make any general expression or comment regarding the visit to Washington of the Swedish Mission, the Prince and others?

THE PRESIDENT: I have done that all publicly.

Q Anything on the Aviation Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing yet. Probably, by not going to bed between now and Thursday night, I will have some appointments to announce.

Q Will you have some judgeships yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q Wages and Hours?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know yet. I will have to sit up all night.

Q Are you considering the name of Jerome Frank for a judgeship?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q The Star said you have.

THE PRESIDENT: I am within four or five feet of recommendations for judgeships, et cetera.

Q Can you tell us about the visit of Brownlow, Gulick and Merriam in connection with reorganization?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is about all there was. It was in connec-

tion with reorganization. I think it should be made clear to everybody -- I think everybody knows it -- but we have to put the Executive Branch of the Government on a business basis and undoubtedly it will be done. We don't want to wait another forty years.

Q Mr. President, have you heard from Tydings, of Indiana?

THE PRESIDENT: What happened?

Q Senator Van Nuys?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought Tydings was from Maryland?

Q Governor Townsend, after sending a telegram, made the observation that he expected there would be no opposition from the White House to the proposal to nominate Van Nuys.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know because I do not know anything about it.

Q Do you think Governor McNutt does?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q As head of the Democratic Party, how do you like the proposed nomination of Senator Van Nuys? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You had better consult an astrologer.

Q Mr. President, a week ago Saturday the eight heads of the largest motion picture exhibitors came to see you. Did you discuss block bookings?

THE PRESIDENT: Did not discuss any specific part, only the general problem of law enforcement.

Q Can you tell us some background as to what you proposed with respect to this conference that Mr. Mellett is holding today?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought that was pretty well covered, was it not, in Lowell Mellett's announcement and my letter to them this morning.

Has that been given out?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything more to add to that.

Q In Colorado Senator Johnson came out in support of Senator Adams, saying that he did so because he understands you --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Evidently he has been consulting an astrologer because I have not taken any part in it. I have not expressed an opinion to anybody. Same old story. {

Q Do you expect to express an opinion with respect to Colorado?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I have given it no consideration whatsoever. So you cannot very well build the story on that. That makes it difficult, does it not? (Laughter)

Q May I revert to that reorganization for a moment? The Brownlow report was very comprehensive and covered a great deal of ground. Many of the things in the report were acceptable to Congress and one or two were not. Would you care to suggest anything along that line? Would you send up that report again?

THE PRESIDENT: I would put it this way, that between the House bill and the Senate bill, as they finally came out, there was undoubtedly the possibility of getting an exceedingly valuable reorganization law and that the country as a whole undoubtedly wants a reorganization law. Where it fell down in the House was on a very simple thing. It was on a question of detail. The average person -- not all, by any means, but a very large number were in favor of the principle and in favor of ninety per cent of the details but did not like ten per cent. Each one was thumbs down on a different ten per cent so it is merely

a question of everybody getting together on it. That is that.

Q Do you still think that the General Accounting Office should be taken away from its present position in the Government and made part of the Treasury? That is, its functions?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody ever recommended that, neither did I.

Q It is not well stated, of course, but do you still think that the General Accounting Office should have its functions very largely changed?

THE PRESIDENT: I never thought that.

Q A great many people thought you did.

THE PRESIDENT: No. In other words, there are two functions.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Two separate functions, and those two functions ought to be separated. There should be, first, the function of checking on current expenditures as they go along and, secondly, there will be the Congressional function of checking on what has been done. That is the easiest way of putting it. In other words, it is just like a corporation. At the end of the year, the corporation hires an outside firm of chartered accountants to go over all their books and say whether they are right or wrong, what changes should be made in their bookkeeping, what might be changed in the course of the year. We want to do for the country exactly what every other corporation in the country does. You see, that is a little bit different.

Q Yes, sir.

Q I understand you talked to Secretary Sayre yesterday about the

Philippines report. Does that indicate any new development or was the report submitted to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the report is very nearly ready -- not quite yet, as I understand it -- to be printed but its release will depend on the completion of the printing job, and the Government Printer is, as I understand it, so jammed with work that I sent a note over yesterday that I hoped that when this report is ready to go to him, which will be very soon, he will try to get it printed so we can all have copies.

Q Anything you can tell us about the efforts to stimulate exportation of wheat?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. I have not heard a word on that for about three weeks. I have not talked to anybody about that.

Q Have you an opinion from the Attorney General about a man in Michigan convicted of murder and sentenced to die?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got to speak from memory. I got a report and word has been sent to the Governor of Michigan yesterday that our understanding is that Michigan has a death penalty and our -- this is all from memory -- and our Federal statutes require that where a state has a death penalty, that the death penalty of a Federal prisoner must be inflicted within that state, that we cannot remove the prisoner to another state except from a state which has no death penalty. I think that is the problem.

Q Was that conveyed to Governor Murphy?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yesterday I sent a letter.

Q Anything new on the Ambassadorship to Moscow?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, do you intend to visit in South American countries on your cruise to the Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only the Galapagos Islands.

Q Can you tell us of anything you specifically talked about with the TVA directors today?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked over the general situation of going ahead with current works and also we discussed the negotiations that are going on between the directors and the Commonwealth and Southern. There is nothing to be given out on that at the present time because it might hurt the negotiations.

Q Any discussion of the new directors for TVA?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Can you tell us where you will land on your return from the trip?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope Pensacola. I haven't been to Pensacola in twenty-five years.

Q Are you going down to the San Blas Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: No. If I went there I would take you with me. (Laughter)

Q I have got it all fixed up. I don't want to go back.

THE PRESIDENT: That is where they have the blonde Indians. (Laughter).

Q Well, the last time I was there I did not see any blondes. (Laughter)

Q Is the Cocos Island still in?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, on the way back from Galapagos.

Q Are you going to Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What place in South Carolina will you visit?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know if we are even stopping there. We have

not got that far.

Q Do you plan to spend any time in Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: Get there in the morning and leave there late that night.

Q Will the United States give any definite plan to the Refugee Conference, convening in France tomorrow at the instigation of this Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; I cannot answer. You had better ask the State Department. I think they have heard on the question of a plan from Mr. Myron Taylor but I am not sure.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Everything all quiet. I hope you have a good time while I am away. Happy holiday.

NOTE:

Press Conferences Nos. 473 and 474 were held while en route across the Isthmus of Panama, one aboard ship and the other on the train. Mr. Learson reports that both of these Press Conferences were over before he was notified, consequently no transcript is available.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #475,
Aboard the U.S.S. HOUSTON in Pensacola Harbor,
Tuesday, August 9, 1938, about 3.00 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Here is the old crowd. Glad to see you. Fred, (Storm)
did you have a good flight?

Q (Mr. Storm) A grand flight.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know anything that you don't know.

Q You know lots of things we would like to know.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the most interesting thing -- I will tell you what you might do, here is a suggestion: See Dr. ^[Schmitt] Schmidt before he leaves the ship to give you a story. He can read to you his preliminary report that he has made on various things that he discovered with the aid of the ship's company. He has made a really remarkable collection of all kinds of marine invertebrates and animals. We have on board two kids -- goats, I meant that kind of kids -- descended from Commodore Porter's goats that he released on James Island in 1813. They are the ship's mascots. And Dr. ^[Schmitt] Schmidt also has a live iguana and a live hog and two live snakes. And we think we have discovered quite a number of other new specimens of fish and other things that they have never known in that particular habitat before. The ice boxes are filled with a complete collection of all kinds of things in bottles and on ice. ^[Schmitt] Dr. Schmidt is shipping them right through to the Smithsonian tonight.

Really, it has been very successful from his point of view. It has added material to the National Museum's collections and for a scientist to be completely satisfied with what he has

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found is pretty good evidence that he was successful.

Q Do you want to say anything about the results (of the election) up in Kentucky?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is about what I expected.

Q Mr. President, have you completed the two speeches that you are going to make at Athens and --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I completed one and I am about half way through the other.

Q When may we expect to have them? Could you give us any hint as to what we should expect?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will you stop in South Carolina on your way up?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will go out on the train platform and say, "How do you do?" before we go to bed. That will be Spartanburg or probably Greenville.

Q I have a query as to your plans up at Huron. Don't you go there in September sometime -- Michigan?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; I have no plans. I have various invitations but I won't make any plans for another two weeks. I have not got any plans except up to the nineteenth of August. I will go up on the seventeenth to Kingston (Ontario) to the University and motor over to the Thousand Islands Bridge, dedicating it in the afternoon with the Premier, getting on the train at Clayton and getting to Hyde Park the morning of the nineteenth.

Q Do you plan to stay at Hyde Park any length of time?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably ten days.

Q Speaking of Hyde Park, have you decided whether you will remain in

Washington from the twelfth to the seventeenth or go to Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, George (Mr. Durno) but I will probably stay in Washington. There is an awful lot of stuff to sign. I have been approving a great many of Mr. Hopkins' projects by radio and now I have got to make good.

Q Have you any comment to make on the Japanese-Russian situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not got anything that you have not got.

Q Do you have any comment to make on permanence for the Pensacola Naval Air Station? There has been something said in the past that there might be divisions transferred to Miami or other places?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it. It is a perfectly grand station.

You know I am the Godfather of it; I reopened it in 1914.

Q You do not know of any proposed transfer of any division of it elsewhere?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not that I have heard of.

Q Any luck down in New Providence?

THE PRESIDENT: No; very little fishing. It is a terribly interesting place. They climbed up to Sir Henry Morgan's Fort, the old Spanish fort. We came ashore and saw the inhabitants. It is one of the most beautiful islands I have ever seen.

Q That is not in the Bahamas?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is off the coast of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, way out at sea, and belongs to Colombia. Colombia owns two islands up there. The other is San Andres. There are about two thousand people on Providencia and about three thousand people

on San Andres. They raise coconuts and cattle and all kinds of fruits. They are self-sustaining and a very interesting community. Many of them undoubtedly descended from the old Buccaneers.

Q We made an 85-mile drive into the interior of Panama, up to a beach called La Venta, where the Army has just started to build a new air field. I was amazed at the cattle industry of the country.

THE PRESIDENT: It is perfectly tremendous. That is one of the things down there that I talked with the President of Colombia about three or four years ago. It is such a good cattle country when you get above 2,000 or 3,000 feet that it would be possible to raise all the beef that is sold to the ships coming through the Canal, instead of bringing in the beef from thousands of miles away.

Q They could find a ready market for it to the Army in Panama.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and of course practically every ship going through the Canal buys some fresh supplies.

Q Most of us have not seen you since you left San Diego. Any reaction from your western trip at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only what has come over the radio.

Q Have you heard anything about how McAdoo is making out?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only the stuff that came over the radio. Radio news which is mostly --

MR. McINTYRE: Mostly international affairs?

THE PRESIDENT: -- what company -- Transradio mostly.

CAPTAIN CALLAGHAN: It is called Transradio Press, but we just pick that up, sir, when we run into it. The ship is not a subscriber

to the service.

Q The Government puts out a service for Marine --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Occasionally we pick up a U.P. story.

Q Just occasionally, Mr. President?

Q They get about, after all. (Laughter)

Q Any preliminary message for the people of Georgia? They are rather excited up there, as you know.

THE PRESIDENT: Are they? (Laughter)

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Are they really excited or only said to be excited?

Q They do not show it, of course. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the newspapers have to live, you know.

Q On the two speeches in Georgia, could we know generally whether politics will be mentioned or not?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. You see, they are not finished.

They only have been written in longhand and the first process -- in fact, one is not finished. The first process is for poor old Kannee to transcribe it into a rough draft and then you cannot tell what I will do to the rough draft.

Q Make it rougher, Mr. President. (Laughter)

Q Will you make advances?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have Steve (Mr. Early) and Mac (Mr. McIntyre) both on board. I take it I will be forced to give you an advance. I am going to have a bad time. They will be after me day and night.

Q He wanted to know if the rough draft of that Georgia speech would be made rougher when completed? (Laughter)

Q Do you expect to see anybody at Warm Springs, any politicians or conferences or anything of that sort?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody at all. I am going to lunch with the Foundation, with all the children, and probably dine with Dr. Boone, and then go back on board the train after supper.

Q When do you expect to see your new namesake?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Any comment on the appearance of the Station (Pensacola)?

THE PRESIDENT: Everything tells me that it is well kept up.

Q How was the fishing on this trip?

THE PRESIDENT: Very good on this cruise. The whole Presidential Party made records and sixty different varieties of fish were caught today. Some of them have not been identified yet.

Q Any comments on the general labor situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing at all. I have not had any news about anything.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #476,
Executive Offices of the White House,
August 16, 1938, 4.07 P.M.

Q How do you do, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: How are all the boys? Glad to see you.

Q It has been a long time.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it has been a long time. Have you had a good time, any holiday?

MR. YOUNG: I took two weeks out in Santa Monica.

MR. STORM: Just looking over some of his properties, Mr. President.

(Laughter)

MR. YOUNG: Oil properties.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I thought it was orange groves.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am glad -- I cannot say I am glad to be back (the outside temperature was 96°) but I am glad to see you all again.

We have a new member of the White House family that some of you on the Coast met, Commander Dan Callaghan. Stand up, Dan, and let them see you. You will all get to know him and Commander Callaghan can look you all over and report to me afterwards what he thinks. I can tell him now that you improve on acquaintance. (Laughter)

I do not think I have anything in particular. The United States Tariff Commission, in pursuance of the general policy of trying to get as many of the independent agencies under the Civil Service as possible, has made an arrangement with the

Civil Service Commission which will place all of its hitherto excepted expert positions under the classified Civil Service. That is just a step in the general direction. I think they have a release on that over there.

Q Is that hitherto experts under the Civil Service?

THE PRESIDENT: Hitherto excepted expert positions. They are now to be put under the Civil Service.

Q Mr. President, have you anything to say about the forthcoming primaries in New York where Congressman O'Connor is running against Jim Fay?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess so. This is not collusive on the part of Fred and myself. (Laughter) I guessed that somebody --

MR. STORM: As a matter of fact, Mr. President, I had the dope last week down at Warm Springs that there was some movement on foot for you to sound off against Mr. O'Connor but I held it up too late and I was scooped in the Sunday morning papers.

THE PRESIDENT: I knew that somebody would ask the question so I have a perfectly good statement here. It is long. I will read it to you and I will give it to Steve and he will give you copies so you won't have to take it down.

Q Will you read it slowly, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It is entitled, "Why the President 'Interferes.'" (Laughter)

And the first sentence is in quotes -- you will see why afterwards. The first sentence is this: (reading) "The President of the United States ought not to interfere in party primaries."

And then the second sentence is not in quotes. (Reading)

That statement, in one form or another, is appearing these days throughout the Tory Press.

The idea is that the President should be aloof from such sordid considerations as who wins the primaries in his own party. But actually these primaries will determine to a large extent the makeup of the next Congress. And that, in turn, will determine whether or not the President can keep his campaign promises to the people.

Campaign promises are supposed to be the responsibility of the whole party. At least that's the theory. But in practice the head of the party alone is held responsible for them.

In American politics any one can attach himself to a political party whether he believes in its program or not.

That is a hot one.

We hear the phrase "read out of the party," but it doesn't mean anything. No one is read out of the Democratic or the Republican Party. There are many prominent Democrats today who are heart and soul against everything the Democratic Party has stood for since 1932. And those men are still in the party.

What's worse, not one of them was candid enough to oppose the renomination of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936, although after four years there was no doubt whatever as to the program Franklin D. Roosevelt was pursuing.

The same hidden opposition, after giving the New Deal lip-service in 1936, turned around and knifed it in Congress in 1937 and 1938.

Now that election time has come around again, the hidden opposition hides the ax behind its back and prepares to give the President lip-service once more.

In those circumstances there is nothing for the President to do -- as the responsible head of the New Deal -- but to publicly repudiate those who have betrayed the New Deal in the past and will again.

If men like Senator Tydings of Maryland said frankly: "I no longer believe in the platform of the Democratic Party as expressed in the New Deal; I'm running for re-election as a member of the Republican opposition to the New Deal," then there would be no reason and no excuse for President Roosevelt to intervene against them.

The issue would be clear. The voter could take his choice between the New Deal and Tydings' record of consistent opposition to it. But Tydings tells the voters he supports the "bone and sinew" of the New Deal. He wants to run with the Roosevelt prestige and the money of his conservative Republican friends both on his side.

In that case it becomes the President's right and duty to tell the people what he thinks of Millard Tydings.

That's why we welcome the report that Roosevelt help is going to be given to Tydings' opponent, Representative David J. Lewis, and to James H. Fay, candidate for the nomination in the Sixteenth Congressional District of New York.

Fay is running against Representative John J. O'Connor, one of the most effective obstructionists in the lower house. Week in and week out O'Connor labors to tear down New Deal strength, pickle New Deal legislation.

Why shouldn't the responsible head of the New Deal tell the people just that?

Q That is very mild. (Laughter)

Q It reads as though it was an editorial.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it was an editorial, but it is my statement now.

Q How do we use that, as an answer to the question?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is it to be in quotes, then?

Q Direct quotes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Any others to be on the list?

THE PRESIDENT: Two, that is enough for one day.

Q I heard in Greenville -- you said you were coming back to South Carolina. Have you decided when that will be?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet; haven't got the date.

Q In connection with your statement, the Time Magazine has been running a series of letters from readers attempting to define the New Deal. One of them calls it Tam^many Methods made Magnificent and another says it is the first genuine effort on the part of public-spirited officials to aid their less fortunate citizens over the apparent opposition of entrenched privilege. There are a lot of others.

THE PRESIDENT: I think nothing further than the one (definition) I gave a good many years ago -- about four years ago -- to the editor of the Vancouver Sun. I think that still holds good.

Q What was that?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to look it up. You will find it, I think, in Volume III of my Public Papers.

Q Fifteen bucks per copy. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: But you will have to buy all five volumes and it will cost you fifteen dollars. (Laughter)

Q Do you expect to say a good word for Governor Murphy when you go up to Port Huron?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any date at all after Thursday of this week.

Q Have you given up the idea of going up there?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had any date beyond this Canadian trip.

Q When are you going to fill the vacancy on our Commission? (D. C.)

Commission.) George Allen is going to leave us.

THE PRESIDENT: Not for a while. I wish he would stay.

Q He is going to stay on Public Works.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish he would stay on the Commission, too.

Q Have you thought of any successors?

THE PRESIDENT: Really haven't thought of it at all.

Q Donald Wakefield Smith's term expires the twenty-seventh. Are you going to announce his reappointment?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any ready for announcement except the five members of the Alaska Highway Commission. I will have those this afternoon or tomorrow morning.

Q Will you discuss the proposed St. Lawrence Treaty up at the Thousand Islands on Thursday?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have not prepared anything as yet. I have three or four suggestions in my desk as to what people would like me to say and I will probably write it on the way up on the train.

Q Have you any comment on the outcome of the Ohio campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that it was about what I expected.

Q Would you care to comment on your reaction to your mail on the Barnesville speech -- mail reaction?

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the honest truth there has been very little reaction one way or the other. I don't suppose I have had ten or fifteen letters on it. The weather is too hot, you know.

Q Any comment on Senator George's "Marching through Georgia" speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have got to be frank and tell you that I did

not read it all. I agreed heartily with what he said about the primary down there being absolutely up to the Georgia voters because those were the same words I used myself.

Q Will you speak in the State of Maryland in favor of Congressman Lewis?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not got any dates beyond Thursday.

Q Any possibility for Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT: As I say, I do not know.

Q On that line, Mr. Lawrence, the State Chairman, reported this week to the boys at Harrisburg, that when he and Governor Earle and Walter Jones were down here you expressed the desire to come to Pennsylvania to make at least one speech in their behalf.

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to go to lots of places.

Q Here is a rather torrid question: Referring to the statement regarding support for the Democratic platform, among the items in that class do you include your Court plan?

THE PRESIDENT: The Court plan was not in the platform but the Court plan is no longer an issue because, in effect, we obtained ninety-eight per cent of all the objectives intended by the Court plan. I made that clear on many occasions.

Q In other words, any disfavor you may hold to any member of the House or Senate is not based on the Court plan?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That is a perfectly fair statement. However, it won't prevent the continued use of the assertion, will it?

Q I hate to bother you with so much state politics but out in Kansas it looks like a pretty bitter fight between Clyde Reed and

Senator McGill. Mr. Reed supported you in 1936 and did not support Governor Landon. I wondered if you were going out that way any time in the fall?

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I have not heard anything about the Kansas situation.

Q Do you contemplate going into Wisconsin and Minnesota?

THE PRESIDENT: Really, it is honestly true that I have no plans and no dates after this coming trip. I suppose I have had invitations to go into forty-eight states, including Vermont and Maine. But I have no plans whatsoever.

Q Who asked you to go into Maine?

THE PRESIDENT: If you must know, I will tell you, my mother. (Laughter)

Q (drowned by the laughter) But she is in Campobello.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #477

(While the President was seated in his car
after leaving the Presidential special train
at Hyde Park Station, New York),
August 19, 1938, 8.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what is the news? I don't know news or anything
at all. I don't want to have any here -- just play around.

Q Any callers?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a caller.

Q There are stories out of Washington that the State Department is
interpreting your speeches as an extension of the Monroe Doctrine.

THE PRESIDENT: How the Monroe Doctrine? They did not, neither did
you and neither did anybody else.

MR. McINTYRE: I know one young man who did.

THE PRESIDENT: You see the point?

Q I never did know just what the application of it was.

Q Now you are getting into the realm of interpretation. Read the
original language of the Monroe Doctrine.

Q Anything on politics, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing.

Q I see Mr. O'Connor (Congressman O'Connor, of New York) has accepted
the challenge.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw the headlines and that's all; I have not read
the story.

Q For some unknown reason, a lot of people are wondering what you are
thinking of your neighbor across the river. (Referring to Father
Divine's "Heaven") I was hoping somebody else would ask that.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the easiest way would be for you to go up on

the front lawn and take a look and then you will see how silly the stories were. It is what they would call a thing manufactured out of whole cloth for public consumption. And -- in this particular case it is entirely off the record -- the New York Times was the worst offender. That is right, isn't it, Felix? (Mr. Felix Belair, Jr., of the New York Times)

Q A little out of proportion, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: In the first place, it is in a different county. Nobody ever mentioned that.

Q And it is across the river, too.

THE PRESIDENT: In the second place, it is 1800 feet -- this is off the record -- from one bank to another. But I think, as the crow flies, it is a mile and a quarter. In the third place, there are so many trees in the way. I think you can see the roof of the house, but that is all. So, the whole thing is pure bunk. That is all off the record. It is a good newspaper story, so why spoil it.

Q You are very generous.

Q I see we have our star left fielder with us. (Referring to John Roosevelt, who was seated beside the President in the car.)

THE PRESIDENT: He is holding out. He says this cash offer is all right but he wants a guarantee on hours and a living wage and he wants an expense account.

Q He wants to be a regular newspaper man.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, he is still open to an offer.

Q Anybody today or tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think anybody. I think tomorrow somebody is

coming -- I have forgotten who it is.

MR. McINTYRE: Henry Wallace.

THE PRESIDENT: Henry Wallace, yes, tomorrow.

Q How long will you be here?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea; either a couple of hours
or overnight.

Q It is too hot to go to Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: It is going to be lovely here. Even in the Nelson
House it will be all right.

(End of Conference.)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #478

At the home of the President, Hyde Park, New York,
August 23, 1938, 2.00 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Captain Patterson to come in today just so he could see how you fellows operate. It is all right; you are all under observation.

MR. McINTYRE: Everybody on good behavior.

Q Chance for Conway to strut his stuff here.

THE PRESIDENT: I know nothing. I am sorry.

Q Are you going to Maryland?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no dates except -- what are my dates?

Q One in Chattanooga.

THE PRESIDENT: Chattanooga -- that is the only date I have got. No, I have got the seventeenth here. I haven't another date.

Q What is the seventeenth here?

THE PRESIDENT: Our 150th anniversary of the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York -- the ratification of the Federal Constitution.

Q When are you planning to go back to Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: I think either Sunday or Monday night -- but probably not until Monday night.

MR. McINTYRE: I think there is a mixup in those dates. I think it is the 135th anniversary.

THE PRESIDENT: No, the 250th anniversary of the first white settler in Poughkeepsie was the other.

Q No date in Baltimore?

THE PRESIDENT: I have absolutely no plans for next week. I don't

know how long I am going to stay in Washington.

Q Some of your Maryland friends seem to resent the implication by Senator Tydings that you are a carpet bagger and they are wiring you to come to Maryland, regardless.

THE PRESIDENT: I dare say.

Q Governor Landon has been writing pieces for the paper. He said that, among other things, if his policies had prevailed that American people would know considerably more security today than they actually do.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I want to comment.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference with Senator Pope over the weekend?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can tell you what is actually the fact, that the chief question of discussion was a matter that involves public morality and rather interesting to me because a quarter of a century ago, when I first went to the Legislature of this State -- Heavens, more than that; it was 28 years ago that I was elected -- the burning issue in this State was whether we would adopt direct primaries or not.

A great many states had already adopted direct primaries in order to get rid of the old-fashioned form of boss-controlled conventions. So I took a great interest in the whole objective of direct primaries. The objective was a very simple one and has been subsequently carried out in very nearly every state of the Union. It was to give the actual voters within a party, in recognition of the party system under which we live, the right to choose their candidates for public office. And in every case in those

days that I ever heard of some method was devised by which the primary within one party would be limited to the members of that party.

There were certain restrictions and definitions to carry out that purpose, for the very simple reason that a party primary, participated in even by a handful of people not belonging to that party, immediately became void and of no effect -- a complete destruction of the objective.

If, for example, in a contest within a party, one group within that party had 49% of the vote and the other group had 51% of the vote, it was entirely proper for the 51% to win. That was a fair expression of opinion. If, however, 2% or 3% of people from another party were to enter the primary of a party to which they did not belong, the will of the party voters could be completely overcome and destroyed.

Now, that is a question of simple political morality and the interesting thing to me is the fact that the Tory press in this country has overlooked a very interesting opportunity to work for decent political morality.

We have certain examples that we all know about. The figures in the State of Idaho, for example, show that whereas in 1936 the Republican primary vote was about 42,000 and the Democratic primary vote was about 55,000, this year the Republican primary vote was only 30,000 and the Democratic primary vote was about 85,000 which, of course, no matter how much you might try to hem and haw it off, was complete proof positive that the direct primary system was completely violated so far as morality went by the entrance of

fifteen or twenty thousand Republicans into the Democratic primary.

There are two other illustrations: One is the letter which is now becoming famous by the Republican State Chairman of Georgia, calling on all Republicans in the State of Georgia to enter the Democratic primary.

Now, this has nothing to do with candidates. I am not mentioning the name of a single candidate. That has nothing to do with it. I am talking about the principle and the fact that it is being credibly reported that in Maryland Republicans are being begged to enter the Democratic primary.

I think it is something that ought to be of interest to all people who believe in the primary system -- of course there are still a lot of people who would like to go back to the boss-ridden convention system but I am talking about people who believe in direct primaries -- I think it is of interest to them to know of the destruction of the principle that is being carried on now without very much protest on the part of the Tory press.

Well, now, you have got a good story. Now it is in your hands.

But you have to make it perfectly clear that this comment of mine has nothing to do with the question of candidates -- individual candidates. I am talking about principles and I would say the same thing if Republicans in any state were to enter the Democratic primary with the object and purpose of helping somebody that I considered a close friend of mine -- it is exactly the same thing.

Now, that is going to be a damned hard story for John (Mr. O'Brien, of the Herald-Tribune) to write, for instance.

Q If a Democrat enters a Republican primary, as O'Connor has done, does that fall in the same category?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly; Democrats ought not to enter Republican primaries. It certainly ruins the whole question of the primary. It is a question of A, B, C morality.

Q Did Senator Pope make any decision to run as an independent candidate?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q If he does go in, can he count on any help from you?

THE PRESIDENT: "If" question.

Q Can you tell us about your talk this morning with Mr. Martin and Mr. Duffy, of Vermont?

THE PRESIDENT: The chief topic of conversation was -- I don't know whether we can call it the "National Highway." It is the continuation of what we outlined four years ago, the development of President Hoover's Skyline Drive. President Hoover invented, in his administration, a great scenic highway from Washington, D. C., over a distance of seventy or eighty miles south into Virginia along the top of the Blue Ridge, and laid out a national policy which was to the effect that if the State would buy the land -- the right of way -- with a strip on each side so as to be a scenic parkway, then the Federal Government would build and maintain the highway on that land. Before I got to Washington most of the work, a very large part of the work, had been done on the Skyline Drive. We have been trying in the last five years to develop that idea for a highway extending from the Canadian line, at the north end of the Green Mountains, down through what really is the Blue

Ridge all the way. For instance, the Berkshires correspond to the Blue Ridge and you go across through the Hudson Highlands, at West Point, Bear Mountain, and then get on down to the Delaware Water Gap, and then that same range extends down to just west of Harrisburg, through Gettysburg and Harper's Ferry -- a little this side of Harper's Ferry, you know, where Braddock Heights is -- it is really the nearest point to Washington -- and then it goes on to Front Royal with the Skyline Drive and through Virginia and down to North Carolina, to the Great Smoky Park, and thence to Georgia, to the end of the Appalachian System, which is approximately Stone Mountain.

Q Mr. President, are you planning to go up to Vermont to inspect --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have no plans.

Q -- to inspect the route that this might take?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no plans.

Q Have you come to any conclusions with Secretary Wallace about the export of that wheat?

THE PRESIDENT: Still talking about it this week in Washington.

Q Getting back to Maryland, have you received any invitations or requests to go down?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have not seen this morning's mail. I believe there are some telegrams along the line you have been talking about.

MR. McINTYRE: There have been quite a few of them.

Q Mr. President, I have a rather selfish interest in asking this question: Have you thought about going to the Pan American Conference in Santiago this November?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought about it last spring and had hoped to be able to do it if I could get off in November, but it seems impossible to do it. It was only a hope and it never got any further than that, unfortunately.

Q Mr. President, speaking of the --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That will break somebody's heart in Panama, Fred (Storm). (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Storm) I take it in my stride, Mr. President. (Laughter)

Q Did you talk on Sunday, Mr. President, with Representative Kopplemann?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you saw me talk to him. He came over and said, "How do you do?" at the car, that is all.

Q Yes.

Q Is there anything special you plan to talk on at Moses Smith's place on Saturday?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will tell them about catching fish.

Q Were these gentlemen from Vermont here as representatives of the State Government to discuss the Skyline Drive?

THE PRESIDENT: No. One is Democratic National Committeeman and the other is the Democratic candidate for Governor.

Q Your idea was cooperation between the State and Federal Governments?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. One reason was that frankly we haven't got very far in the State of Vermont on this plan.

Q Mr. President, are you coming back to Hyde Park on the sixth?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I may come back before that but I cannot tell.

Q I think the last time we were here you said you might have the ar-

chitect's sketch of the new cottage.

THE PRESIDENT: We wrote to -- no, I will tell you this just for your own information: I got a letter from Henry Toombs asking if I had any objection to his printing the plans in the Architectural Record and I told Steve to tell him that it was all right just so long as you people got it at the same time as the Architectural Record so as to protect you.

Q So it will come down there anyway?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How far is the construction work now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we will go up there in the course of the next few days. One of the wings has the roof beams on. In another wing, the stones are almost up to the roof and the other wing is only a couple of feet above the ground.

Q Mr. President, did you send any kind of parting greeting to the delegates of the World Youth Congress which is winding up at Vassar College?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't thought of it at all. In fact, I did not know they were having their final meeting.

Q There is a report that you had asked Commissioner McNutt to take up with the Commonwealth Government (of the Philippines) the possibility of admitting 200 Jewish refugees.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it; it is another pipe dream.

Q Have you figured out what proportion of the total press of the country would fall in the category of "Tory Press"?

THE PRESIDENT: If you will read Volume V of my works, you will find in a footnote that I estimated it to be 85%.

Q Five volumes, costing fifteen bucks. (Laughter)

Q You are speaking of circulation, are you not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. This is daily press -- I am not talking about weeklies.

Q You meant circulation rather than number?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and I think you will find it works both ways, both the number of papers and circulation.

Q There was a study released, I think during the last week, giving the number of papers which support you as about 300 out of 800 of the larger papers.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe it.

Q That was a Gallup survey.

THE PRESIDENT: I still don't believe it.

Q (Mr. Storm) I have no drum to beat for them. I am merely volunteering a little information.

THE PRESIDENT: Outside of Catherine Patterson's paper I should say that probably if you took that total number of 300, which are for me, they would have the smallest circulation out of the 800.

Q 300, after all, is 40%, or something like that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Well, it is not altogether impossible that you will go to Baltimore, or Maryland somewhere?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any idea. I cannot even protect you, Felix (Mr. Belair). (Laughter -- Mr. Belair had written that the President would go into Maryland.)

Q I guess I will have to bat for Russ Young and Earl Godwin. Have you reached the point where you will appoint a District Commis-

sioner?

THE PRESIDENT: No, and won't for some time.

[Donald Wakefield Smith]

Q Have you decided on the reappointment of Dan Smith to the National Labor Relations Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing on that yet, no news. On that general subject, just so you get the thing perfectly clear, of course Bill Green and I did talk about the Wagner Act and we agreed on a very simple thing: so as to make it clear again -- I am afraid there is not much of a face saver in this -- any new law creating a new agency of the Government is drafted with the objective of clarity, but no human draftsmanship can foresee situations that would arise in some particulars under a new law where construction of language necessarily would become a question; in other words, where the language was not clear as applied to some specific case.

Gradually, over these past three years, the Wagner Act has developed certain ambiguous phrases, some of which have been clarified by judicial opinions. Others have not yet been clarified and, after consultation with the N. L. R. B., it is perfectly possible that this winter we may try to seek legislative clarification of them, of some of this language which is not wholly clear. On that Mr. Green and I were one. We did not discuss in any shape, manner or form any specific amendments or changes in the Wagner Act. And when, in the course of time, it comes to the question of what amendments will be recommended, obviously a lot of people are going to be consulted, such as N. L. R. B., various labor groups, all the labor groups, representatives of employers, counsel, lawyers.

Now, that is really all that has happened and that is a very simple, clear statement.

Q Aside from that, would those ambiguities deal with matters of jurisdiction?

THE PRESIDENT: Did not go into that at all.

Q You said ambiguities?

THE PRESIDENT: Every Act -- there is not an Act that has ever been passed that did not have ambiguities in it.

Q No details?

THE PRESIDENT: Details were not mentioned.

Q Have you given any thought, Mr. President, to filling the Supreme Court vacancy?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL**Press Conference #479****Held in the President's Study at Hyde Park, New York,
August 26, 1938, 11.45 A.M.****MR. STORM:** Good morning, sir.**THE PRESIDENT:** Good morning, Frederick.**MR. BELAIR:** Good morning, Mr. President.**THE PRESIDENT:** Good morning, Squire (Mr. Belair), how are you?

Well, how are you behaving? I think tomorrow afternoon, before the picnic, if you want to go up to the house first, you could be over at the cottage about 2.15, at Val Kill. I will join you there and we will go up on top of the hill and I will show you the house, and from there we will go down to Moses Smith and I will give you a dissertation on fish. Then that will give you time -- we will probably be through with Moses Smith about a quarter of four or four o'clock at the latest, and that will give you time to write your stories and come back to the cottage at six.

Q Mr. President, I have a query from Knoxville, Tennessee, from the Knoxville News Sentinel, and the editor says he is anxious to get some comment from President Roosevelt on the successful completion of the first major purchase of a private utility by TVA and the municipality. (Reading) "TVA and Knoxville completed the purchase of the private utility here yesterday" -- that was the day before yesterday -- "and asked that the President be queried about it at his next Press Conference at Hyde Park."

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't very much more to say than that I am delighted it has gone through successfully. Apparently the terms agreed to reimburse the investors in the private company for all

the money they put in and a little more over, which seems fair all around. They were not reimbursed for watered stock. Now, you cannot say "reimbursed" because on watered stock they have not put anything out. That is the wrong word.

Q They were not "paid"?

THE PRESIDENT: They were not paid for watered stock.

Q Mr. President, as you probably have noticed, quite a bit of politics are being written under a Hyde Park date line. (Laughter)

Is there anything you can tell us about your conference yesterday with Mr. Farley?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except off the record.

Q How about for background purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: No, first off the record. Do not let the public get the idea, in writing stories, that when Jim Farley or anybody else comes up here that we confer continuously, seriously, during a whole afternoon and a whole evening. That is silly. One does not do that.

Actually, what happened is this: I did not see Jim Farley -- he got over here in time for lunch at the cottage and I then took him up and showed him the cottage and we got back here about half past three, along in there. At the lunch we talked to a lot of WPA regional woman directors about the problems of WPA all over the country. While eating at the table they circulated around. We got back here about half past three and Jim and I talked here and in the other room, all kinds of things, about an hour and a half, including politics but also including a great many other things. We talked about gold mining, we talked about agriculture,

we talked about crops and of course we did discuss all the different political situations, but that was only, I suppose, a quarter of the entire conversation.

Then we quit talking and went out again and at 7.30 went over to dine with my sister-in-law, and then came back and went to bed.

That is the kind of thing that happens when people come up and it is an awful imposition to say that he spent the whole afternoon and evening conferring on politics, because it is not true. It is the wrong impression to give to the public. It sounds beautiful but it just is not true. (Laughter)

Well, we talked on every political situation and talked perhaps half an hour all told in the course of the day and there was, as usual, complete agreement. I don't see how you can get a story out of that. There was complete agreement. I am not going to refer to specific things, to details, because there isn't any news in it.

Q You said this is all off the record. Couldn't we say, "in complete agreement"?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You can say, "complete agreement, as usual. "

Only, for Heaven's sake, put the words "as usual" in, because it happens to be true.

MR. McINTYRE: Direct quotes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you can use that as direct quotes.

Q Mr. President, have you decided to go into Maryland to make a speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any plans. I cannot tell you anything more than I told you the other day.

Q You have an invitation, have you not?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got lots of them from every state.

Q When you say, "every state," does that mean every state where there is a Primary?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and states where there aren't any. Both, you have to include both. It is awfully hard to write a story on that unless you write, "Sources close to the White House revealed" and things like that. I know all the phrases. Or, "It was believed that --" (Laughter)

Q How did you like John's (Mr. O'Brien) story the other morning?

THE PRESIDENT: It is the finest rehash of things that have one out in the last year or two that I have ever read. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, things in New York are starting off against O'Connor.

Does what you said the other day about one party intervening --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) How can they vote in the Democratic Primary in this State? They cannot vote in the Democratic Primary.

Q I know they can't.

THE PRESIDENT: So what? As Charlie would say.

Q David Lawrence, head of the Workers' Alliance, announced in a story appearing this morning that, regardless of the pronouncements against collections from WPA workers, he was going ahead with his plan to collect \$50,000., not so much to fight O'Connor but to sort of build up a war chest to help all their candidates.

THE PRESIDENT: You saw what Harry said the other day, that I very much hope that people on relief won't spend any money in contributing to any party. That is a pretty good statement.

Q Might we use that as a direct quote?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on Secretary Hull's note to Mexico requesting payment of \$10,000,000. for seized lands?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to get that from the State Department.

Q Mr. President, out in California now they are a little concerned about a new plan to give \$30. a week to every unemployed person over fifty years of age. Are you familiar with that?

THE PRESIDENT: Only vaguely, George (Durno). That is a thing that I can only talk to you about for background. You remember back in -- when I talked on social security on August fifteenth, I used a phrase in here, after talking about the improvement and extension of social security, I said:

"I am also confident that each year will bring further development in Federal and State social security legislation - and - that is as it should be. One word of warning, however. In our efforts to provide security for all of the American people, let us not allow ourselves to be misled by those who advocate short cuts to Utopia or fantastic financial schemes."

Well, I got from the Comptroller of the Currency a memorandum but it is too technical for either me to use or you to use. Apparently this -- this is all background stuff -- apparently this proposal in California is by no means a new one. It is essentially the old idea of issuing warrants to people over fifty years of age, and every time that these warrants -- which may be used to pay certain things, like state obligations, taxes, licenses, et cetera; I don't know what else they can be used for -- every time they are used you have to paste on a two-cent state stamp, which you have to buy with Federal currency, with regular currency. You have to paste it on once a week, which means that on every transaction,

once a week, somebody has to put a stamp on it.

The Acting Comptroller of the Currency points out that there are about a million, three hundred thousand people in California over the age of fifty, which would mean issuing warrants each year up to nearly a billion dollars, which means that those warrants would have to be paid for during the course of the year by a transaction tax of a billion dollars. Obviously it is a transaction tax. And that would represent about a quarter of the total income of all of the people of California. In other words, it is about a 25% income tax on everybody, but principally, of course, on the poorer people of the State.

Furthermore, it leaves out two important considerations. The warrants would not be good, of course, outside of the State, in other words, for any transaction for the purchase or sale of something outside of the State of California. You could not use them to buy an automobile that was bought in Detroit.

And the other question is a legal question, a constitutional question, about the right of a state to issue currency. I am not passing on that. I am simply mentioning the fact that this is a constitutional question. States are not allowed under the Constitution to issue currency.

As everybody knows, this plan is, on the face of it, an extremely attractive one. It is not very different from the Alberta or --

Q (interposing) Alberta?

THE PRESIDENT: The Alberta plan that was put into operation a few years ago. My understanding is that the plan in Alberta is not

working.

Q The Premier lost an election with that plan as an issue, I understand.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, while one is sympathetic with the objective very much, it is a short cut to an extension of social security. It would fall within the warning which I mentioned on the fifteenth of August.

And, of course, aside from the practicability of it, the essential objection is that it is a tax which falls far more heavily on the poor than on the rich. I think that is important.

Q Mr. President, who is sponsoring that plan?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q I think it is Olson.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it is, I don't think so. You had better check on that.

Q What have you done with Mr. Farley? Is he still around?

THE PRESIDENT: He went down early this morning, at 8.00 o'clock.

Q To New York?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q He is not going to get to Washington today?

MR. EARLY: To be perfectly frank, I think Jim suddenly discovered that it was his little girl's birthday. I don't think he wanted Bess to know that he had forgotten it.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't use it.

Q I saw Mrs. Rundall outside on a purely local question, on a school matter, and she said if you wanted to say anything about it, O.K. She did mention something of the possibility of a meeting next

week.

THE PRESIDENT: Some of them wanted to come down and talk it over, I think on Monday. I am not doing anything on it except to try to act as a clearing house between all these different districts. You see, there are -- Lord knows what -- nine districts?

Q About nine or ten.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q She wanted to make it clear that so far as her interests were concerned, she was not trying to tell them what to do.

THE PRESIDENT: No. We want to get them together because there are two facts which we cannot get away from. We need additional high school facilities for a couple of hundred children and we need additional grade school facilities for another two or three hundred, and if we don't get a plan through before the first of October, we don't get any PWA grant. Obviously something has got to be done to take care of the children. I am not laying down any plan. I am just simply calling attention to those two facts. We have a very serious housing problem with the school children and if we do not do something by the first of October we are out of luck.

It means roughly that if the total building, no matter where it was done, came to around, say, \$700,000., which I think is approximately the figure we talked about, it would mean if they do not do it now they would lose about \$300,000. from PWA, and therefore the taxpayers of the town would have to put up the \$300,000.

Q Mr. President, have you had a chance to check into the progress of the Poughkeepsie Post Office project lately?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read last night. They said they might have

it ready to dedicate.

Q Do you expect to come to the Fair?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot. I have got to be in Washington next week.

Q When you were talking about what this amendment would provide, you said that is for background. Well, that has been eliminated.

MR. McINTYRE: Would it be all right if I let the boys use it and draw their own conclusions? I mean, it is not very clear. If they quote your explanation of it we might all be in bad.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is all right.

Q As I understand it, your comments on that are usable?

MR. McINTYRE: Yes, except his explanation as to what he thinks it provides.

Q Have you any other callers today, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Have I, Mac? I don't think so. Probably have some local folks coming in.

Q Have you had any reaction at all to the statement on political morality -- outside of the Tory Press, that is? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes, I have had a lot of letters which are running a thousand per cent. favorable so far.

Q What would be a good definition of a Tory newspaper?

MR. McINTYRE: Illustration or description?

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you the easiest way and this has to be off the record. Put the owner of the Boston Herald and the editor -- the owner, these are owners I am talking about -- the owner of the Herald-Tribune, of the (Baltimore) Sun, Frank Gannett, Bertie McCormack, old man Hearst --

MR. McINTYRE: (interposing) Mr. Chanler.^d

THE PRESIDENT: Chan^dler --

Q (interposing) Roy Haard. [Howard?]

Q (Mr. Storm) You are not going to get my boss in there. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Clark Howell -- let us take some Democrats -- young Clark Howell, and the fellow who has this new Chattanooga paper -- a few of that kind, put them all in a room together, shake them up together, and the cocktail that comes out is the Tory Press. Now those are the owners.

Q Let us lay them end to end and see what happens.

THE PRESIDENT: What comes out is the Tory Press. It is not the editors. Hell, most of the editors have got families. They cannot lose their jobs. They have to write what the owner tells them to. You fellows do; most of you have families and can't think of it.

How did you like that definition?

Q You left Moe Annenberg out. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, we were given to understand that Mr. Farley was somewhat worried about Tam^many support of Fay, that it might militate against his chances in the fall, and I wondered whether he said anything to you about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is a new one.

Q Has your attention been called to Earl Browder's speech on the Coast about the Democratic Party having to embrace the Communist Party or something?

MR. McINTYRE: Mr. Browder said that you could not throw him down; to discourage his support would be throwing down Democracy itself.

THE PRESIDENT: It is on a par with Shirley Temple being a Communist.

It all goes right together. In fact, I am not sure it would not be fun for some of you to dig out the file of papers of 1911 and 1912, great fun -- this is off the record -- and see the names that Bob Wagner and I were called in those years. Communists? Of course. Hell, we were working for a 54-hour law for women and children in industry and the Herald-Tribune was turning somersaults every day, saying it was communistic for women and children to work 54 hours a week.

MR. McINTYRE: You did not brag about being a Communist?

THE PRESIDENT: We were that kind of Communists and we bragged about it. We admitted it. And, after that fire, the Herald-Tribune did the same thing. That was before John (Roosevelt) was born. They said, Oh, it was terrible for the girls to be burned up but when it came to factory legislation for inspection, they opposed it right through. It is an old story, the Poughkeepsie papers opposed it. Not the News-Press in those days. It was going then.

MR. DURNO: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Like the elephant, I have a long memory.

NOTE:

There were no Press Conferences held between September 9, 1938, at Hyde Park, and September 20, 1938. The President visited his son at Rochester, Minnesota and, upon his return to Washington, was incapacitated by a cold.