

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #566,
Executive Offices of the White House,
July 25, 1939, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to have been up there. (Referring to Hyde Park)

Q (Mr. Young) As you come in, where was that field?

THE PRESIDENT: On the right-hand side of the drive, coming in.

Q Is it the big field?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there are about eighteen acres there. We are calling it twelve acres to conform with the law but the fact is that it is eighteen acres.

Q What are you going to do with all the bees?

THE PRESIDENT: They are going to stay right there. They are ancestral bees.

Q (Mr. Young) Where you had the exhibit, it was on the left?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. This is on the right. That was a good exhibit.

Q (Mr. Young) Fine and dandy. I enjoyed that. I was the only reporter out there that morning.

THE PRESIDENT: You were the only one that got up that morning. I remember it well.

(Somebody made reference to "Butch," a nickname fastened on Mr. Felix Belair, of the New York Times, during the clambake at the Morgenthau's, held the previous Saturday.)

THE PRESIDENT: I did not originate that.

Q (Mr. Belair) But you made it stick.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but I did not originate it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news. We had a Press Conference yesterday and I do not think there is anything to add to it.

Q Have you sent a letter up on the Hill on oil to Congressman Lea?

THE PRESIDENT: Oil?

Q Conservation of oil, coming out of your conference a couple of days ago?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

MR. EARLY: Not to my knowledge.

Q It is a letter to Representative Cole.

THE PRESIDENT: I think there is, to Representative Cole and two others. There is no reason why it should not be made public.

Q What are your views on the Federal Government making a start on this elimination of tax exempt securities by permitting the paper that will be issued under this new lending program to be subjected to state and local taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know about the legal point. I guess it is, anyway, is it not?

Q No, they would come under the R.F.C. and they would be tax exempt. There is some discussion at the Capitol as to whether the Government should make a start in this by letting these securities be taxed.

THE PRESIDENT: I have no objection because it carries out the principle.

Q Are you going to sign the Hatch Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not got it. Has it come to the White House?

MR. EARLY: It is here, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: "It is here," says Steve, and it will go to the regular departments.

Q What department? Would that go to Justice?

THE PRESIDENT: Justice and -- let me see -- any departments that there is specific reference to.

Q Mr. President, there is a principle of government involved in that that you might like to comment upon.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you because I have not seen the bill in its final form. There may be a principle of government involved, such as Constitutional provisions for free speech. I do not know, because I have not read it.

Q For instance, there is Jim Bryan, who has attended Democratic Conventions for years. He works in the Treasury Department and of course he could not be a delegate.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is not the Constitutional question I was speaking about. That is a different one. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you going to have any corroborations or denials or other comment on reports that Mr. Corcoran is trying to remove Mr. Farley as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know what you can call it. You can call it tommyrot. Isn't that a good idea? (Laughter) That refers to your story, you see, and not to Mr. Corcoran. (Laughter)

Q I have been waiting for an opening to ask this question because it is secondhand. I am asking it for Mr. Lincoln of our paper. He wants to know if Mr. Farley will be Postmaster General when he comes back from his European trip?

THE PRESIDENT: Without question.

Q Yes, sir.

Q On the letter sent to Mr. Cole, did that go up today?

THE PRESIDENT: What was that?

Q To Mr. Cole on petroleum?

THE PRESIDENT: I sent it up from Hyde Park on Saturday. I think that is my best recollection. Pa Watson looks awfully worried. Will you look it up and see? It may be a wild dream on my part.

Q Mr. President, I understand that it is up there. (Referring to Capitol Hill)

MR. EARLY: That is the reason we do not know, if you sent it up from Hyde Park.

Q Can you tell us what you discussed this morning with Barkley and Rayburn, specifically on legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Just a review of all the bills that are pending.

Q Did the question of adjournment come up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and they both hope that they will adjourn next week.

Q Did you discuss the relief situation with Senator Murray this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Just a minute. Will you stop in Maine, if you go up to Campobello?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I will go ashore anywhere except possibly at Campobello.

Q Do you know the place where you will take off?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Did you discuss how to get the spending-lending bill on the floor

of the House?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Did they tell you they may have trouble with the Rules Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you think you will have trouble?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q I do not know who it is that tries to adjourn this Press Conference so quickly. I have a question. Have you given any thought to denouncing the commercial treaty with Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know anything about it. I have not talked to the State Department since I left, except on a couple of other things.

Q It is the Vandenberg Resolution. That is simply a form of recommendation to the Executive. It is not in any sense binding, of course.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, Fred.

Q Have you had an opportunity to discuss the Louisiana situation with the Attorney General?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would you care to comment on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I do not know enough about it.

Q Have you acted on the new Niagara Falls Bridge Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I signed it today.

Q Can you tell us anything about your talk with McNinch today?

THE PRESIDENT: No; we will probably have a story pretty soon but it is not ripe yet.

Q Anything on the Secretary of the Navy yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a thing.

Q Anything on your acceptance of the invitation to the Young Democrats' Convention at Pittsburgh?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I do not think I will be able to go because I will probably be at sea but I will send a message.

Q Is it your understanding that the Niagara Falls Bridge is to be financed through the R.F.C.?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any idea. All I know is that there aren't any tax exempt security features in the bill.

(There was a pause and the President said, "All right, May (Miss Craig), you say it.")

MISS CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #567,
Executive Offices of the White House,
July 28, 1939, 10.40 A.M.

(Mr. Earl Godwin showed the President the cover of the last issue of Ken Magazine, which caricatured the President and the Press.)

THE PRESIDENT: This is off the record. (The President had not as yet looked at the cover.) I found this morning on the table, beside my bed, a memorandum from Steve (Mr. Early), dated about a month or six weeks ago, with respect to sending flowers to a certain gentleman who was in the hospital and was not expected to live. The gentleman in question is out playing golf now.

MR. EARLY: You should tell him that the memorandum has been here a month.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Look at your Press Conference there. (Indicating cover page of "Ken.")

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I do not think it is complimentary to the Press. I am good looking there.

Q That is the last issue of "Ken." They fold up.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they, really?

Q With this.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they ought to, after that.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I have got any news at all. I asked Steve and he said I have no news, so it is all right.

Q Anything about your week-end plans?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going down tonight and back Sunday night.

Q Who will be with you?

THE PRESIDENT: Let us see; General Watson and General Early, Admiral McIntire and Admiral Frank Walker.

MR. EARLY: Admiral Callaghan.

THE PRESIDENT: Admiral Callaghan.

Q Are you going after marlin?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. It depends entirely on the weather as to where we go. It always does.

GENERAL WATSON. General Harry Hopkins.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; General Harry Hopkins is going too.—

Q Have you decided, sir, whether you will approve the Hatch Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am going to take a lot of documentary evidence down the river with me and discuss it with the Army and Navy.

(Laughter)

Q Have you had an opinion from Murphy (Attorney General Murphy) yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I am thinking, it being the Hatch Bill, that you will have to discuss it with the Navy. (A chorus of hisses and boos)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh-h-h-h!

Q Throw him out.

Q (Mr. Godwin) It is down the hatch.

Q Can you tell us what phases of the bill you discussed with Senator Hatch yesterday? What specific phases you discussed with him?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, a great many phases were discussed. I think probably the most interesting phase is the language as to what Government employees can do and what they cannot do, the language being very vague, and also as to the problem of enforcing the law, as to who would enforce it, and also the problem of

state and other Government employees -- non-Federal.

Q Mr. President, do you care to make any comment on Mr. Lewis' attack on Mr. Garner yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think that the same gentleman said some things about me a little while ago and there was no comment.

Q That is a very discouraging statement you made about the Hatch Bill.

THE PRESIDENT: I would not take it that way.

Q I took it that way. Frankly, I thought you were trying to discourage us.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think one wants to study the implications of language that is very general in its terms. I will give you a simple example: Suppose you are a voter and also a Federal employee: Can you go to a political meeting?

Q You mean under the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I felt I could.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the point, nobody knows.

Q You mean attend a rally or go to a political meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Now then, your best friend is running for office and asks you to sit on the platform. Can you do that?

You see, there are all kinds of implications. You have a friend and yet you are a Government employee. You are anxious to have him elected and, without solicitation, you send him a check for twenty-five dollars. There are all kinds of implications in it. I do not know.

Q It would clearly -- let me take a specific example of a man in Washington who has been very prominent in the Democratic National

Committee, Mr. Colpoys. That would clearly rule him out.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes, as such. No question about that. That is taking part as an official in a party election. That is an entirely different thing. Nobody is raising that question. There are a lot of Government employees that want to know whether they can attend a political meeting, whether they can sit on the platform, whether they can contribute.

Q Doesn't Senator Hatch say they can?

THE PRESIDENT: Read the language and you will get as many opinions for a hundred possible cases as there are people in this room. For every opinion one way, you will get an opinion the other way. That is the real problem. What can people legitimately do is a very, very broad question.

Q Can you ask for clarification without a veto?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. We are merely studying at this time what people can do and what they cannot do.

Q Just for the record, do you favor the objectives of the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Favor the what?

Q Objectives.

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely.

Q Have you satisfied yourself on the constitutionality of it as yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that a secondary -- not a secondary consideration -- isn't that a necessary implication of studying what people can do and cannot do? That is the answer to that.

If, under it, it should be construed by this Administration or some other administration that you cannot go to a political meeting, then there is a great question of whether that would

make it unconstitutional.

Q Do you think there would be any question?

THE PRESIDENT: That is the whole point of it. That is what we are studying. In other words, it is purely in the study stage and do not, any of you, go out on the limb because we have not any other consideration than definite questions. There are fifty different kinds of cases: Can a Government employee do this or cannot he? That is all. We have not got beyond that. So don't, please, write about what is going to happen, because that has not been taken up.

Q It was stated on the air that you were going to send the bill back for clarification?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are going to a phase that has not been taken up yet.

Q I said that because --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I know; I have read all kinds of things.

Q Does your study include the question of whether it might result in the strengthening of state political machines?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not been considered from the political angle at all.

Q Do you consider the bill definitely phrased so that Government workers could not attend a political convention?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how many people are there in the room? You will get 150 different opinions. There will be many questions. Where do you sit, in the back or on the platform? Do you applaud? And so forth and so on.

Q There is some mention in the bill of benefits, so that some people

reading the bill think that a farmer receiving benefits might be affected.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of that.

Q It says any person receiving work relief or relief, and the interpretation on the Hill is that parity payments can be construed as relief, as can any other agricultural payments.

THE PRESIDENT: There you are. That raises an interesting point.

I never heard of it until this morning. What is relief?

Q Mr. President, are you ready to say approximately when the country may expect a statement on the third term?

THE PRESIDENT: Statement on what?

Q Are you willing to say approximately when the Nation can expect a statement on the third term?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter)

Q May I revert --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) And that is being awfully kind. I did not crack down on anybody. It is all right. The answer was, "No."

Q Jake Baker, of this employees' association, is supposed to have sent you a message calling your attention to another bill, the Ramspeck Bill, which extends civil service throughout and does the same thing, has the same objectives as the Hatch Bill. Have you received such a communication from Mr. Baker?

MR. EARLY: Not to my knowledge.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of course, as you know, I have always gone along with Ramspeck to try to extend the civil service to a great many of those agencies which are, by Act of Congress -- not by my act -- kept out of civil service.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the Rules Committee action yesterday in reporting out all of the different amendments to the Wages and Hours Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that after you get all kinds of legislation to the floor you are more apt to get action than if all kinds of legislation remain in the Committee. In other words, it is a hopeful step towards August fifth adjournment.

Q Any comment to make on the lending bill as it is before the Senate now?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had any time to read what happened last night in the Senate.

Q The abrogation of the 1911 treaty; is that a step to embargoes?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think, Pete (Brandt), anything further need be said on that today. Ask the State Department.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #568,
Executive Offices of the White House,
August 1, 1939, 4.12 P.M.

Q Mr. President, good morning, how are you?

THE PRESIDENT: Russ (Mr. Young), how is the infant coming along?

Q (Mr. Young) Very well indeed. What about the big seventy-pound fish you did not catch?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Did you notice the newspaper accuracy on it?

Q (Mr. Godwin) There has been a good deal of faking on that since Jonah's whale.

Q Pa (General Watson) says that he has got \$50. that says he caught the biggest fish. Is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: Pa always catches the biggest fish. No. As a matter of fact, I caught far and away the best fish on the trip. I never saw one before. It was a ten-inch mackerel. I had him for breakfast and it was the most delicious fish I ever ate.

Q How did you know it was a mackerel?

THE PRESIDENT: It had all the fins.

Q How big are they ordinarily?

THE PRESIDENT: Three feet; two or three feet.

Q Hadn't you ought to have thrown him back?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know if there is any law on that but anyway it is inside of me now, so it is safe. Gosh, it was good. It was the most delicious I ever tasted.

Q Mr. President, I caught a ten-inch trout.

THE PRESIDENT: But this mackerel was better than any trout I ever tasted.

Q It was that long and that round (indicating); like an eel.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you mean sea trout. They are all right if you eat them within an hour, otherwise they get soft.

Q Yes. We cut them up and salt them in brine.

Q (Mr. Young) A big gate today.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you ever try baking a fish in mud? It is the most delicious thing in the world. It is all solid and then you crack it open. You use nice good, clean clay.

Q Is that so?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: We have answered all the questions in the front row while you were all coming in in the back row.

Q Did you hear about the House vote on the lending bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I did. I have not had an analysis on it yet.

Q Any comment on it?

THE PRESIDENT: How did it line up?

Q 193 to 166 refusal to help the rule. There were 147 Democrats, the count showed, joining the Republicans.

THE PRESIDENT: Practically a solid Republican vote?

Q Yes; very few opposed, one or two.

THE PRESIDENT: I think this, by way of comment: We have to look at the results. If we do not get legislation at this session, if we had been able to start the lending program, the effect of it would have been felt by industry within from sixty to ninety days. In other words, orders would have begun to flow in to industrial plants. That would have put people to work and, almost automatically, a certain proportion of those people put

to work would have been taken off the relief rolls, thereby accomplishing the fact of reducing Government expenditures for relief, thereby reducing taxes to the average taxpayer and, at the same time, giving employment without permanent cost to the Government or to the taxpayers.

So, the net result is, from that point of view, that the failure of the bill is automatically going to cost the taxpayers of the United States quite a lot of money, a good many hundreds of millions of dollars and, at the same time, will mean that a large number of industrial plants will not have their production stepped up in the same way as if the bill had gone through. There will be more people who will have to be taken care of on relief than if the bill had gone through. That is perfectly obvious and, of course, the people who were responsible for the failure to adopt the rule have an absolute -- Congress has an absolute right to make that determination, so there can be no possible criticism of the action of Congress, except that there is an absolute right on the part of the taxpayers of the country and the people on relief in the country and the industrial plants of the country to know exactly where the responsibility lies and, of course, an equal right to ask the names of the people or parties who voted against the rule.

Now, of course that can all be reduced, very simply, to figures. I have not had any chance to have the thing reduced to figures of dollars or of human beings, but it is a very simple thing to figure out how many dollars would have gone out, let us say within a year, under the lending bill if it had gone through.

We know how many people, from past experience, very definitely, how many people are put to work for every dollar spent on public improvements of various kinds. So, if you figure the number of dollars that would have been spent within a year on public works by the lending method, you will be able to find out the number of people who would have been put to work under that program within a year and, per contra, you can see how many people will fail to get work through the failure of the bill.

And then, we also know, in spending public money, what proportion of people on public works are drawn from relief rolls and it means that those people have to be taken care of on relief, as they are at the present time, rather than removed from the relief rolls.

That is about the long and short of it.

Q Do you recall what those figures are, by any chance?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q On that tax, can you elaborate? Can it be interpreted that this new tax bill will call for higher taxes on the public to meet the situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What did you mean when you said it called for higher taxes and more taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Because every man that we take care of on the relief rolls costs the people some taxes, does it not?

Q I thought you meant additional taxes.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You did not recall those dollars and the people, the proportion.

Does this refresh your memory at all? I may be wrong about it, but for every man on the Public Works payroll, Secretary Ickes used to say that there were three or three and a half men behind the line. Does that bring anything up?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That was the figure that was used on all P.W.A. estimates and checked back after the actual work was done, and that was the figure, about three and a half people are put to work behind the lines for every person that is put to work on the job itself.

Q Would that apply?

THE PRESIDENT: That would apply in this case, the same thing.

Q But you do not know how many dollars it took to put one man to work on P. W. A.? You do not recall?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any plans to meet the situation while Congress is still in session.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything to be done.

Q Will you ask for a larger relief appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Congress has determined that already.

Q Is it a fair guess that this matter will come up at the next session to be urged by you, sir, at the next session?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know, Fred (Mr. Essary). --I only got to that point. I only heard about it about an hour and a half ago. I do not think that fast.

Q There was also talk at the Capitol that the \$800,000,000. housing bill will go down also, as a result of this same Congressional attitude?

THE PRESIDENT: As you know, also on the housing proposition, one of the principal objectives was to begin slum clearance in a great many of the smaller cities of the country.

The first lot, you might say, of projects that were put into effect last year have related to the most, what might be called, the most important and crying needs of the larger cities in the country and we are now getting down to the point of being able to make a dent in the slum conditions in many of the smaller cities so that it would affect pretty nearly every state of the Union in the course of the coming year, and that, of course, would have meant putting a great many people to work.

Q That is not yet killed?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but, as I say, if it is killed also, a great many people would lose a chance for a job which they otherwise would have got.

Q There is a housing program that has not yet run out of money.

Isn't that so?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true but, as you know, there are applications in that will more than take care of all that money and it takes quite a while after an application first comes in to get the plans and everything all through and there is not, actually, enough money still available to meet all the applications that are already in.

Q Going back to those figures once more, did you determine, even in round numbers, how much employment you figured your lending program would give?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because that involves my knowing how many people

or how many dollars are necessary to put an individual workman to work on a project and I do not remember the figure.

Q Senator Barkley said in his report to the Banking and Currency Committee that it would create 500,000 new jobs.

THE PRESIDENT: If he said that, it is probably correct. Senator Barkley would not have made the statement unless he had pretty good authority.

Q We understood that to be the first-line jobs and not those behind the lines.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. Jones said there was \$1,300,000,000. of lending authority in the R. F. C., and as I read your program, it only called for \$700,000,000. expenditure during the next year. Couldn't this be very easily taken care of by a little change in the authority of lending? That is, couldn't the three billion --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is essentially what this bill did. It was just to take care of these "litty bitty" things that would make those existing funds available.

Q But it did not sound "litty bitty" the way you put it out.

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You know you can accomplish a lot sometimes with just a few words and it does sound fairly important when a "litty bitty" change will put five hundred thousand people to work in the front lines. Isn't that right? That is something to think about.

Q Of course they contended, up on the Hill, that most of these things the R. F. C. could do now and that they had the three billions.

THE PRESIDENT: And the R. F. C. would do them now if they had a "litty bitty" change, and that is what we were asking for in this bill.

Q One of the criticisms raised was that you were trying to circumvent the \$45,000,000. constitutional --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now, let me ask you a question, a very simple question: Suppose there is a bank that has got a million dollars of deposits in your home town, which is a good average small town bank. It has got a million of deposits. Of course that is a direct debt from that bank to the people who put money into it. It is a direct debt. Would it be fair to you to get up in the Congress, or on the stump, or write an editorial and say, "We wish to call your attention to the fact that the First National Bank of this town has a debt of \$1,000,000. We wish to call your attention to the fact that this is a tremendous sum for the First National Bank to owe." And then you end your editorial or speech on that note. Would that be fair?

And yet, that is what every one of these people are saying. Now, of course it would be fair if you said, "Yes, it owes a million dollars but it has assets for that million dollars and more besides because it has got all of its paid-up capital in addition to that million dollars which stands behind the debt of the million to the depositors." Therefore is it a fair proposition to say that, when the Government borrows money and then lends that money out -- in other words, it is doing just exactly what the First National Bank of Squeedunk is doing -- that the Government is that much indebted? Is that any different

case from the case of the First National Bank? Isn't it fair to say that the Government has received for its million dollars which it has borrowed and then loaned, certain security, certain assets, certain promises to pay, just like when it buys, when the bank buys the mortgage of the farmer, takes a mortgage on his farm and lends him the money?

The Government, in this case, puts the money out on good security, a straight credit basis.

It is worth remembering, in that connection, back in 1934 -- you read the Congressional Record for the spring of 1934 and you will find speech after speech that was made in the Senate and the House by the Republicans and a few Democrats that all this business of Jesse Jones lending out this money, why, it was all bunk, that we would never get the money back, that we would be darned lucky if we ever got fifty per cent of the money back. Read it in the Congressional Record. And the Director of the Budget at that time came in with a long face, day after day, and said, "Mr. President, you should not accept Jesse Jones's statement that he is going to get back practically all of the money that he has been lending out." He said, "You will be everlastingly lucky if Jesse Jones gets back half the money he ever lends out." He pulled a long face so often that I was afraid he was not in sympathy with what we were doing and he got out. (Laughter)

And of course the record shows that he was wrong and these people in the House and Senate were wrong because Jesse Jones has got it all back. Now, there is the record and they are pulling the same old line at the present time. They are saying,

"This lending money, you will never get it back." The same crowd is saying it that said it in 1934. There is nothing new in this world. It is all the same idea.

Q Would you like to say a few words in commemoration of the historical significance of tomorrow? Tomorrow will be the twelfth anniversary of the statement of former President Coolidge that he did not choose to run. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you suggesting that I should take my summer holiday in the Black Hills?

Q No, sir; I merely wanted a few words in commemoration.

THE PRESIDENT: I think, on my summer holiday I am going to be away, off at sea, and I am going to take three gentlemen of the Press, from the Press Associations, who will follow me on a destroyer. I hope for their sake it will be a smooth sea. Everything that they send in from the destroyer, you see, has to go through me. (Laughter) So you will get duly censored news all the time I am away. That is the only case where we have censorship of the Press. Then, when they get sick, I will have to write their stories for them, so that will be that much worse.

Q There is a bill in the Senate, a measure that extends the life of the civil liberties measure. It is jammed up somewhere. Do you know about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I have said it before and I want to make it just as strong as I possibly can, that I hope that amount will be given by the Senate Committee to extend the work of that Civil Liberties Committee.

As I understand it, they thought a year ago, a year ago last

spring, just before the session ended, that if they got the final \$50,000., it would complete their work. But, as the investigation went on last fall, they uncovered a great many new things that they believed were violations of certain civil liberties and they believed that those new things ought to be investigated but Senator La Follette felt that, having given his word that that final \$50,000. would be the final \$50,000., he felt that he ought not to ask for any more. He made a statement on the floor that that was the only reason he had not asked for it, but he and his colleagues actually felt and stated that they ought to have it to look into those new things that they had uncovered, so I hope very much, for the sake of civil liberties in this country, that the allocation of money will be given to them.

Q In connection with the visit today of the Mexican Ambassador to see you, can you tell us anything about the letter which I understand he brought?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Can that be made available?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is a personal letter.

Q Mr. President, do you feel that this southern group made out a case against the $32\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ minimum wage?

THE PRESIDENT: I am looking into it. In other words, the case presented lay between 30¢ an hour and $32\frac{1}{2}\text{¢}$ an hour, or a total of 20¢ a day, but they stated that that 20¢ a day would cause a very large number of small southern mills to close up for various reasons. So I am going to do some checking on it.

Q Can you tell us about your talk with Mr. Archibald McNeil of Connec-

ticut?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he just came in to say, "How do you do?" I have not seen him for about a year.

Q Have you made up your mind what you are going to do about the Hatch Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Would you care to tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (Laughter)

Q Would you care to tell us --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think you will get something tomorrow.

Q On civil liberties, did I understand that only the Press Associations are going with you on your northern trip?

THE PRESIDENT: That is all, Russ (Young).

Q Just for the record, that is all. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't you get hired by a Press Association for the occasion?

Q No, thanks.

Q Will Senator Hatch have any desire to have that pen as a souvenir?
(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is not even subtle.

Q To go back to the cotton manufacturers, are you considering a differential as well as the amount of the recommended minimum?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You know my position on the question of minimum wages. For a long time I felt there should be a differential between those parts of the country where the cost of living was definitely higher, in other words, where in one part of the country you could maintain exactly the same standard of living

as in the other part of the country for a little bit lower price, a little bit lower living cost. I have always been in favor of that, a small differential, and that was very well exemplified and carried out in the N. R. A. provision where they had, I think in the North it was \$12. and in the South \$11. That was, roughly, a ten per cent differential. It was the lower South, where you do not have to have furnaces and winter overcoats and so forth and so on. There is a definite differential.

Q Is that substantially what you told those people today, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Your conversation with the Mexican Ambassador, would you say there was any likelihood of negotiating that oil settlement soon?

THE PRESIDENT: We did not talk about that.

Q Will there be a Message --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, that is not subtle.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #569,
Executive Offices of the White House,
August 4, 1939, 10.44 A.M.

Q Look at that necktie! (Referring to necktie worn by General
Watson)

Q Watson's necktie!

Q You do not have to look at the mirror.

Q It is a breakfast egg tie.

Q (Mr. Young) Do you think you will go down the river tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I will stay right here. Bills will begin coming
in tomorrow, I hope.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news. The plans are that --
Rudolph (Mr. Forster) says there are about 350 bills, somewhere
between that and 400, that are due to come to us -- after the
Congress has adjourned, I will stay here for two full days to
see any members of the House or Senate that want to come in
and talk about anything and, incidentally, I will sign bills on
the side. Then I will go up to Hyde Park and keep on signing
bills for nearly a week -- and vetoing. Then I will get on the
cruiser and disappear for a little while.

Q How long do you intend to disappear, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: A week or ten days.

Q Where will you board the cruiser, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know yet definitely; probably New York.

Q Mr. President, I know you do not anticipate things of this sort,
but there is a Civil Service Retirement Bill which you possibly

know all about by now. Do you intend to sign it?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know enough about it, Earl (Mr. Godwin).

The general principle is pretty good. I have not seen the bill in its final form.

Q Have you signed a bill for refunding about a million and a half dollars to the Muskegon Conservancy District of Ohio?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You have not signed it?

THE PRESIDENT: It is to reimburse for the purchase of that land?

Q Yes.

Q Getting back to the cruise, when you finish with the cruise are you going back to Hyde Park or here?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably at the end of the cruise we will turn around and come back here because I will have been away for about two weeks. I probably will come back here for a while and then go to Hyde Park and between then and October I will divide my time between here and Hyde Park.

Q Where does that put the western trip?

THE PRESIDENT: About the first of October.

Q Do you agree or disagree with the statement of Senator Taft to the effect that no sensible person will want to be President after 1941? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No sane person, did you say?

Q No sensible person.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he say that about his own candidacy? (Laughter)

Q He said it in connection with his own candidacy.

Q Won't you answer?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't you think that is an awfully good answer that I have already given?

Q Have you found any more people with a passion for anonymity yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Are there to be three more appointed or are you going to stand pat on the first three?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not going to stand pat on the first three. Whether I will appoint three more, I do not know. In other words, there is no reason why I should not tell you the exact situation. My general thought is that I will appoint two more and keep the sixth place vacant as a place to put in somebody to perform some special duty, some specific duty of a temporary character. That was the general thought originally and it seems to be a pretty good one.

Q Would that, then, be temporarily filled from time to time, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: If necessary.

Q Any comment on the House action on the housing bill yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No comment. Res ipsa loquitur; including the roll call.

Q When will those two be appointed?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q Mr. President, there seems to be some conflict between the Army Engineers having charge of flood control projects and the engineers of the Bureau of Reclamation regarding the construction of some dams and reservoirs in the West. I believe you recently had some people here to talk over that situation. Is there

anything you can tell us about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It goes back, really, to the first study of the reorganization steps two years ago. At that time we had two agencies that were building the larger type of dams. One was the Reclamation Service that has built Boulder Dam and was building Grand Coulee and the other was the Army Engineers that were building Fort Peck and Bonneville.

The feeling at that time was that these two construction agencies ought to be maintained and maintained in such a way for construction work that neither one of them would overwhelm the other, that there would be what might be called a healthy rivalry between the two big Government construction agencies instead of having the whole thing done by one. Both are extremely good.

The Army Engineers, in the past few years, have, of course, got away beyond, in their construction work, the Army personnel. It was thought, for that reason, that the Army Engineers should not become too big. They only have a limited number of officers that can do the work and it has got to the point where something like three-quarters of the Army Engineers' construction work was being done by civilian employees. The reason for keeping them from absorbing all the work is that their primary function is a military function. In case of war the Army Engineers are intended for service at the front, with the Army, the great bulk of them, and, therefore, we felt it would be a mistake to make them so big that they would do all the construction work. So we laid down what might be called a rule of thumb and that

was that they would continue to do all the harbor work, all the Mississippi work and all the river work where flood control was the primary function -- flood control and navigation, the two being tied together -- and to allocate, as a matter of policy, the rest of the work, that is to say, where it was on the upper reaches of a river, especially where navigation did not enter into it, to allocate the work in such a way that the Reclamation Service would be kept going with equal importance to the Army Engineers -- to keep both organizations functioning. Each one would be merely a check on the other. The result is that we have now a very excellent system worked out so that when a report is asked from either Reclamation or the Army Engineers it is studied by the other service.

If there is a question of a dam on the upper reaches of the river that has irrigation possibilities, we weigh the importance of the irrigation as compared to navigation and flood control and in some cases, of course, power enters into it to a certain extent. The system as worked out now will mean no crossing of wires but it will mean that if a dam is principally for irrigation it would be done normally by the Reclamation people and, if it is primarily for navigation, it would be done by the Army Engineers people.

Q Then in a hypothetical case, where say a dam was 50-50 for reclamation purposes and for flood control and there was no navigation, probably Reclamation would have more to say about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably, if it did not give, in the total construction work, too much work to Reclamation. The same thing, as a

hypothetical case, with Army jobs.

Q Do you plan to talk to the country, on your western trip, about this action in the House and Senate with respect to lending and spending?

THE PRESIDENT: I have absolutely no plans for speeches except the speech at Big Smoky.

Q What is the other one?

THE PRESIDENT: I have only two speeches, one at Great Smoky opening and the other is the San Francisco Fair. I do not think you can figure out a story on those two.

Q Have you studied any of your communications to get an indication as to the temper of the country?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; I have not had any mail yet.

Q Did you discuss the Tammany leadership yesterday with Congressman Gavagan?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I did not, in any shape, manner or form.

Q One of the conferences in the House on the Third Deficiency Bill took out the \$119,000,000. for the Commodity Credit Corporation. According to Secretary Wallace, this imperils the farm loan program. Any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that the Secretary is right.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #570,
In the President's Study at Hyde Park, N. Y.,
August 8, 1939, 12.30 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Who else is here? I am trying to see what paper Tommy (Mr. Qualters, the President's bodyguard) represents. (Laughter)

I have only 145 bills left to act on and they have not yet come to me. In other words, last night the last thing I did was to finish going through all the bills that I have got so that it is pretty good, and all that have come to me have been either signed or vetoed except about ten that were sent back for further information, and I still have 145 to come. Have we a pouch coming tonight?

MR. HASSETT: Probably tomorrow morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. So that by tomorrow morning I will probably get a good batch of the 145. I am not working on the bills today. I am trying to catch up with what you see on my desk. Did you ever see such a mess? (Laughter)

Sidney Hillman is coming to lunch. And after lunch, Jimmy Moffett is bringing the Shaikh (pronounced shake) or Shaikh (pronounced sheek) or Shaikh (pronounced shike), whichever way you want to pronounce it (Mohammed), of Bahrein. Of course you all know where that is. That is just to say, "How do you do?" Do any of you know Bahrein?

Q I hope not. How do you spell it?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I am dying to know where it is.

THE PRESIDENT: Such absolutely crass ignorance I have never seen.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Is it Arabia or northern Africa?

MR. HASSETT: You are doing very well, Mrs. Roosevelt.

THE PRESIDENT: You are getting hot.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Tell me where it is.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it is an island in the Arabian Gulf, that is to say between Arabia and Persia. It is ruled by an independent Sheek, Shike or Shake (laughter) and it is a very excellent oil country.

Q How long, Mr. President, have you known of this? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I have always known it. I have always known it because, you see, I collect stamps.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I regret to say that we have never been able to stump him on a question of geography. It is the most horrible thing.
(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know where Muscat is. Heavens, I had the Sultan of Muscat as an official guest of the Government a year ago. Well, it is a little north of Muscat, just on the mainland of Arabia, but it is an island off the coast.

Q That is the fellow that gave you the golden --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, the golden scimitar, or something like that. Anyway, it is an exceedingly effective weapon if properly used.

He (the Shaikh) is just coming up to say, "How do," that is all.

Outside of that I have absolutely no appointments except on Thursday -- well, you don't want to break that story yet. It is just the annual report of the National Infantile Paralysis Foundation. You had better wait for that until tomorrow.

Q You still have not told us how to spell the name of this --

MR. HASSETT (interposing) I have got this (indicating telegram) here. You can have it. You have it greatly abbreviated. You might read it now that you have it.

Q I don't know -- Shaikh here is spelled S-h-a-i-k-h.

Q This is spelled S-h-a-k-a-i-h.

MR. HASSETT: He calls it that, so I take it he is a professional beauty.

THE PRESIDENT: I would avoid your own way. There are great differences between the "a" and the "e". You had better stick to what Bill (Hassett) says. You would insult him otherwise.

Q (Mr. Harkness) Mr. President, you stated yesterday that while Congress had refused to go along with one of the methods of the Supreme Court liberalization program, you had gained all of the objectives?

THE PRESIDENT: That is right. In other words, I note in stories that the other six objectives have been largely slurred over. Now the other six objectives, of course, were of interest to everybody in this country. They were of interest, first of all, in the expediting of cases -- of course we had all of this out -- because the delay in bringing cases to trial of two years and three years was always to the disadvantage of the poor litigant, whether he was plaintiff or whether he was defendant. In other words, he could not afford to wait and the rich litigant could afford to wait two or three or four years, as very often happened. Therefore, the speeding up of the calendars has made a great deal of difference in affording adequate and proper justice in all of the jurisdictions of the Federal Courts. I do not think that that,

from the point of view of justice, is worth slurring over as an accomplishment.

Now, of course, that has been greatly aided by two of the seven things that went through. The first was the retirement privileges, which have enabled older judges, who could not work as fast as younger judges, to retire, and the other three -- actually three out of the seven -- has helped that. The next was the appointment of additional judges in those judicial districts where there weren't enough judges to handle the number of cases. The bill for that has not come to me yet but I will undoubtedly sign it when it does, making a total of thirty new judges.

And then connected with that a little bit, but more on the constitutional end, two of the other bills are of very great importance because, in the past, two private litigants could, in a private suit between themselves, raise a constitutional question and that would be determined without any chance for the Government to appear in the case to defend the law that had been passed by the Congress. That has been taken care of by permitting the Government to intervene. The Government has to have notice served on it right away of the constitutional questions raised.

Then, along that same line, it has always been possible in the past, by injunction in the lower court, to tie up the whole case again for two or three or four years on a constitutional question while the issue was working its way gradually up to the Supreme Court. Now, under the new legislation, it means that the constitutional question goes from the original court right away quick to the Supreme Court of the United States where it must be

put at the top of the preferred list of cases. That also saves the poor litigant a tremendous delay and, incidentally, it is saving the Government itself -- everybody -- by getting a determination of constitutional questions quickly instead of tying it up. We have, of course, lots of illustrations. On the N.R.A. it took months and sometimes several years to get the constitutional question before the Supreme Court. Now we can get it immediately before the Supreme Court as a preferred case.

I think it is very important to stress the fact that out of the seven objectives six were obtained -- and they are all very, very important objectives -- six were obtained by legislation and the seventh by the opinions and decisions of the Supreme Court itself, which is not bad.

Q (Mr. Harkness) A thousand per cent. It is a good batting average.

Mr. President, then the logical second half of the question is this: That the recent Congress also disagreed with you on method, particularly regarding neutrality and domestic recovery through the --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I would not say that, Dick. I would not say they disagreed on methods. What I would say is this: That they made a bet -- not the Congress, don't, for Heaven's sake, say "The Congress", but a substantially unanimous Republican minority in both Houses, both the House and Senate, plus about twenty per cent, twenty-two per cent of the House and twenty-five per cent of the Senate, have made a bet with this country that the President was wrong. And I hope they win their bet. But, if they do not win their bet, the responsibility is one hundred per

cent on a solid Republican minority plus a small minority of the Democrats.

And they have made this bet -- two bets with the Nation, and I hope they win. But it is taking a terrific chance. That is the other part of it.

Now, you see, that is not disagreement on method; that is a disagreement on what is now, today, both on neutrality and on cushioning the necessity of laying off a great many people this coming spring. On the neutrality end, they bet the Nation, made a large wager with the Nation, which may affect, if they lose it, about a billion and a half human beings. Now, that is pretty important. They have said, "There will be no war until sufficiently long after we come back in January so that we can take care of things after we come back," and I sincerely hope they are right. But, if they are not right and we have another serious international crisis they have tied my hands and I have practically no power to make an American effort to prevent such a war from breaking out. Now, that is a pretty serious responsibility.

If they are wrong, of course, and if the situation should get to a crisis with a lack of power on my part to try to avert it the way I did in September of 1938 and April of 1939, why, of course, it is perfectly obvious who will be solely responsible -- a solid Republican minority plus twenty to twenty-five per cent of the Democrats. And I hope they win their bet.

Then, on the other big wager they have made they have wagered the country that when the full effect of taking a million human beings off the relief rolls, which is about four million people

counting their families, during the course of this year, and, at the same time, having all the P.W.A. work coming to an end this coming spring, that private industry and private business will take up that whole slack without the Government doing anything about it. And I hope they win that bet too.

But, if they do not win, and private business and private industry do not put all these people, the million people on relief and the three millions dependent on them, and probably another million people on P.W.A. at the present time -- that is to say carrying out Public Works -- if they do not take up that slack then, in that case, again it is perfectly obvious that they have lost the bet with the Nation, and the Nation must and will hold them solely responsible.

I think that covers it pretty well.

Q (Mr. Belair) You have pretty well anticipated a question I was going to ask in that connection. I do not think I am overstating it very much by saying that the country pretty well expects a statement from you on the House rejection of the housing bill and the lending bill. Might that not be applied --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think that covers the situation pretty well.

Q (Mr. Belair) The same thing?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, so far as your jobs and everything else is concerned, because, after all, it affects the newspapers of the country, it affects the advertising of the country, it affects the circulation of papers. We all know that. That is right, is it not, Dick (Harkness)?

Q (Mr. Harkness) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: We hope that it goes along all right but, if it does not, we know who will be responsible. It affects even radio. Right? So, just thinking from the point of view of the country, and the good of the world too, on the international end of it, I hope that they have that right.

Q (Mr. Harkness) This situation, Sir, presents a distinct challenge to business, does it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, a very definite; very definite. And they have a wonderful chance, because, at the present time the shelves of the country, all kinds of goods, are not overstocked. The only thing that is overstocked -- the only things that are overstocked are certain agricultural commodities. We have, perhaps, a little excess on the total wheat and we have a rather large excess on the total of cotton, and some excess in dairy products, but, so far as business goes, industry, the shelves are not overstocked.

I have not got any plans for speeches, because I have no plans ahead at all at the present time until that trip commences on the first of October. I only have two speeches outlined for that -- no, three -- one at Great Smoky, one at the San Francisco Fair and the other at the dedication of Olympic National Park. I don't think that even through surmise and guessing can you find great political occasions in those three events. Am I right? Even persons who have been close to the Administration -- (laughter)

Q (Mr. Belair) Pretty slim pickings.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it.

Well, you have got plenty of story today. Right?

Q Have you accepted an invitation to take part in the dedication of the Red Hook Central High School?

THE PRESIDENT: I told them last spring that we would fix a date and, so far, no date has been set. I am seeing Ben Frost tomorrow or the next day and will find out from him what date they would like to have it on and see if we can work it in because, you see, from the end of the cruise I will probably go right from the ship to Washington for a few days.

(Turning to Mr. Hassett) Let us tell them about -- do you want to hold it until Friday? My wife does not know this but she won't be there. You had better find out whether it is the Grand Duke of Luxembourg or whether it is the Consort of the Grand Duchess.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: It is the Consort, if it is the same as it was several years ago, when I was over there, or has she died?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is the boy, eighteen years old.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Then I suppose it is the same.

THE PRESIDENT: You had better check and find out whether it is the Grand Duke or Grand something of Luxembourg. He and his boy are coming over to dedicate the Luxembourg Pavilion at the Fair. I cannot give you the exact date but it is about the twenty-eighth of August. They are coming to Washington to stop at the White House and I will be back from the cruise before that. Then I will come up here and then, from the twenty-ninth of August until the twenty-eighth of September, I will be about half the time here and half the time in Washington and, during that period that I am here, we will take some time to dedicate the Red Hook schoolhouse.

Q Have you received any invitation to take part in the dedication of any other buildings in Dutchess County?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not think so.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Do you think you will be up here on Labor Day?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Then may I tell Mr. Hasset now that I hope everybody will come to a picnic on Labor Day?

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, talking of illustrations of what I am saying about this rather precipitous decline this coming spring in work which the Government has helped through existing legislation, you have a very good illustration right here in the town of Hyde Park: The town of Hyde Park applied for grants to build these new schoolhouses to take care of the complete lack of accommodations and they are, all three, under construction at the present time.

By the way, later on -- they are not quite photographable yet because they are not more than fifteen feet above the ground, you might tell the photographers this: I think we will have a little trip after I do get back from the cruise or at the end of October to show you these three buildings because they are the first three buildings, so far as I know, around here that have been built of field stone. They will be different from the fifteen thousand other colonial brick schoolhouses that are being built all over the United States and, for a long time to come, we will have something that is different and classier than anybody else has got.

Now, on those three schoolhouses that are being built, 45%

with Federal money and 55% with bonds issued by the school district, there are 450 workmen at work. They will be all under roof this fall, late this fall. They will be all under roof and then, of course, once under roof, all the people working on the outdoor part of it will be discharged. There will be, during the course of the winter, a certain number of people employed, a decreasing number of people, in finishing up the interior, the plumbing and painting and flooring and things of that kind. But all three of them will be finished by late in the spring and then there won't be any of these 450 people at work on any public buildings, so far as I know, in this town. And I think the same thing applies to a certain extent to the new consolidated school in Red Hook, the new consolidated school down at Wappingers and the additions to the school in Arlington and certain other public works in the city of Poughkeepsie that have been done with W.P.A. funds.

So, you see, it is rather a practical question of human beings tied up with work, or, putting it the other way around, human beings who are not going to have this work after this coming spring. That is just a practical illustration and you can duplicate it in every other county in the United States.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Give them the illustration of the precipice.

THE PRESIDENT: I was saying to the Missus at breakfast this morning that we have been carrying on now, for some time, at a fairly high level with three million people, workers, on relief rolls, plus probably, counting the people who get out the material for the job, another two million on P.W.A. That is about five million people at work one way or the other, and they have dependent on

them four times that number. That is a total of twenty million people who have been given work, not always steady, but some work.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: And some buying power.

THE PRESIDENT: And a great deal of buying power which affects the little grocer and every store on Main Street of Poughkeepsie, which is a good illustration -- every single store on Main Street, Poughkeepsie, and the two or three small stores in Hyde Park Village. It affects all the gasoline stations.

Now, coming next spring, there will be a cut down of from three to two million on W.P.A., and, on P.W.A., two million will have finished their work, so there are three million out of five million who will no longer be employed with any form of government assistance. The theory has been, on the part of the solid Republican minority, plus twenty to twenty-five per cent of the Democrats, that business would take up the slack as they lost their work, but it is a very serious condition, because it is not a gradually declining one over a period of years, but, rather, it is a precipice.

That is what the Missus was talking about. It is a precipice and it is always hard to get down a precipice without danger to life and limb, and then, going down, you have to slow up everything, even if you do get down safely to the bottom of the hill. The theory of the lending bill was to provide a transitional period, in other words, a graduated descent from the level of high employment to come down on a nice easy grade and let business pick up the slack as the country came down this nice easy grade. However, they have voted in favor of the precipice method.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I always think you ought to tell them about -- you remember the old incline we used to run down with Uncle Ted at Oyster Bay? Because that is what happens.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. At Oyster Bay there was a sandy place that went from the higher level down to the beach and we children were awfully terrified because it was awfully steep and the sand went down with you and you were darned lucky if you did not end, half way down, by going down head over heels.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Uncle Ted lined you up and you had to go at a run.

THE PRESIDENT: And go down this steep dune.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: And coming back you had to go up again and you slipped down two steps for every one you went up.

THE PRESIDENT: The other way around, one for every two, otherwise you would not get up.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Yes, and you always had to climb.

THE PRESIDENT: It was a very difficult process, with real danger to life and limb. But the precipice illustration is a good one. It seems a little more dangerous to national prosperity than the gradual descent.

Q Mr. President, I understand that Lowell Thomas has sent your baseball team a challenge. Have you answered him at all?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know they had. What does Captain Durno say?

Q (Mr. Durno) He did send us a challenge but I don't think we can accept. You are not going to be here next Sunday, are you?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to be gone. I am leaving Saturday morning about ten o'clock.

Q He suggested, then, after you came back from --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is all right. Any time around Labor Day.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Make it for that Sunday before Labor Day.

THE PRESIDENT: That would be all right. But what are we going to do about training?

Q (Mr. Belair) We are going to Campobello and train.

THE PRESIDENT: Entrain, you mean.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: You will have to do a lot of training. I wanted you in that Virginia Reel. (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Belair) If there was a chink in the woodwork, I would crawl right in. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is all right; you started off very bravely.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I think, on the other hand, the nine old men would have to do a lot of training too.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have to get Johnny but I do not believe he will be back in time.

Q Can we get any other sons?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: Franklin, Jr., ought to be here because he is supposed to be working with John Mack.

Q (Mr. Durno) He is pretty good. We need somebody that can hit the ball.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have got Tom Qualters here. He used to be on the Notre Dame football team. He ought to be able to do something.

Q (Mr. Durno) What football team?

THE PRESIDENT: I will give you a tip, off the record, if you will go up to Hyde Park and see the man who manages the Robin Hoods. They

are pretty good. Am I right?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: They have won lots of games this year.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you boys can take off the Robin Hoods on the Eagle News and the Star and Courier, just a nice temporary assignment. That puts them into the newspaper profession and I think we will win. That is a good team, that Robin Hood team. Did they beat Poughkeepsie the other day?

Q I think they did but I am not absolutely certain.

Q (Mr. Belair) Mr. President, do you leave from New York at the Brooklyn Navy Yard or from some other place?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is down on the west side, at one of those piers.

Q That is on Saturday. When will it put you into Campobello?

THE PRESIDENT: What I think I will do, Felix (Belair), is to go on up the coast and get to Campobello on Monday. You see, you could not make it by Sunday.

Q We can fly.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you could fly.

Q (Mr. Belair) We can make it by midnight Saturday night. You do not know how badly we want to get up there. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, in Eastport they have a very good hotel.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: It is the best hotel.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you ever been in it?

Q I have heard all about it. Northeast Harbor isn't very far.

THE PRESIDENT: It is eighty miles.

Q We can tell the Coast Guard.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: If they are sensible, they can go on the Island (Campobello). There are people on the Island who take paying guests.

They will be a lot better off than in Eastport.

THE PRESIDENT: Darling, don't you think you are saying not very nice things about Eastport?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: It has not changed; it has never changed.

Q What are your plans?

THE PRESIDENT: My plans depend on fog. I think I will try to get in about eleven o'clock in the morning and have people off the shore to lunch or go to the cottage -- Franklin and Ethel are there -- and later in the afternoon I will go back on board and, if it is clear -- only if it is clear -- go out and leave that same afternoon but, if it is foggy, I won't leave until the next day. On those things you cannot tell. So, if I do go out late in the afternoon, you could still, that afternoon, take an automobile and go down to Bar Harbor Ferry and over to Northeast the same night.

Q If you should happen to see a lot of stray newspapermen wandering around, you could have them tossed into the sea.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is right.

Q We must have atmosphere.

THE PRESIDENT: That is dead right. There is always a lot of color out there.

Q The Maine coast, they say, is a beautiful thing.

THE PRESIDENT: We need a little bit more lyrics in the news stories. Isn't that right, Dick?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I think you ought to tell them that Ellsworth is the place to go to and take a car from there to Lubec, and not go to Eastport at all.

THE PRESIDENT: No, do not go to Eastport. Go to Ellsworth and take the car from there to Lubec.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: You will find a ferry which runs occasionally.

THE PRESIDENT: It is a scow with a little motor boat tied on the side of it. You go down this beach -- it is about a 45-degree angle on the Lubec side -- and it is just a great big incline with sliding pebbles. How any car goes down it, I do not know. You go down on the run and get aboard this scow and the little chug-chug soon starts and you are taken off 200 feet through an 8-knot current and, if the engine should ever stop, you would be in the middle of the Bay of Fundy. It is the darndest place you have ever seen; it is the Lubec Narrows.

Q (Mr. Durno) It is a very nice hotel; I can recommend it to him.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, who is going on the destroyer?

Q (Mr. Cornell) The three Press Associations.

Q (Mr. Durno) Doug Cornell and Tom Reynolds and I are.

THE PRESIDENT: She is one of the new ones, one of the 1880's, so I think you will be very comfortable.

Q (Mr. Conway) Will you make any other stop?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not going ashore.

Q Any place where the other Press Correspondents could come?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not the faintest idea. Whenever I can, especially if it is rough or foggy, I will go into a harbor at night so that the people on the destroyer and myself will be out of the long roll. I prefer harbors at night, but which harbor it will be I have not the faintest idea, and how far north I will go I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Campobello will be the only one?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There is only one possible contingency and that is off the record. I am thinking about you people. I think the Press Associations are all that is necessary. For instance, suppose I should go into Liverpool or Shelburne or Halifax? You cannot tell; I might be fogbound, but the Prime Minister of Nova Scotia or the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia might come out and say "Howdy?" They do not know I am coming but if I went into Louisburg or Sydney on Cape Breton Island, some officials, the Mayor -- that is a separate Province -- they might come aboard. If I stop into Newfoundland Harbor -- Newfoundland, as they call it up there, some potentate might come aboard, but I do not know where I am going.

Q Have you any seasick remedies you might recommend?

THE PRESIDENT: Get one of Pa's (General Watson's) plasters. You know that?

Q Do you recommend that?

THE PRESIDENT: I do, very much, because it saved their lives. You know that story?

We took the first cruise from San Francisco back through the Canal -- this is all off the record -- with Secretary Ickes and Pa (General Watson) and Harry Hopkins. It was their first cruise. Pa had gone to Abercrombie and Fitch and he had spent thousands of dollars in buying the latest fishing outfits recommended by Abercrombie and Fitch. They had cost four times the prices you can buy them at any other store. He had the darndest things. He had a fishing cap that had a darky's visor which was eight inches

long. He had said to the clerk, "Do you know of any remedies for seasickness?" The clerk said, with an English accent, "Oh, yes, sir. The very best thing we have is a plaster from London." And Pa bought the plaster and read the directions and, about the third day out, we were off the southern end of lower California and we struck the tail end of what they call a Tampico twister. It was a bit rough and Pa gave those to Ickes and Hopkins and they put, each of them, one of those plasters squarely on their abdomens and went to bed. Whether it was the bed or the plaster, they were not seasick. They remained safely in bed. Then we got down to the Cocos Islands where it was wonderfully smooth and warm and we went into shore to swim and they had these plasters on. It took them about six weeks to get them off. We used hoses and gasoline and kerosene and could not get them off. The last remains were off in about six weeks.

Q (Mr. Cornell) I think I will pass that up.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think there will be any particular news tomorrow or the next day except these darned bills, when they begin to arrive. I am waiting here hopefully and patiently.

MR. BELAIR: Thank you. That is the first time I ever said it.

(Laughter)