

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #491,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 14, 1938, 10.45 A.M.

Q You look snappy this morning. (Referring to the President's new suit.)

THE PRESIDENT: I am not feeling snappy. I sat up last night hearing the European side of things from Ambassador Bullitt.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not going up to Hyde Park until Sunday noon because I cannot get all the work straightened out until then.

Q Has the Administration changed its policy toward the prosecution of the local Medical Society?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have not followed it at all.

Q There was some report that the Government was going to drop its case.

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard a word about it.

Q Have you heard of the progress of the work on the Gravelly Point Airport?

THE PRESIDENT: Somebody told me yesterday that they hoped to get the first dirt flying in about ten days and I said that when I got back, a week from Monday, I will drive down with the Commission and look it over. Nothing formal.

Q Did anybody tell you it will take two years instead of one?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Your driving down there will inaugurate the work?

THE PRESIDENT: No speech or anything like that.

Q They wanted you to run a steam shovel.

THE PRESIDENT: No, just drive around.

Q At the last Conference you told us you might have something to say on the budget at this one. Any comment you can make?

THE PRESIDENT: The only comment is that I cannot make any comment for the reason that new developments in national defense require such a complete restudy of American national defense that it will defer, necessarily, any budget comments for some time.

Q Mr. Baruch, when he left yesterday, said that it was his opinion that the Army was lacking in modern equipment. He said that there is definitely not a first-class organization because of lack of what he termed, "modern arms." Do you propose, Mr. President, to ask for additional funds to supply the Army with --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In the first place, I did not read Mr. Baruch's statement, except the headline, so I cannot comment on that, but there are a good many people and a good many studies -- not just Mr. Baruch but a good many others -- who are very carefully checking up on certain new elements that have gradually been coming in for the past three or four years, elements that relate, just for example, to the problem of mass production, which we have never yet adequately considered. They are new things and therefore they require a good deal of study.

Q That mass production, does that include airplanes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and other things, too.

Q Have you taken any definite steps toward standardization of certain weapons and plane manufactures also with the idea of preparing for mass production? I understand there are several branches where standardization is needed, or some people studying

it think it is needed, to set up mass production.

THE PRESIDENT: You have answered your own question. The words, "mass production" necessarily mean "standardization." You cannot have mass production unless you have standardization.

Q Has your product reached a point of development where you feel you can standardize?

THE PRESIDENT: Other nations are doing it.

Q Is any centralized or interdepartmental body studying this?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am doing it.

Q Is that study being conducted with civilian advice?

THE PRESIDENT: Every known kind.

Q Is it the intent to create an organization similar to the wartime War Industries Board?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this has nothing to do with machinery for running it. It is a question of national defense.

Q Is it contemplated to materially increase the size of the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot give you anything on that because then you get down to a kind of partial report. We are then only taking up one small phase. If you ask me, "Are you going to have two more submarines?" or, "Are you going to give up the cavalry?" or, "Are you doing one thing or the other?" it becomes a very difficult matter because it takes away the whole rounded picture. What I want to do is to give to the country a complete picture, when we are ready, rather than in comparatively minor detail.

For instance, talking off the record, talking about \$150,000,000. for two new battleships, of course you people

had to write something. Of course that was not a new story, really, because the authorizations had been made last year. Obviously they had to go in. But I don't want to confuse the public by talking about items of that kind. I am thinking in terms of national defense.

Q Does the power study enter into it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you contemplate creating a unified Department of Defense?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a pure detail of later administration. What I am doing now is studying a plan to meet needs under rather new world conditions.

Q When will the plans be ready? Can you tell us the time?

THE PRESIDENT: By the third of January.

Q Can you throw any light on the reason which led to this decision to reorganize the whole national defense picture?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say, offhand, that it started about a year ago because of information that was coming in at that time. It has been in progress for about a year and it has, in a sense, been forced to a head by events, developments and information received within the past month.

Q Will you say, are you referring to technical or political matters?

THE PRESIDENT: Defense matters, not political.

Q I mean information that is coming in, is it technical?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, technical.

Q Any comment on the statement made yesterday by Groesbeck, of the Electric Bond and Share, in which he pledged cooperation to the Holding Company Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I asked some information on it yesterday afternoon, supposing that the question would be asked. It is fairly long and I will try to touch the high spots.

I am, of course, very glad to read of the statement made by Mr. Groesbeck at his stockholders' meeting, I think it was. In trying to evaluate it, I think we can say that the announcement illustrates exactly what I meant in the past when I urged cooperation between business and government in concrete and not in general terms; in other words, not merely lip service but getting down to brass tacks.

Secondly, it ought to be clear that the term, "death sentence," which was invented, not by the Government or by the Press but by the utility propagandists, three years and a half ago -- that is a matter of record -- that that term brought more harm than good to the utilities, and we are now going to have the opportunity to prove what we have always contended -- go back and read the debates in the hearings -- that that Section 11 in the Utility Act was not a death sentence but should properly have been called a "health sentence."

Q Did you call it a "life sentence"?

THE PRESIDENT: Health sentence. That, apparently, is being recognized by the owners of public utility securities. They are beginning to think that their securities are worth more money now that certain officers of the utilities have given up the old term.

Next, Mr. Groesbeck, being a good business man, the prospect is that private business will be helped by his action in

sitting down with a business-minded commission to work things out in a businesslike way, and we hope that other companies will come in. His views will be reflected in the views and statements of other people in similar positions. A number of companies, of course, are in and cooperating, such as the American Water Works and Electric Company and the Columbia Gas and Electric Company.

Finally, we all wish that this delay might have been avoided and that the utility companies might have cooperated without the many legal steps they took that preceded the Supreme Court's decision upholding the constitutionality of the legislative provisions but, on the other hand, this being a democratic country, where democratic processes work, it is a perfectly normal thing to expect that kind of a delay and it is all right.

Q Mr. President, do you feel it essential to seek extension of your powers over the dollar after next June thirtieth?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not the faintest idea. I had not thought of it until I read it in this morning's paper. It comes up this time every year, does it not? It is one of the hardy annuals. (Laughter)

Q Do you care to discuss the situation in the Communications Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The Communications Commission, I take it, is running their own job.

Q Did you happen to read the editorial on Mr. Dubinsky's statement urging you to mediate the C. I. O. and A. F. of L. dispute or to call a meeting of your own?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Has anybody suggested that to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Consider the fact that they have been called into my office.

Q I mean together?

THE PRESIDENT: They have even been in together.

Q No new conference plan?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would you care to make any comment on the disappearance of the post-Hoover recession? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think this action of the Electric Bond and Share is along the line of what that necessary and very proper temporary White House spokesman at Hyde Park mentioned two weeks ago. Of course, as you at Hyde Park knew, there was one reason for using that on that particular occasion, the reason being that a comparison was made of certain things that happened in foreign nations. We won't have any more, of course, unless there is some similar reason why there cannot be attribution to the President.

Q Are you going to make a speech in New York for the ticket?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, Fred (Storm). The only news -- I am being very expansive today -- is that the Governor (Lehman) is coming up to see me next week -- I do not know the date yet because it depends a little on his plans -- and when he comes up we will talk about the campaign as a whole in the state in which I vote.

Q (Mr. Storm) And where the O'Connell boys vote me. (Laughter)

Q Can you make any comment on the Palestine situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The Secretary of State has a statement which I understand is going to be given out very shortly.

Q Have you received a request from Senator Donahey to do something about the old age pension situation in Ohio?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #492,
In the President's Study at Hyde Park,
October 18, 1938, 12.00 M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: This is not a big crowd so it is all right. Colonel and Mrs. Murray over here in the corner. We have all had the best time yesterday that ever happened because when the good people landed on the CAMERONIA and joined us on the train, the first stories that went out were that Mr. Arthur Murray, famous dancing teacher, and his third wife were coming up to spend the day at Hyde Park. That was good. And the next morning Colonel Murray and Lady Murray were staying here -- that was yesterday morning's papers. And yesterday afternoon's papers said that "Sir Arthur Murray, railway magnate, and Lady Murray." So they have come to the conclusion that if they are not made Marquis and Marchioness before they leave, they will be quite hurt.

Q We can do that today, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good.

Q That is known as an American build-up, Mr. President. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news at all. Governor Horner, I believe, is outside. Governor Lehman is coming to lunch and Secretary Morgenthau is coming.

Q I had a query last night. The office wanted to know whether you had any ancestors in New Amsterdam in 1647.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Storm), it is a touchy subject. They did not start keeping passenger lists of immigrants until 1648, you see, and because their names were not on the passenger lists -- they

started in 1648 -- therefore they must have come over before that, but what the ship was and what the year was we do not know. We think there is a record. The original gentleman was called Kleine Claes, which means little class, and there is a mention of a little claes way back in 1640, so he may have come over then, but all we know definitely is that they were here before 1648. And then there appear various piecemeal records starting in '48 and '49. We know that they were surely here after that.

Q What did you think of that play the other day?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought it was grand. You know, I have never seen any shows just like that before.

Q Walter Houston did a swell job.

THE PRESIDENT: He came around after supper at the White House and was rather interesting. I thought he was going to hurt his knee terribly. He told me that he had thought so at first but he soon got used to it. He thought he would not be able to keep his balance but he soon got that, too.

I don't think there is any news.

Q Secretary Morgenthau is to be here. Is that purely social, or budgetary?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it will be budgetary from 5.30 to 6.30 and after that it will be social.

Q Anything new on the national defense needs' study?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing. They are proceeding very well.

Q Some of the newspaper stories have intimated that it will be tied up with recovery. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is just in the preliminary stage.

Q Would it run into enough money to really have any influence on recovery?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not the faintest idea. In other words, anything I can say or you would say would be pure, unadulterated guesswork. I don't know.

Q Does your phrase about guesswork apply to the story carried last night about 4,120 airplanes?

THE PRESIDENT: That is absolutely guesswork. I haven't the faintest idea. I could not write an intelligent story on it at the present time.

Q Secretary Wallace has given us this new farm plan. Anything you can say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I don't think I can talk about it intelligently enough to trust myself. He was here on other things.

Q Did you hear Winston Churchill's broadcast or radio speech in which he spoke about the union of English speaking persons?

THE PRESIDENT: No, only read the headlines.

Q We understand Mr. Hoover was on the air last night.

THE PRESIDENT: So McDuffie said.

MR. McINTYRE: That is off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: Mac says that has got to be off the record. And furthermore, he turned it off after five minutes. That is off the record, too. (Laughter)

Q Have you heard anything about Secretary Ickes' health -- reports that he has been sick?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Ickes? It was true that he felt the altitude crossing the Divide and he is all right again.

MR. McINTYRE: Fred (Storm) suggested that he had been in rarefied atmosphere now for several months. (Laughter)

Q I understand artists are being invited to submit some mural designs for the Poughkeepsie Post Office, one of a century ago and one comparatively recently. Was that your idea?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are just about done.

Q No, these are additional, one for each end of the hall. The artists have been invited to take part in the competition and the price they will get will be \$2100. each. It is to be submitted by April 1, 1939.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know except that the original plan called for panels that would bring things down to date. I suppose it is part of the original plan which Miss Reynolds and I worked up between us.

Q Is there anything you can tell us about Secretary Perkins' proposal for a thirteen-member mediation commission to settle labor disputes?

THE PRESIDENT: No; only what she said, that is all.

Q Is anyone coming with Governor Lehman, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I told him to bring anybody he wanted to.

Q What brings him up here?

THE PRESIDENT: To talk about the campaign.

Q The Illinois campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you mean Governor Horner. He is just east and I have not seen him for some time.

Q I was wondering.

THE PRESIDENT: I had not seen him since spring and I asked him to drop up here. No particular discussion.

Q Have you dispatched an invitation to King George in connection --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can only talk to you off the record. It is very difficult. When the head of a nation visits another nation, you do not have a special engraved invitation sent to him. It is not done that way. That is all I can tell you.

Q How is it done, Mr. President? (Laughter) Off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: No, not even off the record.

Q I believe they will be in Washington, nevertheless, won't they?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Have you heard anything lately that leads you to believe that relief expenditures can be held to the balance on hand?

THE PRESIDENT: We have just the preliminary studies of that. After all, there are two things, as you all know from previous years. First is the estimate of relief that is made up on the third of January for the balance of the year. That has been the custom, because you cannot tell much beyond the first of July. And then, later on in the session, the way we have done it before, we give them an estimate of needs on relief for the coming fiscal year, beginning the first of July.

Q Aubrey Williams was telling us at the White House that you had instructed him, if possible, to hold expenditures down to the sixty millions now available.

THE PRESIDENT: As I remember it, the bill gave us, definitely, the money up to the first of February and, in addition to that,

\$175,000,000. to be used as an emergency fund, if necessary.

Isn't that right, Harry?

MR. HOPKINS: No, it was the first of March. They appropriated money for eight months and then, if the emergency existed, we could spend it prior to the eight months.

THE PRESIDENT: That is it.

Q What was the total?

MR. HOPKINS: A billion and a half.

Q Have you scheduled any new meetings of the trustees of the school district?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard anything about what happened since we got here. I guess they are meeting all the time.

MR. McINTYRE: Do you think Governor Lehman could stop by and see the boys after --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will try to get him to.

Q We would appreciate it very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Unless he is going on to Albany.

MR. McINTYRE: He will probably want to play up to his own boys.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you suppose he will have a crowd with him?

Q I imagine so.

THE PRESIDENT: You don't know whether he is going to Albany? If so, he won't want to go back to Poughkeepsie.

Q Could we come up here and meet him?

THE PRESIDENT: It would be possible to have a double conference, but what would you do? You would have what they call "a conflict of authority." There might be some awful crossing of wires, with your stories and the fellow that is covering him.

Q We could hang it on White House circles.

THE PRESIDENT: That is always good. "Sources close to the Administration." It is all right.

Q Are you acting in this old age pension fight out in Ohio, trying to settle it?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know what has happened lately.

Q I had a message from Columbus, which said that State Auditor Ferguson was forwarding data for your consideration.

MR. McINTYRE: That has not arrived yet, Fred (Storm).

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard a thing for -- I don't know what -- ten days.

Q The AP has queried us from Albany on this supposed flood control conference here with Mac (Mr. McIntyre) this morning at eleven?

MR. McINTYRE: I have. I am going to receive a petition for you this morning.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #493,
In the President's Study at Hyde Park,
October 21, 1938, 10.45 A.M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Frederic (Storm). How is the boy?

What did you do yesterday with all the rain going on? What kind of golf did you play?

Q Indoor golf.

MR. McINTYRE: The game they call galloping golf.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is a very expensive game.

Q (Mr. Belair) Yes, sir; it is.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, let us see what I have got. I have several things here, if you are short of stories.

Q We certainly are, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I can give you lots of stuff.

No. 1: I have always checked up on the tourist travel in the National Parks just the way, when I was Governor, I used to check up every year on the tourist travel in the Adirondack Park and the Catskill Park and the various State Parks as being somewhat of an indication of the condition of the country.

Here is a memorandum that I got from Slattery, which I will give Mac (Mr. McIntyre) to show to you. It has got the figures in it but it is not to be used in a statement. It was made out in the form of a statement by me because there is a whole lot of stuff here that you need not use. (Reading)

"As I have repeatedly emphasized, it is my desire, and the purpose of this Administration, to raise the American standard of living so that all

of the people may enjoy better economic security and good living. Public use of the national parks, which are created for the benefit and enjoyment of the people, shows how well we have succeeded."

You can put that in your own language. (Reading)

"In 1933, administrative responsibility for many of the historical parks and national monuments was scattered among several departments of the Federal Government. For economy and the maintenance of consistent standards of public service, I consolidated that responsibility in the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior.

"In 1934, the first year that travel statistics were recorded for the consolidated national park and monument system, 6,337,206 people visited those reservations. In 1935, the travel figure climbed to 7,676,490; in 1936, it increased to 11,989,793; in 1937, it mounted to 15,133,432; and in 1938, 16,233,688 people visited the areas in the national park and monument system."

In other words, in four years the number of people who are visiting National Parks and Monuments has increased more than two and a half times, which is a very interesting thing.

(The balance of the statement, which the President did not read to the Press, is as follows:

"These travel figures, in other words, show that more than two and a half times as many people in the United States had the opportunity to visit national parks and monuments in 1938 than in 1934. As a gauge of how we have climbed out of depression, I think that is convincing evidence.

"The greatest increase in park travel was made in the number of people who visited the historical parks and monuments. There is a growing interest in our American traditions, accomplishments, and cultural heritage. Travel helps to build national unity.

"I am proud of our national parks, for they are a cultural achievement. They are a practical recognition of the educational and inspirational value of certain resources, as contrasted with the commercial exploitation of those resources.

"Parks are an implement of conservation. They conserve breathing spaces. They conserve archeologic, historic, and scientific masterpieces. They conserve forests, streams, and wildlife.

"Parks are also utilitarian. They provide for the use and enjoyment of outstanding resources. Whether that use is group play or individual contemplation of nature's beauty, it is use of national resources for human betterment, and with sustained economic returns.")

It is a beautiful statement. You can take all kinds of beautiful things out of it as long as you do not take it as my statement.

Q This does not include the National Forests?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course, in the National Forests they have not got the same kind of a checkup on the numbers as they have in the National Parks and Monuments, because so many people go into the National Forests without going over a road.

Q In line with these statistics as reflecting the condition of the country, have you any comment to make upon the widespread back-to-work movement in the automobile industry?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the only comment is that it is a very delightful fact.

Q And that, of course, will help in holding down WPA spending?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Then, here is another thing: I have been digging these things up. Here is another thing I have had for about a week or ten days and I cannot give you very much in the way of details on it because I have not got them, but it is the kind of a thing that, when you get back to Washington, if you want to write a special story, it is good.

Back in 1937, the Congress at the suggestion of myself and the Attorney General -- this was part of the Court objective -- passed a bill setting up -- I don't know what it was called -- a board, commission or group, or whatever it was, of Federal Judges to reorganize and reform Federal Court practice and procedure. Judge Kannee will know about this. Up to that time there were a great many complaints about Federal Court practice. It was slow, it was not uniform, it had a great many excrescences -- there is another word for it, but that is what it was. It had grown up over a great many years. It required speeding up for better justice and especially for quicker justice. This committee, I think that is what it was called, of Federal Judges met and, in accordance with the terms of the Act, made a report last spring, which I sent to the Congress. That report laid down a whole new series of simplification and standardization rules and the Act provided that the Congress would have the right to veto these rules before it adjourned, but that if they did not veto the rules before they adjourned, they would go into effect on the first of October. They did not take any action on the rules, one way or the other, and therefore they went into effect on the first day of October.

The result is one of the most important steps that we have taken for the reform of Federal judicial procedure.

And it is rather interesting as a sidelight on methods of Government, taking it in a broad way. These rules were -- put it this way: If the Congress had attempted to formulate rules themselves, which they had a perfect right to do, for practical,

present things, what would have happened? In all human probability, nothing would have happened. It was a more or less technical problem. It had been discussed for twenty years and nothing had happened. Therefore, the Congress very wisely said, "We haven't got the time, in a body consisting of the House and Senate, to go into the details of Court rules; therefore we will delegate the legislative function to set up rules to a committee of experts composed of Judges and assisted by the Department of Justice. And we will provide that what they bring in, in the form of rules, will automatically go into effect, provided the Congress itself does not veto them."

The result is that we have taken one of the most important steps we have ever taken.

Now, I do not have to point out to you the analogy between that procedure and a good many other problems of Government, such as reorganization and a good many other problems of actual administration. Rules of a Court are essentially an administrative problem and these new rules improve the administration. They are laid down by the people who run the Courts, the Judges and the Department of Justice, and the Congress gave to itself the right to veto them.

MR. McINTYRE: Is there any precedent for that action that you know of?

THE PRESIDENT: That we do not know, but it is an amazingly interesting accomplishment in a very sound way for getting more or less technical problems solved. It is a very interesting thing. Most people in this country do not know about it at all because

it has had just a stick or two. But all the lawyers who practised in the Federal Courts are quite thrilled by what has been accomplished.

Q For the purposes of our stories, are not those rather unimportant in themselves, as far as our story is concerned?

THE PRESIDENT: No, they are tremendously important from the point of view of the lawyer. They are very drastic. It is the most drastic thing that has ever happened in the practice and procedure before the Federal Courts. I cannot go into the details because I know only about half a dozen of the important things that have been done.

Q Stories have been printed on it.

THE PRESIDENT: You will probably find it in the files but it is the kind of thing that is not known to the general public at all.

Q Mr. President, naturally you are cheered over the method by which this was accomplished?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is a practical way of accomplishing Administrative reforms.

Q Have you anything else in mind that you think might be carried out along this line, such as reorganization?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. After all, that is the principle. It is the principle and the objective of what I have said all along about reorganization. In other words, give to the people responsible for administration in the Executive Branch of the Government, just as they did to people in the Judicial Branch of the Government, the right to bring in new rules, new plans, to the Congress and give to Congress the right to veto that plan within a given time.

Exactly the same thing.

Then I have got one other thing here: I have had reports from Administrator Andrews, of the Wage-Hour Administration, that are very gratifying in that there is a general disposition to comply with the law being shown by employers throughout the country.

The response has been such that the Administrator has some hope that many employers engaged in intrastate commerce, as well as in interstate commerce, may voluntarily accept the standards that are being set up for interstate commerce.

MR. McINTYRE: Couldn't they use that as a direct statement, just as you gave it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is all right.

Q Mr. Andrews --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. In other words, the Federal Government has the constitutional right only to regulate wages and hours in interstate commerce but it has been the thought behind the exercise of that right that local industries, operating only in commerce within a given state, would voluntarily adopt the standards of the other people. And it seems to be working out.

Put it down, John (O'Brien); it is a good story. Send it in.

Q (Mr. O'Brien) I got that.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe they will use it but it is a good story.

Q Could you give us a good story now by commenting on what Ambassador Kennedy said about getting along with dictators?

THE PRESIDENT: I read Dorothy Thompson's headline this morning. I did not read the story. That is the answer. How did she interpret it?

Q I did not read her; I had not read her. I would rather read his speech; it is quite a speech.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you get a query following Dorothy Thompson's interpretation?

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that was a columnist.

Q Is there anything you can tell us about your conversation with Mr. Bullitt?

THE PRESIDENT: No; he has been up here having a holiday. We have had no conversation.

Q Nothing on war debts?

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not. I am sorry to spoil that one, too.
(Laughter)

Q The picnic lunch was right? We had that right?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you had that right. That was all right.

Q Colonel Lindbergh was decorated by the German Government for outstanding services, as one who deserved well from the Reich. It has been pointed out that it was his survey on aviation that helped them. I wonder if Colonel Lindbergh has reported the results of his investigation to his own nation?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

MR. McINTYRE: He was decorated there but he would probably be crowned if he went to Russia. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you off the record about a thing like that, after all. Charlie Lindbergh is an awfully good fellow. They ask him all sorts of questions. He goes to a luncheon and talks about what he has seen and eventually it gets into the

papers. As a matter of fact, practically every Government in the world had any story that he brought out of any country weeks and perhaps months before he got into print. That is the real fact. There was nothing new to our Government in the story. It was merely new to the public. It was good news. We had it weeks before and of course our information does not necessarily check up with his but it is substantially the same.

Q I thought that perhaps, as a Reserve Officer, he might have felt that it was his duty to send it in?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

MR. McINTYRE: How can he get that decoration?

Q We checked up on it. A special Act of Congress gives him authority.

THE PRESIDENT: He would have to go back to Congress.

Q He got a blanket exemption.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know it had ever been done.

Q It must have been showered down on him.

Q They wait until those things pile up and then they put it through in an omnibus measure.

THE PRESIDENT: We have an omnibus measure every year and it goes through, naming people by name who have been offered decorations. Jim got one and Paw Watson.

Q George Fox --

Q (interposing) There is an interesting story in the box on page one of the Times. In the Federal Building in Newark they have just ripped up the Seal of the United States on the floor there, with no published reason, but it followed protests from a group there saying that it was desecration of the Great Seal

itself. That was something new to me. I did not know that the seal itself is ever placed --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now, that goes back to T. R. when McKim, Meade and White, the architects who re-did the White House -- what was it? 1904, 1903 or 1904 -- when they completely redecorated it, they put, I think it was the Presidential Seal --

Q (interposing) That is what it is in the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: It is on the floor of the main hall as you come into the door. I think if you will check back you will find that there was a lot of discussion about it and it was defended and criticized and finally T. R. said, "A seal is not a flag. You put a seal on a document and you stick it away on a library shelf." I think his ruling was that not being a flag it was perfectly proper to leave the Presidential Seal in the floor of the hall of the White House.

MR. McINTYRE: As a matter of fact, it is very interesting to know the number of people who do not like it. You see people who walk around it repeatedly.

Q There is a policeman there who does his best to keep visitors off. He shunts them away but they do not even notice the seal.

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe that was to keep the gold from being nicked off.

Q Mr. President, do you care --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It is not a very vital problem.

Q It is interesting.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, very interesting. That was T. R.'s ruling at that time.

Q Mr. President, do you care to comment on the virtual wholesale

indictment in New Mexico of sisters, nephews and cousins of
[Chavez?]
Senator Shipstead? There is quite a large group.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course, whether it be New Mexico or Dutchess
County or Brooklyn or Syracuse, get them all in. (Laughter)

Q Buffalo, too; they have one up there.

THE PRESIDENT: Buffalo, too. One is apt in local government, state
government and Federal Government always to find some indictable
people, and it is the duty of Government to go after them and
indict them, try them, where the facts warrant. Rather a nice
connotation there, off the record, in view of the State Campaign
and what Brother Dewey is saying, with Dutchess County, Syracuse,
Mayor Marvin, you read about him this morning -- I wonder what
Dewey's answer is to that.

Of course there are crooks whether the Government is Demo-
cratic or Republican, and they ought to be weeded out as soon
as you run up against them.

Q Do you know what brings Mayor LaGuardia up here?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not, frankly. I think he is going to talk about
projects in New York City.

MR. McINTYRE: He will probably offer to see the boys.

THE PRESIDENT: He will probably talk politics. I haven't the faint-
est idea yet. He has been due to see me for three or four weeks
and it is the first chance. I doubt if it is anything specific.

Q Are you making much progress in your study of the national defense
problem?

THE PRESIDENT: It is coming along all right.

Q I don't suppose there is anything you can say yet about the budget?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the only thing I can say about the budget is that next Monday or Tuesday, when I get back, I begin taking up the departmental budgets with Bell and I think he has two of them ready for me. I don't know which ones they are. I told him to bring a blue pencil with him. (Laughter)

Q When do you plan to return, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Either Sunday night or Monday night, I do not know which yet.

Q Mr. President, in view of the fact that Dutchess County is your home, do you want to extend your remarks about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that covers it awfully well, don't you? And by the way -- no, I won't tell you now; I may use it.

Q Tell us and we won't use it.

THE PRESIDENT: All right; don't you use it but I may. Did you see that perfectly joyous line in the slip that was made in the Eagle News about two weeks ago?

Q About taking it up with the Republican Caucus?

THE PRESIDENT: It was perfectly joyous. It is grand and the people of the State will love it if I use it. They are seeking twenty little relief organizations in this county, just the same way they have twenty little highway departments in this county. Twenty little highway departments -- just think of it! Isn't it an absurdity?

Q They have got a lot of Deputy Sheriffs, too.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q On this Federal reorganization matter, you spoke of early: What is the status? How much remains to be accomplished on it? Can

you explain that briefly? It seems to me several bills were passed last session.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I thought some of them were passed piecemeal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. The only bill that was passed was the Post Office Civil Service Bill. That related to it in a sort of an aside.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't you stage a real competition between Mac (Mr. McIntyre) and Hack (Miss Hackmeister)?

MR. McINTYRE: Hack can beat me. When that old Dutch girl starts to hitting them -- (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, I forgot to ask you: Mr. Straus is coming up to luncheon today. Anything special you are going to take up? Anything on Pittsburgh housing?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not that I know of. He is just coming up to report how much he has left in the way of projects.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #94,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 25, 1938, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: The Hyde Park boys had an extremely good vacation.

Q So we saw by the papers.

THE PRESIDENT: It improved their golf a little.

Q Is that a fancy map or something that you have there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is a crossing the line (Equator) diploma.

Fred (Storm) has two or three of them.

Q (Mr. Storm) I don't want to forget any either, Mr. President, when I cross again.

THE PRESIDENT: I have done three days' work in one already.

Q It looks like you did have a full day.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How is the house coming along?

THE PRESIDENT: Fine; plastered on the inside --

Q (interposing) Will you get in this winter?

THE PRESIDENT: -- I mean the house, not Fred (Storm). (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Storm) I am strictly on beer -- in Hyde Park.

Q Pictures of it look fine, very pretty.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead and shoot.

Q Have you heard anything from your Fact Finding Board on the railroad wage problem?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Will that report be released from here or by the Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I don't know what the procedure is.

MR. EARLY: We are giving it out.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says we are giving it out.

Q Mr. President, are you concerned with the testimony that has been given before the Dies Committee, particularly in the case of Governor Murphy of Michigan? Testimony last week charged him with treasonable activities in the settlement of the sitdown strikes in Michigan two years ago. Because he didn't call out the National Guard they claimed the lives of thousands of persons were endangered.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I certainly am concerned with that kind of testimony.

I think I would like to say something about it, but I think it probably would be better if I wrote something out instead of trying to talk extemporaneously because my language might not be polite enough so, if you will give me a chance, as soon as the conference is over I will get somebody in and dictate something for you. It is a pretty important thing and I think it can be done that way.

Q Can you say something about similar testimony about Louis Bloch, one of your recent appointees to the Maritime Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: How much space am I guaranteed in the papers tomorrow?

(Laughter)

Q (Mr. Storm) All you want, Mr. President.

Q I think we can guarantee to carry the text. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I guess I had better stick to one thing at a time at this time.

Q Can you tell us anything about these recent closings, when the wage hour law went into effect, of a lot of small low wage firms? They announced that they were going to close instead of complying with the Act. Did you talk to Andrews about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and I think we are both in entire accord that it is unfortunate that this should come up just two weeks before an election because, judging by any important social legislation that has gone on the statute books in the past, some people are immediately affected but it is by no means certain or clear that they are permanently adversely affected. In other words, a national law of this kind works itself out and it would be an exceedingly good thing if even the most reactionary newspaper owners -- owners, I said -- and politicians were to try, as a matter of patriotic duty, to help make a statute work. Lord knows, we did not have any help from that type of American in getting the statute passed. It is the attitude that says, "Oh, yes, I am in favor of decent wages but I don't like this suggestion, this way of carrying it out." And then you say to them, "Do you like such and such a plan?" and they say, "Oh, no, no, that is terrible." And then you make a third suggestion and they say, "Oh, no, no, that is awful." And then they either write or speak in favor of good wages.

And then, you say to them, "Well, what would you suggest? What is your suggestion?" And then they say, "Why, that is not my business."

Now, that is very much the American way of doing things and that is why it makes any improvement in the economic status or the social conditions of this country a long tedious process.

On this particular thing, the Wages and Hours Bill, it seems to me that the practical thing would be for the particular employers and for the Government really, honestly, to sit down and try to make it work, to see if they cannot (make it work). After all,

the pecan industry is not going to quit. They are not going to quit growing pecans or picking pecans or distributing pecans. Let us take that as an illustration. It is not going to quit. What we ought to do is sit down and try to make it work, the quicker the better. It is a question of point of view, of working with a definite effort to try to make this law work. I think that covers it pretty well.

Q Getting back to the Michigan situation, Senator Brown was quoted by the AP as saying that you had given him a definite pledge that the Mackinaw Bridge would definitely be built.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe he said that.

Q He was quoted.

THE PRESIDENT: I had better find out what he really said.

Q Can I have a statement from you as to the status?

THE PRESIDENT: The status is very simple. Here you have one state that is split in two by a strait between two great lakes and the state, for a great many years, has needed better communication than a mere ferry. A bridge is -- well, they have even talked about a tunnel but a bridge seems to be the most-practical. The bridge is a definite need of the State of Michigan, and, I think, a definite need for the United States. Therefore, what I told Senator Brown and what Senator Brown probably said was that I was going to use every effort in the next Congress to get a bridge built with Federal assistance -- that does not mean the whole cost on the Federal Government, not by a jugful, but Federal assistance, because it is a national problem besides being a very definite state problem.

Q What Congressional action will be needed?

THE PRESIDENT: The appropriation of money.

Q Sir, have you decided when you will go down to Gravelly Point to start the Airport?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not; what is a good date?

Q The movie men are boosting for Thursday or Friday.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will try to go down before I go back to Hyde Park -- next Thursday.

Q In your talk with Edison, Johnson and Williams, did you discuss the establishment of a national War Department Training School for mechanics in connection with the air program?

THE PRESIDENT: If you will put the question on a different footing, I will answer it. In other words, it is as I said ten days ago: If you can avoid for the present a factual story about who is going to do this, that or the other thing in a national defense program, it will be very much to the good for national defense. What we did talk about was the need of training a very large additional number of aviation mechanics. There is a great shortage in this country for any large aviation program and that is a matter -- the training of such mechanics -- is a matter that is being studied at the present time. We don't know yet who will do it or how it will be done and that is why I cannot be factual honestly in talking about who will do it or how it will be done. I am talking now about the need and we are discussing a great many different ways of accomplishing the objective.

Q How does the A. F. of L. feel about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Are they making any protests?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a matter that will, I suppose, be under study.

We are looking more at the total needs than anything else. We haven't got to that yet.

Q Are you contemplating any coast defense or bases?

THE PRESIDENT: It is the same story -- the same answer. You cannot talk about the details yet. We are talking about the objectives.

Q There seems to be quite a bit of discussion at the moment of the desirability of giving the CCC military training in connection with the expansion of any national defense program. Are you in favor of that?

THE PRESIDENT: That has not as yet been discussed.

Q There is some editorial discussion?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Referring to the air bases, may we assume from your answers that they are under consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you had better not assume that. It is like some columnist that attempted in one paragraph to define what a naval base was. I was a little amused, because I could not describe the many types of naval bases in twenty pages.

Q Still on national defense, has there been any change in the administrative policy toward lighter-than-air craft?

THE PRESIDENT: That is still under study. The question at the present time -- no reason why you should not know this -- the bill provides, as you know, for the expenditure -- I think it is at the discretion of the President -- of not to exceed three million dollars for a rigid lighter-than-air ship. That means that there are three

courses of action possible. One is not to build one, the other is to build one up to the limit of three million dollars, which is about six or seven million cubic feet, and the third alternative is to build a different type of ship, a smaller type, for a somewhat different purpose, in other words, coast patrol purposes, and we have not decided which of the three courses we are going to take.

Q I still don't understand quite whether you have the question of coast air bases under discussion or under study?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, strictly speaking, no, because we are studying a much larger problem. We are studying national defense. I mean, it is a little like asking me whether we are going to start new training camps. I haven't the faintest idea. We are talking about the larger needs of national defense and that is why, if you ask me whether we are going to build a lighthouse here or put a new Coast Artillery fort there, the answer is, "No," because I haven't got down to the details.

Q Have you come to any general idea as to the cost of this program?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no.

Q That has not come into it yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not in any shape, manner or form. I have no idea.

Q Did you and the British Ambassador today discuss the question of Palestine?

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Of Palestine?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can you tell us more about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter)

Q We are wondering whether he brought in a reply to your recent letter to Prime Minister Chamberlain?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you discuss with him, Mr. President, the forthcoming visit of the King and Queen of Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: It was touched on.

Q Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q How about the trade agreement with Great Britain?

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

That is being talked about and has been for some time.

Q Is there any answer from the British Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe so but I have not seen it yet. It is on its way over or is being received.

Q Have you discussed the international monetary situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did you discuss it with Secretary Morgenthau this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you tell us what the general nature of the British answer is?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, as I say, I have not seen it. I suppose it is a continuation of negotiations.

Q This, I suppose, is an "if" question. If the King and Queen come, will you have him over for a Press Conference so that we can see him? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Now, look, if any question like that ever gets out of this room, even in the form of a question, they won't come. Now,

you see what you are doing? (Laughter)

Q I thought it was to be part of their American experience.

THE PRESIDENT: If you want them to come over, for Heaven's sake don't ask questions like that.

Q Do you intend to make any speeches in the Pennsylvania political campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: I have already answered that about a week ago.

Q Aside from speeches, there is a report today that you might take some steps to aid the Democratic ticket. I don't know what the nature of the steps would be.

THE PRESIDENT: That is a new one on me.

Q Mr. President, aside from national defense, can you tell us how the budget is shaping up?

THE PRESIDENT: I am taking up -- I think it is tomorrow -- I am having the first budget conference and I think it is on two departments but I don't know which two. I think they will proceed through until I go down to Warm Springs around the twenty-second of November and will include, of course, all the regular departments and all the agencies of the Government in the regular normal running of the Government.

Q Do you plan any speeches in Michigan?

THE PRESIDENT: I have already answered that two minutes ago.

Q That was Pennsylvania; I asked in Michigan?

THE PRESIDENT: The same answer applies. In other words, in order to make it quite clear, I think it was ten days or two weeks ago that I said I was making the one speech and one speech only and that was over the air on the fourth of November at Hyde Park. That

ought to cover any questions on any other states.

Q I have got one after that, Mr. President: Are you going to stop in Chattanooga on your way down to Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: On the way down or the way back. I think we did promise that, did we not, Mac?

MR. McINTYRE: It is not definite.

THE PRESIDENT: Mac says it is not definite so I cannot promise it.

Q Mr. President, will you comment on Mr. Dewey's charge in New York that Democratic governors have been mere front men for politicians in New York State? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the Republican organization in Dutchess County.
(Laughter)

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #495,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 28, 1938, 10.55 A.M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

Q What is that, Mr. President, something new? (Pointing to a small bronze object on the President's desk, which had the appearance of an incense burner.)

THE PRESIDENT: That is 2000 years old -- 2100 years old. It came out of the ruins of Babylon.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, John W. Hanes, to be appointed Under Secretary of the Treasury today.

The Railway Emergency Board is going to report tomorrow at 12.30.

I think that is about all.

Q May I ask you to repeat that last?

THE PRESIDENT: The Railroad Emergency Board will report tomorrow at 12.30, to me.

Q Will we get the report then?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so. I have no idea what is in it.

Q Has there been any wide reaction to your attitude on Palestine?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; but not only before I spoke about it -- since I spoke about it, but before it. A great many letters came in, of course.

Q Did you have a letter from Cardinal Dougherty?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think so. They are all being answered.

Q Will any be made public?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course if anybody wants to make public their own letter to me and my reply, that is all right so far as I am concerned.

Q Do you care to comment on the findings of the Senate Campaign Committee regarding WPA political abuses in Pennsylvania and some other states?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot because I really have not read it.

Q Mr. President, there are reports yesterday that your Power Committee has already started conferences with the Utilities and that a loan was in sight?

THE PRESIDENT: The first part is right and on the loan question it is not right. I think the Assistant Secretary of War, who has been chairman of that committee, is going to give out a statement today which covers, roughly, two things. The first is the definite plans on the part of the Utilities for adding to their facilities and, secondly, that they are continuing to study on further plans.

Q Will there be loans, do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have no idea. It depends entirely on the individual situation.

Q Mr. President, is that Power Commission meeting regularly?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, right along.

Q Are they coming in to see you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think they are. (Laughter)

Q They are coming in today, Mr. President -- Johnson (Assistant Secretary Louis Johnson) and Edison (Assistant Secretary Charles Edison).

THE PRESIDENT: I guess that is about something else.

Q Mr. President, J. David Stern and Senator Guffey have been callers here within the last three days and today comes Robert L. Vann. There is quite a lot about Pennsylvania politics going on around Washington and I wonder if we could say anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I guess you are probably right. (Laughter)

Q Who arranged the visit of Mr. Vann?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose he asked for it.

Q There was a statement in this morning's paper from the SEC about the Whitney case. Is there anything more coming through, do you know, sir, about that matter?

THE PRESIDENT: As I understand it, this is part one of three reports. Of course, it is a very, very interesting document. It is rather horrifying. There is no use going into it; you have had the summary just the way I have. That shows certain practices that went on, which everybody, including the Stock Exchange, is trying to prevent in the future.

Q Have you seen the other two?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will they be made public?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so; I don't know. All I am able to say is that the thing was in three parts. It is very voluminous.

Q Mr. President, have you given any thought to any recommendations for construction of new naval or air bases in the Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a very interesting thing. I am wondering who is trying to find out.

Q I am.

THE PRESIDENT: Why is everybody so interested in the location of new

naval or aerial bases? I don't quite get it. Why, it is just part of the general program of national defense -- there are no details and no decisions.

Q The National Retail Dry Goods Association is proposing that you have a conference with distributors, laborers, farmers and all economic factors to consider an alternative to Secretary Wallace's two-price plan. Have you given any thought to it?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not even heard of it. I will have to ask about it.

Q Have you any comment to make on the suggestion of the Dies Committee that you were misinformed about its activities in the Michigan situation?

THE PRESIDENT: You know what I would do for a good story? I would go to your colleagues of the press who covered the Dies hearings and find out from them what they think about the conduct of the hearings by the Chairman.

Q (Mr. Paul Anderson) I covered them all.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that would make a good news story.

Q (Mr. Paul Anderson) I wrote it at the time.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think I am right?

Q (Mr. Paul Anderson) I think your comment on it was mild -- certainly mild compared to mine.

THE PRESIDENT: If I had been in your place I would probably have said the same thing. I think you will get a grand story by interviewing your colleagues up on the Hill who have been covering those hearings.

Q (Mr. Paul Anderson) Some of us wrote the same thing you said in your statement but in stronger terms. Some of us commented orally in

language -- (Laughter)

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #496,
Executive Offices of the White House,
November 1, 1938, 4.10 P.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope you enjoyed listening to the race (between Seabiscuit and War Admiral) as much as I did. I don't think there is any other news.

Q Mr. President, is there anything that you can say on your meeting with Mr. Groesbeck (of the Electric Bond and Share Company) this morning? He came out with a very bullish statement and said, or rather indicated to us that there was a rapprochement -- he said to use that word because it was a good old State Department word -- between the Government and the private utilities.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think that is all right. I don't think there is anything to add. We had a very nice talk.

Q Looks like you aren't going to get your little opportunity to go down to Gravelly Point before you go away.

THE PRESIDENT: Not this time. I think it is better to wait, Russell (Young), because we haven't got the dirt ready to fly, but we will, I hope, have it ready to fly by the time we get back.

Q Mr. President, did you tune in on Mars Sunday night?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I did not know about it until the next morning.

Q What has got to be done over there at Gravelly Point before you start? Is there anything important holding it up?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is the ellocation of the work among the different departments that will do it for the Authority (Civil Aeronautics Authority).

Q Will they have to wait until you go there before they can start?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are still working on the plans.

Q They won't start until you go there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, they may. This is not going to be a formal opening. I will drive down and look it over.

Q Anything about Mr. Harrison and Mr. Pelley?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you got all there was. You got it all from them.

Q Do you think the railroads are anxious --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They are holding a meeting, as I understand it, with the railroad executives.

Q Will you, sir, reconvene the special committee you appointed or will they reconvene of their own account?

THE PRESIDENT: They are reconvening on their own motion. Do you know when?

MR. McINTYRE: Very shortly.

THE PRESIDENT: Within the next few days.

Q Are you in favor of a naval base in the Caribbean?

THE PRESIDENT: We have one.

Q Are you in favor of expanding that one, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot answer that question. That is almost like asking, "Are you going to establish any more aviation bases on the West Coast?"

Q Is it too early to say when you expect to get back from Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly in time for the eleventh of November, Armistice Day.

Q Can you comment on the approaching visit of Colonel Batista?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that he has been invited to come here for the last couple of years and now I am very glad he is coming.

I am having a visit at the present time from an old friend of mine and a good friend of many of you, the former Prime Minister of Belgium, Mr. van Zeeland, who is sitting here behind me.

Q The Republican State Committee of Connecticut has just made public a poll which shows that 85% of the people are worse off today than they were in 1936. Does that merit any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: The comment is, "So what?" (Laughter) Consider the sources. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us when Commissioner McNutt may return from Manila?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I understand -- I haven't heard anything in the last -- what? six weeks, but about six weeks ago I understood he was coming back around January.

Q Does it rest with him?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, have you and Mr. van Zeeland come to any conclusions on the state of the world?

THE PRESIDENT: We have always had for a good many years very similar conclusions. The similarity has not changed.

Q Could you share any of those with us? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, has the Treasury informed you of the proposed efforts of the Daladier Government to absorb all the gold held by private investors and have foreign exchange control?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q With possibly a revision of the Tri-Partite Agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is a new one on me. I think, Fred (Storm), it was a UP story I read on the ticker.

Q (Mr. Storm) It ought to be true, Mr. President. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, Chairman Dies said last night that he had invited you to cooperate with the Committee so that he could make a proper investigation and that you declined. Can you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Ho hum. (Laughter)

Q Is that for quotation?

Q Can you tell us about your conference with these housing officials this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that was a further exploration of a problem that we have had for the last three years. We started in with the HOLC, which saved a very large number of existing homes, and then the next step was the FHA, which has been very successful in creating homes, new homes, for an income group -- to put it in a rather broad statement -- that could afford to pay ten dollars or more per room per month. Those figures, of course, are for the more northern part of the country.

That did not do much good for the poorest group of tenants and home owners in the country, so then we started what was at first the Slum Clearance Authority under the Interior Department and that graduated into the present U. S. Housing Administration. That has been very successful in providing a great many homes for people in the lowest group. That would take care of people who could afford to pay five dollars or less.

That still leaves in the nation a very large group of people who can afford to pay between five and ten dollars per room per month, who have not been taken care of by any of the existing agencies. This talk this morning was to discuss ways and means of getting cheaper financing for that particular group of the population, so that we could have, for example, in the north individual homes at a cost of approximately \$3,000. that would rent on the basis of between five and ten dollars per room per month.

Those studies are continuing. We have not found a definite way out yet. We are still working on that problem but it is a very great national need.

Q Would that involve private capital?

THE PRESIDENT: That is what we are trying to get, private capital.

Q Did the method of cheaper or mass construction enter into that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That is a part of it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a part of it, too.

Q Anything to say on that?

THE PRESIDENT: That part of it is probably a little more easy than the question of getting the money. The problem of getting the money is not that the money is not there, but the money that is put in by the very large investors and the large -- what shall I call it? -- the large sum money, where it is put in in great blocks by individuals and corporations, they seek, of course, some additional privilege for the use of that money, and many suggestions along the lines of tax exemption have been made for the money -- I mean tax exemption in the higher brackets in order

to encourage it to go in for this type of safe investment.

What I am exploring is the fact that we have in this country an enormous pool of money belonging to the small investors who do not come in the upper brackets of the income tax and are seeking to find investments that will bring them in a net of somewhere around 3%, $3\frac{1}{2}$ or $3\frac{1}{2}$ %. The machinery for bringing this type of investment to the small, individual family has never been developed.

I have had studies made in half a dozen communities, which show a surprising amount of \$1,000., \$2,000., \$5,000. potential investments where the people do not know what to put the money into. They had their fingers burnt in putting it into stocks and debenture bonds and things like that in 1927, 1928 and 1929. They won't go to the brokerage houses any more and they won't go to the bankers and the banks won't give them any advice -- they used to -- where to put the money. They don't know how to get a 3%, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ % return.

But the actual total of all these families and individuals that have got small amounts leads me to believe that there is a pool waiting for a form of investment such as this particular housing investment would be. Now, that is our problem and we haven't the answer yet.

Q Is that known as the Lambert plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is one of many plans. The Lambert plan does call for a partial exemption of income taxes in the upper brackets. That is what we are trying to get away from.

Q Has any consideration been given to the question whether the effect of the minimum wage law will diminish the need for rental subsidies

for the lowest paid group?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We think that there is -- well, for instance, that is the Straus housing. I suppose the applications to go into new Straus houses will be five and ten times the number of rooms that we have available so the improvement of wages will take a long time before that demand is satisfied.

Q There are 1800 applications for the Langston Housing Units in Washington which can take care of some 350 families and they are from \$3. to \$5. a room, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The Federal Building and Loan Associations, do they bring any small money into house building, or does that not pay enough interest?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that comes into that, not cheaper housing.

Q Has any plan been arrived at to salvage New England timber knocked down by the hurricane?

THE PRESIDENT: That is all done.

Q Settled?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Can you discuss the visit of Kettering (Mr. Charles F. Kettering, of General Motors) this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we talked about inventions.

Q Could you enlighten us on your conference last Friday with Robert L. Vann, of Pittsburgh?

THE PRESIDENT: He came in and talked to me about a Negro division in the Army.

Q Is that all?

Q Did he mention politics, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: He did not. I am sorry to spoil a good story, but he did not.

Q. Have you reached any decision on that experimental dirigible?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet; I haven't got a report. I am waiting for it.

Q. What are the reports you get from New York State on the political situation?

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

Q. Have you sealed any envelopes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. I am going to. (Laughter)

MR. RUSSELL YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Right. I will see some of you at Hyde Park on Friday.