

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #398

Executive Offices of the White House

September 14, 1937, 4.00 PM

THE PRESIDENT: Welcome. You look as if you had a good time.

Q Did you get many fish?

THE PRESIDENT: We got so many one day we got tired of pulling them in.

Q I got three hundred bass.

THE PRESIDENT: We caught over a hundred at Fishers Island in about three hours of fishing.

Q That was the only real day you had.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they call them Tautog. You fellows call them striped bass.

Q Are they pretty game?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Anticipating what you are going to ask and in order to save time (laughter) -- I know approximately what is on your minds and I want to be helpful if I can. Therefore I am going to give you this statement for direct quotation. Get out your pencils. (Reading) "I know only what I have read in the newspapers. I know that the stories are appearing serially." -- not

seriously, I said "serially" -- "and their publication is not complete. Mr. Justice Black is in Europe where, undoubtedly, he cannot get the full text of these articles. Until such time as he returns, there is no further comment to be made."

That is all.

Q Will you read the whole thing again, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: "I know only what I have read in the newspapers.

I know that the stories are appearing serially and their publication is not complete. Mr. Justice Black is in Europe where, undoubtedly, he cannot get the full text of these articles. Until such time as he returns, there is no further comment to be made."

Q Has Mr. Justice Black been communicated with by you or any member of your Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You said, "No"?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I said, "No".

Q Have you any information as to the time of his return?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Prior to the appointment of former Senator Black, had you received any information from any source as to his Klan membership?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q May we ask, if it turns out that he is a member --

THE PRESIDENT: That is an "if" question.

Q Did the Department of Justice make the usual investigation that they do with respect to members of the judiciary as to Mr. Justice Black?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say on the international situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more to add to what I said at Hyde Park the other day, which still holds good. It is taking the principal part of my time.

Q No decision about the western trip, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot decide, that is the trouble.

Q Cannot decide or cannot make it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot decide yet.

Q Mr. President, do you favor an investigation on the scrap metal market such as has been proposed by the four departments; Army, Navy, and, I believe, the Departments of Interior and Commerce were also favorable to it?

THE PRESIDENT: An investigation of the scrap metal market?

Q Yes, sir; an investigation of the scrap metal market.

THE PRESIDENT: What do they want to know?



Q Domestic supply, the drain caused by export demands and all of that.

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't they got all those figures?

Q I doubt if they show --

Q Yes, Mr. President, they have those. I have read them time and again.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of the suggestion. You know, there was an investigation made by an inter-departmental committee about four or five months ago.

Q Secretary Hull informed the Committee, apparently, that he would be glad to make that report public. I don't believe that it has ever been made public.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know of any reason why it should not be.

Q Have you appointed a successor to Chairman Landis of the SEC yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q What do you expect to see Governor Earle about today?

THE PRESIDENT: He was in Europe and just got back, just landed.

Q Did you say when you will return to Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: The same thing applies to that. I cannot make any plans. I have not made any plans beyond Friday evening's speech. You can say this, though, Russ (Young),



that if I stay over on Saturday I am going down to see that motorboat race that I have been trying to see for five years.

Q That is the President's Cup Regatta?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but I am not at all sure that I can stay over. So do not announce it as something that I am going to do.

Q Are you nearer any decision regarding an extraordinary session of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Have you any idea of going to a football game Thursday night? It is played locally.

THE PRESIDENT: I wanted to very much but, knowing I have to make two speeches, I am afraid I cannot. I will have to work all Thursday night.

Q Can you tell us anything about the call by the Spanish Ambassador today?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the credit situation? Is there any concern over it?

THE PRESIDENT: As to what?

Q Over the money situation, the possibility of a money pinch.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the Secretary of the

Treasury about that, I would not know. I am always in a money pinch.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your talk with Mr. Hull and Mr. Kennedy today?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will probably have something -- I don't know whether you will get it tonight or tomorrow -- in regard to shipping headed for the Far East. I cannot give you anything because it is not written out yet.

Q Headed toward the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether it will be ready tonight or whether you will have to wait until tomorrow.

Q Will that apply particularly to the steamer Wichita?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it will be general.

Q Can you tell us anything about the Wichita which is Government owned?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the Wichita at the present time is proceeding from one American port to another.

Q Are you still considering the application of the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: That is always under consideration and has been for weeks.

Q To get back to the Black situation, did the Senate discharge its full responsibility?

THE PRESIDENT: (Reading) "Until such time as he returns,  
there is no further comment to be made."

Q That seems to be a hint that there may be a further state-  
ment after he returns.

THE PRESIDENT: No, don't write yourself out on a limb.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #399  
Hyde Park, New York  
September 21, 1937, 3.00 PM

(There was general conversation with respect to the ball game at Lowell Thomas' the previous Sunday. During the conversation Mr. Early telephoned from Castalia, Ohio, and spoke to the President about his fishing trip, saying that he was going to put some trout aboard the train while it was en route through Ohio.)

THE PRESIDENT: Doc O'Connor has been here with Keith Morgan.

Mac is giving you this afternoon, for release in the Thursday morning newspapers, a story about infantile paralysis. This year there has been another very, very serious epidemic. This is merely for information now because it is for Thursday morning release. The release itself will give you the same thing. (Reading)

"I have had reports from many areas in which this disease is again spreading its destruction. And once again there is brought forcibly to my mind the constantly increasing accumulation of ruined lives -- which must continue unless this disease can be brought under control and its after-effects properly treated.

"My own personal experience in the work that we have been doing at the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation for over ten years, leads me to the very definite conclusion that the best results in attempting to eradicate this disease cannot be secured by approaching the problem through any single one of its aspects, whether that be preventive studies in the

laboratory, emergency work during epidemics, or after treatment. For over ten years at the Foundation at Warm Springs, Georgia, we have devoted our effort almost entirely to the study of improved treatment of the after-effects of the illness. During these years other agencies, which we have from time to time assisted, have devoted their energies to other phases of the fight. I firmly believe that the time has now arrived when the whole attack on this plague should be led and directed, though not controlled, by one national body. And it is for this purpose that a new national foundation for infantile paralysis is being created.

"As I have said, the general purpose of the new foundation will be to lead, direct, and unify the fight on every phase of this sickness. It will make every effort to ensure that every responsible research agency in this country is adequately financed to carry on investigations into the cause of infantile paralysis and the methods by which it may be prevented. It will endeavor to eliminate much of the needless after-effect of this disease -- wreckage caused by the failure to make early and accurate diagnosis of its presence. We all know that improper care during the acute stage of the disease, and the use of antiquated treatment, or downright neglect of any treatment, are the cause of thousands of crippled, twisted, powerless bodies now. Much can be done along these lines right now. The new foundation will carry on a broad-gauged educational campaign, prepared under expert medical supervision, and this will be placed within the reach of the doctors and the hospitals of the country. The practicing physician is in reality the front-line fighter of the sickness, and there is much existing valuable knowledge that should be disseminated to him.

"And then there is also the tremendous problem as to what is to be done with those hundreds of thousands already ruined by the after-effects of this affliction. To investigate, to study, to develop every medical possibility of enabling those so afflicted to become economically independent in their local communities will be one of the chief aims of the new foundation.



"Those who today are fortunate in being in full possession of their muscular power naturally do not understand what it means to a human being paralyzed by this disease to have that powerlessness lifted even to a small degree. It means the difference between a human being dependent on others, and an individual who can be wholly independent. The public has little conception of the patience and time and expense necessary to accomplish such results. But the results are of the utmost importance to the individual.

"The work of the new organization must start immediately. It cannot be delayed. Its activities will include, among many others, those of the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation, of which I have been President since its inception. I shall continue as President of that foundation but in fairness to my official responsibilities I cannot at this time take a very active part in the much broader work that will be carried out by the new foundation, and I therefore do not feel that I should now hold any official position in it. However, because I am wholeheartedly in this cause I have enlisted the sincere interest of several representatives and outstanding individuals who are willing to initiate and carry on the work of the new foundation. Its personnel will be announced as soon as it is completed."

There is no personnel list out as yet because we are not ready with it. But the purpose is to coordinate all work against infantile paralysis.

Q Warm Springs will continue the work it is doing?

THE PRESIDENT: It will be merely one phase. There will be the Rockefeller Institute and the Harvard Medical Center and the University of California and the work out at St. Louis and in Indianapolis and in different hospitals all over the country. The Warm Springs Foundation will be



one of dozens.

Q There are about sixteen altogether that have been getting these contributions?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There are about sixteen research and there are about, probably, a hundred hospitals that are working on the after-effects. Then, of course, there are the public health bodies that are working on the new nose spray. So you have three things, the research, the public health, the doctors that are working on the nose spray which is one form of prevention, and then the after-care.

MR. McINTYRE: The new foundation will be a coordinating agency.

Q This is to be statement by you?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, for Thursday morning papers.

Now, you have the trip --

MR. McINTYRE: I haven't given out the detailed itinerary yet.

THE PRESIDENT: Now please don't write stories on pure guesswork, unfounded guesswork, on the reason for going here or there. One of the stories was that I had given up Nebraska. I wanted very much to see Nebraska, to see the Nebraska power projects, but I could not work it in. It was a question of spending a whole extra day in order to go through by day and it is not fair to say that I gave up Nebraska for a political reason.

MR. McINTYRE: I think you might tell them, off the record, about Butte too in this itinerary.

THE PRESIDENT: I wanted to go to Butte because I haven't been there since 1932, but I could not work it in without taking an extra day. The same thing applies. If I do decide to come back to Hyde Park I hope nobody will say that I avoided going to Washington for political reasons. I may come back to Hyde Park because my mother will land the previous day. I would like to come here, if I can, but if I do come here it will not be a political reason that brings me.

Q Can you tell us about that query on Black?

THE PRESIDENT: It just is not correct.

Q Justice Black's nephew in Washington made a speech before the Alabama Club --

THE PRESIDENT: What is the name of the nephew?

Q Smith. At that luncheon he said that Mr. Black had given a full account of his activities to those persons who were responsible for his appointment. Is there anything you want to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not in answer to that. I can only tell you, off the record -- no, not for attribution -- exactly what I told you before. Somebody asked me, in the first

conference, if I knew anything about it and I said, "No." A typical newspaper editorial like the Poughkeepsie paper said that I must have known. It is the same old thing and the same old story.

Q I don't think in this statement the nephew said whether the statement was made before or since. It may be that since this event occurred an account might have been made.

THE PRESIDENT: Again, not for attribution, I have had no communication one way or the other. You all know that. That is just for your information and not for attribution.

Q In that connection there seem to be some interesting developments as to whether any effort was made to ask Justice Black or to have -- whether he was asked for any explanation before the appointment was made. Can you answer that?

THE PRESIDENT: The other answer covers it. In other words, again this is off the record, suppose I were to appoint Ernest (Lindley) to the Interstate Commerce Commission. Do you suppose I would say, "Listen, Ernest, how many illegitimate children do you have running around the country?" That is something you do not ask.

MR. McINTYRE: You might ask Ernest just out of curiosity.

(Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I might have asked Black lots of things, just out of curiosity.



(By instructions, no notes were taken of about five minutes of discussion off the record.)

THE PRESIDENT: The easiest thing, if I were writing the story, would be to say that the President very obviously has no-  
ago  
thing further to add to his statement of a week/and that was the quote statement and the answer, "Did he have any knowledge," "No." You could write the story so that the President had nothing further to add to those two things; that those two cover everything.

Q Is it all right for us to say that the statement he made at that time that he had no knowledge of any Klan affiliations before the appointment still stood, nor has he received any communication from Mr. Black, in any way, since.

Q Also, Mr. President, I would like to feel free to use, "It was learned" without saying who it was learned from, "that there was no effort made" --

THE PRESIDENT: You cannot say that because if you do that you have to go into an explanation about what you do ask a fellow when you appoint him.

Q Off the record, is there any lesson to be learned from this in the future? I mean with respect to similar appointments? I mean, these Klan disclosures that fly up in the face? I mean, in the future let it be the regular duty of the

Department of Justice to be charged automatically to check up on any particular individual and to submit to you a complete --

THE PRESIDENT: No, certainly not. Here is the simple way, off the record. A man's private life is supposed to be his private life. He may have had certain marital troubles which, if they came out, might be pretty disagreeable. It certainly is not incumbent on the Department of Justice or the President or anybody else to look into that, so long as it does not come out and a fellow has led a perfectly good life.

MR. McINTYRE: So long as it does not come out as a public scandal.

THE PRESIDENT: So long as it does not come out as a public scandal. You must assume that the man, if he has led a decent life up to the present time, is all right. You cannot go and ask him about it.

I will give you an example: There was a certain man, I will call him Mr. A, who, after he had been appointed three years, had pointed out that some ten years before he had been the inside man on a local racket, somewhat against his will. There were very definitely extenuating circumstances. He had not committed a crime and

probably he could not have gone to jail for what he did. It had not even come out in the papers at the time that the racket had existed. It looked pretty bad. I sent for him and got a complete statement of the case. The thing did not come out in the papers. He realized the error of his way and had gone straight ever since that time. It was a dirty, crooked gang he was mixed up with. But you could not have found that out. You never investigate a thing like that. You would have to investigate a man's check book and his accounts and things like that.

You know, I laid down -- Ernest Lindley knows this -- in the famous Farley case that rule that evidence would be allowed in of transactions in the clubhouse -- the little tin box stuff -- before he was elected sheriff because nobody in that case had any notice of the things he had been doing. At the same time there was a fellow in Brooklyn --

Q (Mr. Lindley) Was it McQuade?

THE PRESIDENT: That is right, McQuade, and a lot of stuff about McQuade had come out during his first term of office. It had been made public and everything else and after that he had been elected. On that information it was held that all the facts were before the electorate



when they had re-elected them to office. There was that distinction. The whole thing had come out, it was an elective office and the voters said, "We know about these terrible things he did but we want him as our sheriff again." So I removed him but refused to remove him again.

Q He was one of the thirteen starving relatives?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q A statement has been issued that the Illinois Federation of Labor has invited you to address their convention on the way out on your trip.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't do it; the schedule is fixed.

Q Any possible application of those two formulae to the Black case?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. I don't think they are germane.

Q Have you had any reports on the reception of your Constitution Day address as it was received in dictatorial countries?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't heard a peep out of that. But I had an amazing number of telegrams and letters come in, more than at any time, and of course we do not give out the number for fear that somebody would say, "Yes, the last time he got four hundred telegrams and this time only three hundred." Of course, there were some unfavorable

ones, as usual. Actually there were two. You cannot use that because if we do it once we will have to give figures and then you get comparisons but, for your information, there were three hundred favorable and two against.

MR. McINTYRE: There have been a good many more that I have not troubled you with, letters and things like that.

Q There was a box in the Times, I think it was yesterday, to the effect that your speech had been barred in Central American countries. That is interesting.

MR. McINTYRE: The dictator idea.

THE PRESIDENT: And in Germany.

Q They formally held up publication in Germany until they could interpret it.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think the Liberty League is going to mail it out, Brother Murphy?

Q (Mr. Murphy) I would recommend it if I were asked. (Laughter)

Q Are those PWA allotments announced today the last PWA allotments of any kind?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. When I say "yes", I suppose there may be two or three that are still being investigated, but, to all intents and purposes, that is it.

MR. McINTYRE: The end of PWA -- that is what they want to know.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q On the end of PWA and the order with respect to National Emergency Council, has the time come when the word "emergency" is a misnomer and anachronism as, for instance, the use in connection with CCC Camps -- their name is Emergency Conservation Work -- and the FERA?

THE PRESIDENT: On that last one, we certainly are going to continue the word "emergency" because we hope that we will be able to get rid of practically all of it. In the case of CCC, I think we ought to take the word "emergency" out. I had not thought of it. My only difficulty on that is this, that I asked Congress to make it permanent and they did not, they only made it two years.

Q It might be temporary, then?

THE PRESIDENT: It might be temporary. Of course, I am pretty sure that Congress will keep on extending it at the end of another two years. It is silly to call a thing like that "emergency". You could not get Congress to abolish it to save your life. We have got it down to 15,000 camps. Taking it on the law of averages, if you throw out the big cities where they haven't got any, I suppose we have them in three hundred Congressional districts. That is an average of four to five to the district. No, they are not going to get rid of them.



Q I meant only the name itself.

THE PRESIDENT: So far as I am concerned they ought to take it out.

Q By and large, Mr. President, do you consider the emergency at an end?

THE PRESIDENT: Not "by and large". Relief is not over.

Q With the exception of WPA?

THE PRESIDENT: Practically everything else. Of course there is still RFC loaning money for emergency needs. It is awfully hard -- you cannot say that by and large it is over.

Q In connection with RFC, isn't RFC very definitely tightening up?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my, yes. They are lending very, very little. But there are emergencies. For the sake of example, some railroad might need refinancing. They might conclude that it was worth saving. Well, is that an emergency or isn't it? I don't know.

MR. McINTYRE: Where PWA is concerned, this is really the end of PWA as a lending agency, but they will have to continue to function for some time.

Q Twenty to forty years and sixty years?

THE PRESIDENT: On the inspection end they will have to function

for two years and, in some cases, a little longer. For instance, they have made a loan for the New York Tunnel. That will take three or four years to finish. The bulk of the inspection work will be over in two years and that applies to only a few of the bigger projects and then, when they get through with that inspection of all of them, it will become more or less a finance organization, seeing to it that they get the money back.

Q Does this action on PWA also tie into the press conference of last Spring, the press conference in which you outlined the shift from heavy, durable goods spending to consumers goods?

THE PRESIDENT: That is apparently true, yes, but from now on we are working more and more on the expenditure of Government money for non-relief work, to the planned five hundred million, four hundred and fifty or five hundred million dollars that I have been talking about. In other words, that is the basis of need, national need -- I am not talking about relief needs -- the national need for flood control, soil erosion work, navigation, rivers and harbors improvements, reforestation, drought area reservoirs, and so forth and so on. It will work into that so that we are going to try to hold all Federal appropriations within the five hundred million dollars.

Q Five hundred million dollars?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q I remember at the time of the Spring press conference you said you would either elaborate on that at another press conference or that you would make a fireside talk.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will. In other words, my thought is this, that when I get the report of the survey which is now going on, we will tie it up to the Budget and we will have all that five hundred million dollars divided up and explain to the country the why and wherefore of its subdivision.

MR. McINTYRE: You do that to the Press in your annual Budget conference with them.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I will spring it before the actual Budget, a little ahead, so as to prepare people for it.

Q Is that the National Resources Committee which is making the study?

THE PRESIDENT: The National Resources Committee but, of course, various other agencies such as the Army Engineers, Reclamation, Soil <sup>[Conservation]</sup> Erosion Service, et cetera. That will all come in to me and then on my totals I will take it up with the Budget.

Q Is that the one that eventually will go to Congress, that report?

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THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What did Secretary Morgenthau discuss with you?

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing he came to see me about was this Assistant Counsel of Internal Revenue. I forgot he was coming. He only dropped in to say, "good-bye", on his way to Washington. He said he would keep me in touch. He asked whether this man was all right. I said, "All right", and he started off and flew back.

MR. TROHAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: For heaven's sake, take warm clothes, because it is going to be awfully cold in Yellowstone. You will be up seven or eight thousand feet and there may be snow.

Q Overcoats and sweaters?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, overcoats and sweaters, it may be darned cold.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #399-A, (With members of the Canadian Press),  
At the entrance of the Governor's Mansion,  
Victoria, British Columbia  
September 30, 1937, 3.25 P.M.

Q Have you anything to say to the Canadian people on your visit here?

THE PRESIDENT: Ever since I have been in the White House I have continued the practice, started in 1884, of going to Canada at least once a year. It is a pretty good record. And I am especially happy to see British Columbia where I have never been before. Now that I know the way, I am going to come back as soon as I can.

I am very grateful for the delightful hospitality of the Lieutenant Governor and of all the people who came out to see me on the street.

Q Did you discuss the Alaska Highway while you were here?

THE PRESIDENT: We did. I spoke to Mr. Pattullo. Our hope is, of course it is of tremendous interest because more and more people are traveling and the more good roads they have the more they will travel.

Q Is the United States anxious to see that road built, sir, through?

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as the two governments find it is time to do it.

Q Thank you very much.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #400

Hyde Park, New York

October 6, 1937, 11.30 AM

(The President's mother and Mrs. Roosevelt were present at the conference which was held on the entrance porch of the Hyde Park home.)

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody? Little strangers -- I have often seen them in the distance.

Q We were not always sure you were on the train.

THE PRESIDENT: Ernest, how are you this morning?

Q (Mr. Lindley) We all want to get to the hotel and shower a bit.

THE PRESIDENT: The real part of the trip that you missed was Lake Crescent, so far as the crazy part is concerned.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I read Mr. Post's story.

THE PRESIDENT: That was mild.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I decided that it was not as comfortable, perhaps, as it might have been.

THE PRESIDENT: It was one of those rare occasions when the press, in their stories, showed real understatement.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: It showed that we are, all of us, growing a little soft.

Q I didn't say that. (Laughter)



MRS. ROOSEVELT: I can only tell you gentlemen that if you did not sleep that night, I did not either because I had to change planes every five minutes.

(General conversation about trip.)

THE PRESIDENT: I think you have got all the news there is. I don't know of any, literally.

Q Do you care to amplify your remarks at Chicago, especially where you referred to a possible quarantine?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you had any communication with Mr. Black since his return?

THE PRESIDENT: None at all.

Q Did you have any prior knowledge of the fact that he was going to speak?

THE PRESIDENT: I just might as well talk to you, off the record. Actually what happened that day was that in the morning, I think it was Jimmie who said, "By the way, Mr. Black is going on the air tonight at 6:30." I had entirely forgotten about it. I said, "Fine," and never thought about it again, and I did not go to the Governor's Mansion to receive a telephone call, Ernest (Lindley), and I did not change cars, U. P.,

because I wanted to avoid the radio. What happened was very simple. About twenty minutes before five, before we got into Olympia, the Governor said, "It has stopped raining. Don't you think it would be a good idea to get into the open car because there will be a crowd there." When we got into Olympia there were certain reasons why we wanted to go to the Governor's Mansion -- I need not explain any further -- and after we got away from Olympia the road was wet so we slowed up the thing to prevent the policemen on motorcycles from going overboard. For that reason we had a slow run and instead of being in the open car for about twenty minutes I was in it exactly two hours and ten minutes. That is the actual, simple fact.

Q Do you care to make any comment at all on what Mr. Black said? I am sure you will recall this -- we all like surgical precision --

THE PRESIDENT: "Surgical" is good.

Q (Mr. Anderson) (Reading) "I know only what I have read in the newspapers. I know that the stories are running serially and their publication is not complete. Mr. Justice Black is abroad. Until such time as he returns there is no further comment to be made."

Now he is back.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't any comment.

Q That probably implied that there would be, did it not?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It strongly implied that there was a possibility, that is all; not that it would be. I know my English.

Q "Until?"

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I wonder if you could help us a little bit in interpreting.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps I should have used the Wall Street term, "when, as and if".

Q It did imply that there was a possibility and now there is no possibility.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It depended on circumstances and subsequent happenings.

Q Can we take it, then, that your attitude from now on --

THE PRESIDENT: You cannot take anything, Bob. That is an "if" question.

Q When will you determine whether there shall be an extra session of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say within the next week. I have to get back to Washington and do some checking up down there.

Q What are the conditions that will bear on that decision, the extent to which Congress is ready to proceed legislatively?



**THE PRESIDENT:** Partly that and partly the opinions of various people that I want to talk to and have not had a chance to talk to. I would say, for background, that probably three-fourths of the Members of Congress to whom I talked on the trip are in favor of a Special Session.

**Q** By the way, you did talk to the Senate Farm Committee at Spokane, Pope and McGill?

**THE PRESIDENT:** I did not see them at Spokane. I think I saw Pope on the way out, did I not?

**Q** I think so.

**THE PRESIDENT:** But I have not seen any of them since they started their hearings. I believe somebody on the train had seen them at Spokane --

**Q** That was Jim Murray.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Yes, Jim Murray, that was it, and he told me how they had gotten on.

**Q** He was under the impression that you had seen them too.

**THE PRESIDENT:** No, he simply told me he had talked to them and he thought they were getting on very well.

**Q** He told me they did think there should be an extra Session by all means.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Yes.

**Q** Is this November 15 a good guess if you do have an extra Session?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Well, I do hate to specify a date. If I were writing the story, I would say somewhere between the 8th and the 16th because that would give them time, if there is a Special Session, to get most of the spade-work done before the Christmas holidays. If it were made too late they would run right into the Christmas holidays before they really got anywhere.

**Q** Are we safe in assuming that wages and hours would come in for consideration by that Special Session, if there is one?

**THE PRESIDENT:** If I were writing the story I would mention the principal things such as the crop thing, wages and hours, reorganization, regional planning and, by the way, on regional planning, of course it is easy to say "the little TVA's" but of course they are not.

**Q** They are not?

**THE PRESIDENT:** No, they are not TVA's. They are not at all TVA's. In other words, the TVA, under the Act, is given complete charge over a whole region, a whole watershed and, if a dam is to be built, the TVA builds it. When an electric transmission line is to be run, the TVA runs it. When there is soil erosion work to be done, the TVA does it, and the TVA is doing quite a lot of that replanting. When it is a question of building certain communities, you will notice that

the TVA is doing it. In other words, it is a complete administrative agency for that region.

Now, the bill which Senator Norris has is an entirely different thing. It does not create any Board or Commission with administrative authority. It is merely a planning agency and, as the bill is drawn, it is nothing more than a planning agency.

Of course on the administrative end, things depend a good deal on how the reorganization bill goes through. Of course the idea of the reorganization plan originally was that there would be a Public Works Department. Now that has been eliminated but we can arrive at the same objective by an entirely different method by coordinating all of the public works agencies of the Government through the President's office so that after a plan for a region is made, the Congress and the President would then determine who would carry out the plan. Now, it would not be in one agency, necessarily. There might be a dam on the Columbia River, a new one, three or four or five years from now which had been recommended and which Congress appropriated for. Now, in all probability, that dam would be built by the Army Engineers or the Reclamation Service and not by the Columbia Valley Authority because that is only a planning agency. Do you see the distinction?



Q The agency would determine how much of the program is to be carried out at any one time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, the agency would only make recommendations to the planning agency of the President -- the national planning agency under the White House. I think the easiest way of putting it is this: Suppose there are eight regional agencies and they make recommendations for 800 million dollars to be spent. They all come in with their recommendations and they amount to 800 million dollars. The President confers with the Director of the Budget and with the Secretary of the Treasury. We say, "This is perfectly absurd. We cannot possibly recommend to the Congress 800 million dollars of public works. We can only recommend 200 million dollars." So we get them all in, the eight chairmen, around the table and make them cut their 800 million dollars down to 200 million dollars. Some are made to cut more than others but the total amount involved is cut from 800 to 200 million. We list those in a list marked "A" and we list another 200 million dollars, let us say, in a list marked "B" and we send those two lists to the Congress as part of the budget and we say to the Congress, "Here is what we have all agreed on as being the best projects. They are in list 'A' and we can afford 200 million dollars which they will cost

but, for your information, here are the next best, another 200 million dollars, and it is entirely in the discretion of you gentlemen as to whether you want list 'A' as it is or take something out of list 'A' and substitute something from list 'B', but that is in your discretion. The only thing we ask for is that your total not exceed the 200 million dollars. You can even, if you gentlemen of the Congress think it is wise, authorize something that is not on either list 'A' or list 'B'. That is solely a matter of Congressional discretion, but don't go beyond 200 million dollars."

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q I wonder if you would give us a brief resume on what you "intook".

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh, it is awfully hard to do it off the record.

Q Do it on the record.

THE PRESIDENT: Or on the record. Well, I "intook" the general situation west of the Mississippi because I did not get much of a chance to see things east of the Mississippi. First of all, the crop situation is infinitely better than at any time in the last four years; even, on the whole, better than 1935 which was not a serious drought year. A great deal better

than 1934 and 1936.

Q You could have got that from the Department of Agriculture here.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I could, but I always like to check figures and statistics.

Q You have to see them?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is right.

Number two, I think there is a better understanding of what it is all about than there has been at any time in the past.

Q On the part of whom?

THE PRESIDENT: On the part of the voters, on the part of the population.

Q You don't mean the same one they had in November, do you?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me give you an illustration: I mentioned several times, for instance, that PWA and WPA projects have got to be curtailed. There would have been an awful holler a year or two years ago or three years ago if I had said that. Today there is a general understanding of that fact.

Q When you say, "What it is all about," you mean what the Administration is doing?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Don't you think that links with number one intook -- better crops?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not think it is a question of better crops.



Q Do you think they have the understanding --

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps better crops help them to better understanding, but there is an understanding that it is not a mere hand-out program, it is an economic program which shifts with the economic condition of the country. It is an understanding that we are not going to keep people on relief when we do not need to.

MRS. ROOSEVELT: If the crops had not been better they would not probably have had to understand it because the action taken would have been different.

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true too. And then there is also general acceptance on that same crop end of the fact that we have got to have some kind of a surplus control. The overwhelming majority of farmers are for it.

Q Did you mean it literally when you said that "Jim Murray and I have reached the conclusion that the building of schools and stadiums should be dispensed with, and that you should turn to reclamation projects, dams, et cetera?"

THE PRESIDENT: Not hard and fast. You might get a place where there are a thousand unemployed and nowhere to put them to work except on a municipal improvement.

Q Here is an impossible question which my editors keep asking me: You are going to put many new millions of

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acres into cultivation and, at the same time, we are curtailing crops elsewhere?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly.

Q There seems to be a conflict there?

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

Q Isn't there a conflict when you put more acres into cultivation at the same time you are trying to reduce acreage elsewhere?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at all.

Q Why?

THE PRESIDENT: Because the reduction of acreage takes place, in almost every case, on poor land.

Q Well, the new acreage will grow more than the old ones did, and they grew too much?

THE PRESIDENT: No, they won't grow more than the old ones did. That is exactly the point.

Q No?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you remember that drive from Glasgow down to Fort Peck. That is almost all upland. None of that land ought to be cultivated; none of it at all. Well, what are you going to do with the families on it, throw them into the cities and put them on relief? We have got to move them somewhere. Where? Suppose you put them down in the Boise Valley. That upland farmer was farming 300 acres of wheat and he had

not made a good crop for the last seven or eight years. Take him down and put him on 40 acres in the Boise Valley. He does not grow wheat, he grows small stuff, garden crops like onions of which there is a very little surplus at the present time. You have transferred him from a crop which has a large surplus into another crop which has virtually no surplus.

Q Mr. President, we heard constantly as we went through the West that there wasn't any interest any more in agricultural legislation, especially anything that carried crop curtailment because they had good crops and good prices for the moment. Did you sense that feeling or have you had reports --

THE PRESIDENT: There is always, when you get a pretty good price and a good crop yield, a slackening of interest. Of course most of them realize and remember what has happened in the past and there is very little, not nearly as much as one would expect, of the lack of interest that would normally come because they remember what did happen and they say to themselves, "If we do not do something about it at the present time, it will happen again." They are much better educated than they have been.

Q So you feel it won't be difficult to put through this farm legislation when Congress returns?



THE PRESIDENT: No. And of course the other side of it is that if it does not go through they are bound to have an awful smash in crop prices and then they will be the first to come and demand what we are trying to do for them this year.

Q Not changing the subject, but did you intake anything on the Supreme Court issue?

THE PRESIDENT: Apparently no real interest in the method but a great deal of interest in the objectives. In other words, the average man throughout the West and all through the East says, "Quicker, cheaper justice, extremely advisable and very necessary. We have all had our experiences. We do not know much about details. Maybe the President is right, maybe the President is wrong, but what we are after is the objective."

Q May we add something about the judiciary to that legislative program?

THE PRESIDENT: You are a little premature. I don't know. I would not put it in now because it will be too much of a guess. I don't know.

Q How about the anti-lynching bill. It is my recollection that the Senators --

Q We had a discussion about that. Does that have to come up at the Special Session, if there is one?

THE PRESIDENT: It has to come up under the Senate rule that they vote on it immediately after the passage of the crop bill. It has passed the House already.

Q What is there that you can do to reach the objective other than what you did do?

THE PRESIDENT: That is what I am going to talk about when I get back to Washington.

Q What are you going to talk about when you get back to Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: For instance, the question of additional District judges. That is one method. I don't know. I think the Circuit Court judges recommended twelve. I think the Department of Justice recommended twenty-four. Well, we obviously need to do something about it. Whether it is twelve or twenty-four is not the important thing.

Q Should we consider the Supreme Court out of it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily but, on the other hand, I would not say that you can consider it in.

Q Returning to that speech of yesterday, in view of its extreme importance, I think it would be very valuable if you would answer a few questions or else talk for background.

THE PRESIDENT: I think on that I can only talk really

completely off the record. I don't want to say anything for background.

Q I had two major things in mind. One was what you had in mind with reference to quarantining -- what type of measure. Secondly, how would you reconcile the policy you outlined yesterday with the policy of neutrality laid down by the Act of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Read the last line I had in the speech.

That gives it about as well as anything else. (Looking through New York Herald Tribune of October 6.)

Q I don't believe that paper carried it. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Here it is: "Therefore America actively engages in the search for peace."

Q But you also said that the peace-loving nations can and must find a way to make their wills prevail.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes?

Q And you were speaking, as I interpreted it, you were speaking of something more than moral indignation.

That is preparing the way for collaborative --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes?

Q Is anything contemplated? Have you moved?

THE PRESIDENT: No; just the speech itself.

Q Yes, but how do you reconcile that? Do you accept the fact that that is a repudiation of the neutrality --

THE PRESIDENT: Not for a minute. It may be an expansion.



Q Is that for use?

THE PRESIDENT: All off the record.

Q Doesn't that mean economic sanctions anyway?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily. Look, "sanctions" is a terrible word to use. They are out of the window.

Q Right. Let's not call it that. Let's call it concert of action on the part of peace-loving nations. Is that going to be brought into play?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that I can give you spot news because the lead is in the last line, "America actively engages in the search for peace." I can't tell you what the methods will be. We are looking for some way to peace and by no means is it necessary that that way be contrary to the exercise of neutrality.

Q Is there a likelihood that there will be a conference of the peace-loving nations?

THE PRESIDENT: No; conferences are out of the window. You never get anywhere with a conference.

Q Foreign papers put it as an attitude without a program.

THE PRESIDENT: That was the London Times.

Q Would you say that that is not quite it, that you are looking toward a program as well as having an attitude?

**THE PRESIDENT:** It is an attitude and it does not outline a program but it says we are looking for a program.

**Q** It is a receptive attitude toward a program?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Then, another thing which is off the record entirely. We will get one or two stories from London which say, "Why doesn't the United States suggest something?" Why should we suggest something? Can't somebody else make a suggestion? We have done an awful lot of suggesting. Every time we enter into some kind of an effort to settle something with our British friends, when we make the suggestion they get 90% and we get 10%. When they make the suggestion it comes out nearer 50-50. Why should we be doing the suggesting?

**Q** Wouldn't it be almost inevitable, if any program is reached, that our present Neutrality Act will have to be overhauled?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Not necessarily. That is the interesting thing.

**Q** That is very interesting.

**Q** You say there isn't any conflict between what you outline and the Neutrality Act. They seem to be on opposite poles to me and your assertion does not enlighten me.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Put your thinking-cap on, Ernest. (Lindley)

**Q** I have been for some years. They seem to be at opposite poles. How can you be neutral if you are going to

align yourself with one group of nations?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean, "aligning?" You mean a treaty?

Q Not necessarily. I meant action on the part of peace-loving nations.

THE PRESIDENT: There are a lot of methods in the world that have never been tried yet.

Q But, at any rate, that is not an indication of neutral attitude -- "quarantine the aggressors" and "other nations of the world."

THE PRESIDENT: I can't give you any clue to it. You will have to invent one. I have got one.

Q Did you notice that Senator Borah praised the speech?

Q What is a quarantine?

MRS. ROOSEVELT: I have great sympathy with you, Ernest (Lindley).

Q This is no longer neutrality.

THE PRESIDENT: On the contrary, it might be a stronger neutrality.

Q I mean as related to -- (interrupted)

Q This is all off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this is all off the record.

Q I wanted to ask something else about the Supreme Court thing. Did you notice any difference in the attitude of the people toward your Supreme Court policy and



the attitude that was manifested by the representatives in Congress last Session?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Depends on which one you mean. There were 435 different attitudes in the House and 96 in the Senate.

**Q** Well, they only voted once.

**THE PRESIDENT:** That was a catch vote, as you know.

**Q** I think they were pretty well lined up.

**THE PRESIDENT:** Ernest -- if you will read, all of you, the editorials in the other papers, you will see exactly what Ernest was bringing out, that there are no two of them that agree. Absolutely no two of them. Most of them cannot visualize the thing at all and of course, when you come to the old man of the seas -- old man Hearst -- he sent out his editorial to all the papers and it is the silliest thing ever written. Did you see it in the Times Union this morning? It is perfectly terrible -- awful. Says it means this is getting us into war and a lot of that.

**Q** Do you agree or disagree with what apparently amounts to the conclusion of the British, that sanctions mean war?

**THE PRESIDENT:** No. Don't talk about sanctions. Never suggested it. As I said to Jimmie, don't get off on the sanction route.

Q I meant that in general terms; going further than moral denunciation.

THE PRESIDENT: That is not a definition of "sanctions."

Q Is a "quarantine" a sanction?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you excluding any coercive action? Sanctions is coercive.

THE PRESIDENT: That is exactly the difference.

Q Better, then, to keep it in a moral sphere?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it can be a very practical sphere.

MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you, Mr. President.

**CONFIDENTIAL****Press Conference #401****Executive Offices of the White House****October 8, 1937, 10.38 AM**

**THE PRESIDENT:** I hope that you will all, all of you who were not on the trip, ask everybody what a good time they had on the trip -- those who went -- and, especially, ask about their night at Lake Crescent. They had a very, very wonderful night at Lake Crescent, one of the best they have ever spent on any trip.

**Q** May we begin by asking you about the trip?

**THE PRESIDENT:** I had a very good time.

**Q** Tell us some of the things you took in on this trip.

**THE PRESIDENT:** I took in a lot. It was a big intake.

Literally, I haven't got a single bit of news this morning because, as you know, we had a conference Wednesday morning and I have been at Hyde Park ever since and I have not seen the Secretary of State nor anybody as yet. If you ask any questions about foreign things, I will tell you I don't know.

**Q** You are going to see the Secretary of State?

**THE PRESIDENT:** He is coming in at eleven o'clock.

**Q** Will you comment on the business situation?

**THE PRESIDENT:** No.



Q Have you decided about naming the Housing Administrator?

Will he be named pretty soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, but soon.

Q Considerable speculation has been aroused, both at home and abroad, over the use of "concerted effort" and "quarantine" in your Chicago speech.

THE PRESIDENT: So I understand.

Q I wonder if you could tell us whether you have any plans toward implementing the suggestions carried out in your Chicago speech.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I cannot say anything further than what I said Wednesday morning because I haven't talked to anybody since then.

Q What about an extra session?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing as Wednesday morning.

Q Is Norman Davis coming over?

THE PRESIDENT: He is, and the Under Secretary is coming.

Q Any progress being made on selecting sites for air bases under the Wilcox Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You mean last year's bill?

Q Two years ago, for a series of coast air bases.

THE PRESIDENT: They are about to get one at Tacoma and that is about the only one I heard of on the trip.

Q They authorized three?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Will you take up the international situation with your Cabinet this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Do you plan to hold any meeting or conference with Mr. Justice Black?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am only going to be here five days.

Q Can you comment on the reports from Paris that Mr. Blum plans to pay a visit to you?

THE PRESIDENT: That was in the newspaper.

Q Is it too early to say how long you will remain up at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: About six or seven days -- about a week. I have got to speak in Poughkeepsie on Wednesday morning, which is the 250th Anniversary of the town and the 150th Anniversary of the Constitution and the laying of the cornerstone of the new Post Office.

Q Aren't you scheduled to make a speech here on some building dedication?

THE PRESIDENT: I have to be back here for that on the 20th.

That is the Federal Reserve Building, another cornerstone.

Q Have you any comment on the announcement that President Ortiz of Argentina might visit you?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that if he comes up he will be very, very welcome. I have not heard anything personally except what I read.

Q Will you make a Constitution speech at Poughkeepsie?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I am going to refer to my great-great-grandfather who was a member of the Constitutional Convention which met in Poughkeepsie and which ratified the Constitution.

Q You mentioned him before. What was his name?

THE PRESIDENT: Isaac.

Q Mr. President, do you favor the use of compulsory marketing quotas in connection with the crop control program?

THE PRESIDENT: Will you repeat that?

Q Do you favor the use of compulsory marketing quotas in connection with the crop control program?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I have not read it over.

Q The old one was strictly voluntary and the Bankhead and Smith bills have compulsory features.

THE PRESIDENT: There are too many constitutional issues involved in the question for snap judgment.

Q In the event the nine-power signatories should suggest Washington as the site of the nine-power conference, would that be welcomed?



THE PRESIDENT: In the first place, it is an "if" question and, in the second place, as I said before, I cannot say anything about the foreign situation at the present time, not having talked to the Secretary of State.

Q Anything about an extra session?

THE PRESIDENT: The same story as on Wednesday.

Q Are you going to hold conferences regarding the special session? I understood you were going to have various people in.

THE PRESIDENT: I will talk to people. There won't be any conference on it.

Q Will the decision be made before you go to Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q There have been many stories in recent days concerning the possibility of higher taxes for next year.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any news on it.

Q Has the Treasury Department submitted its plans for new taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You said in one of your messages it would be in October.

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine it will be.

Q Mr. President, will you take up revision of the Neutrality Act in the special session or in the regular session?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot comment at all. It is the same old story. I haven't got anything to add to what I said on Wednesday morning because I have no further information.

Q Mr. President, returning to Poughkeepsie, in what capacity was this great-great-grandfather at that Convention? What was he, a delegate?

THE PRESIDENT: He was a delegate, yes.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to have a revised budget for this year soon? Will one be issued shortly?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.