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KODAK Gray Scale



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 5, 1929

My dear Boys:

There is a tremendous let down with all of us today with the close of the legislative session and the inauguration. I feel little able to think, and less able to act. I pass over the inauguration with you, simply saying that almost directly in front of me sat yesterday in the senate chamber the outgoing and the incoming presidents. I would have given much to have been able to sketch their countenances. Two more dour, forbidding, and disagreeable faces it would be hard to conceive. Every lineament was sour and disgruntled, and no human expression once illumined these stony faces. The little man who left at once for Northampton is eating his heart out; the other man, who, despite his enormous publicity and the advertising of his modest and shrinking ways, feels himself practically a dictator, and will pursue his ruthless and relentless course in the next few years. The best index of his character is his treatment of Donovan, who, from the earliest moment of his contest, was his close friend and fighting adherent, and who, because of the Anti-saloon league and the Ku Klux Klan is kicked incon-
tumely into the discard. If you read the inaugural address, you'll see how true was the statement repeatedly made by me last year, that this is the time when all of us A.P.A's and Drys must stand together. He has sensed that politically his

fortunes depend upon prohibition and his ultra dry stand ought to be very pleasing to the wets we know in San Francisco who were so enthusiastically for him. I have received many messages through third parties of his desire to be friendly. I have invariably replied that I wish him success in his administration, that when I believe him to be right I will be with him, and when I believe him to be wrong I will fight him as hard as I know how, and at all times I will be governed by my own view of policies and of right and wrong.

We have been sleeping in our new house at 122 Maryland Avenue Northeast. We can utilize only one room. I have explained to you before that Mother is working with the four walls of an old house, and is changing, altering, and making over all of the rooms in it. If I could only draw I would try to draw you the floors. I am doubtful if I can even describe them, but I will try. The house is entered by a small hall in the centre. To the right as you enter upon the first floor, there is a very large room, capable, in my opinion, of being made into a most excellent and perhaps quite splendid living room. In this living room at present upon one side is a bay window, which looks like a protuberance upon a thumb. Your Mother is cutting that away, and putting French windows in place of it, so that there will be an entrance ^{from} ~~into~~ the living room ^{to} ~~from~~ the side of her ^{house.} ~~property.~~ I will not attempt to give you the dimensions of the room, but will see if Mother and I together tonight can draw the floors, so as to give you some adequate

conception of them. On the left of the entrance hall, there are two rooms of moderate size. One of these will be used as a sort of sitting room, and the other, the back room, is the dining room. The carpenters are cutting doors between these now. There is a window in the back of the dining room, which Mother is removing, because she is going to build a porch adjoining there. Back of the large living room I first mentioned is the kitchen, and a very brief hall way, from which a door opens into the dining room. There was a door connecting the living room with the kitchen, but this Mother is walling up. She is doing a great deal of work in the kitchen, building pantries, closets, and the like. The house is sort of lopsided arrangement, the longer side being with the living room and kitchen; the shorter portion containing the other two rooms on the other side. This Mother will remedy by her outside porch, which will run back and adjoin a part of the kitchen. The second floor contains first, a beautiful room, the room we shall adopt for ours. Already it has taken shape, and is the one room which has, thus far, taken shape. Mother has made it light blue, and has built a tiled bath room with a shower, which is really fine, adjoining it. Next to it is a room she will utilize for a dressing room or closet room for our clothes. Across the hall is a front room, which is not particularly large, but which I think is a very good room. Adjoining this front room at the back is another bath room, which Mother is building, ^{and a} ~~but~~ very much smaller place which will be utilized for closets. On the next floor, which at first I thought was an attic, but

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when I looked at it I found was quite spacious. Here there are two front rooms, which can be utilized as guest rooms, another bath room, and a small servants' room. In addition, there is a very large cellar which can be made into anything desirable. I am rather fearful I cannot give you an adequate conception of the place, and I will not add, in my opinion, to your idea of it by enclosing you a photograph which Erling took. The photograph is like that of a soubrette, infinitely better than the original. You'll understand from it, however, the walls and the possibilities. There is something in the picture that is wholly out of perspective and that I can not describe, but the house is shown with its funny front steps and its bay window stuck out in most incongruous fashion. There is another thing about the property that will interest you. You'll observe the ^{lawn} ~~line~~ in front of the house and in front of the stone house immediately to the left. The building line sets back 30 to 35 feet from the ^{inner} ~~outside~~ line of the sidewalk, and this intervening 30 or 35 feet belongs in fee to the United States. It is to be fenced with a straight iron fence as you can just discern in the photograph, and to be used by the adjoining property owner, but we cannot fence it as we wish, nor do otherwise than maintain it as a sort of ~~a~~ private park. In building a wall around our property as Mother intends to do we'll build a wall about seven feet high. It will start from the corner of the building line that you'll observe, and run in a sort of ~~a~~ ellipse to the back building

I hadn't any idea of the condition of these titles until I began to get the necessary permits that Mother required. I have but one photograph, so Miss Connor will flip a coin to see in whose letter it goes, and I ask the one who receives it, after examining it, to hand it to the other. I may say to you that Maryland avenue is a tremendously wide avenue, that our house is situated only a block from the beginning of the capitol grounds, and that it faces upon a block of residences, which already have been condemned for the new Supreme Court building. In time, therefore, we ought to face a very beautiful park, and the new Supreme Court structure. Singularly enough Joe and Fong are more than delighted to be away from the Riverdale house, but neither of them likes the kitchen and the new gas stove. I really believe that Mother has been more worried over the four dogs and the cat and the two faithful Chinese boys than over anything else. Every single particle of the house inside is being remodeled, so you can understand her task. The house is a very old one, and the walls enormously thick brick walls, formerly used here. It was dirty and filthy, and no doubt unsanitary. When the work will be done the Lord only knows.

I am in such a daze today that I am letting my decision as to whether to come to California to await until I get back my equilibrium. Today I was told the extra session was to be called for the 10th of April. I would love to come out, even

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for three weeks, but I hate to leave your Mother here alone. It is a terrible task, and each day finds her more worried and worn.

With my love,

Affectionately,

Dad

P:S: As the Senator suggested I flipped a coin, and
Mr. Arch wins the toss. Mary Connor

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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 6, 1929

Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Arch:

Mother and I have been greatly concerned over the injuries to Martha and yourself. I am writing in behalf of both of us. I want you to realize how engaged she is, and how impossible it is for her to do anything else except the work that engrosses her every minute of the day now. We're living in the house. We get up at seven. The workmen arrive at seven thirty. From the time that she snatches a bite of breakfast until late in the evening, she is superintending them and directing what they do. Of course, you know we have no architect, and everything is dependent upon her. She has her own ideas and her own plans, and she works them out entirely by herself. Fortunately, she has a good foreman, a carpenter who has been employed in the Capitol here, and he has been very wonderful, working nights, Sundays, and overtime. She has literally made over every room in the house, and when I say this, I mean built over every room. She has torn down practically every partition, and built others, reconstructed doors and passageways, etc. I go into this detail so you'll understand why she personally has not written you. At night, and we dine wherever we can,

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 2

and at any time possible because the kitchen is not yet in such condition that it can be utilized for our meals, she is so tired and worn that I feel more sorry than I can tell you for her. In fact, if she gets through this infernal thing without being sick I will be extremely thankful. We have an hour together late in the evening, and then talk about you and the other dear ones in California.

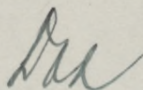
I am sending you, as I am sending Jack today, two sketches of the three floors of the house, which will give you some idea probably of what she is doing. Such places as the living room, and the room upon the second floor designated as our room, had partitions across them, and you have no idea what a task it is to knock out these old brick walls that formerly were used in construction here. However, enough of the house.

There was quite a flurry in the senate just before adjournment over speculation upon Wall Street, and a demand that something be done to curb it. Of course, nothing was done because nobody knows what to do. If anybody were wise enough to suggest a way the Congress would adopt it. I glance casually at the stock reports, and the only thing I have observed is the sky rocketing of Anaconda. I am wondering if the gentleman who had some when I was in San Francisco retained it. If he did, he was singularly fortunate.

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 3

Give our love to Martha and express to her, please,
how sorry we were at her accident, and how we long for
her speedy recovery and yours.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. M. Johnson', written in a cursive style.

B Street

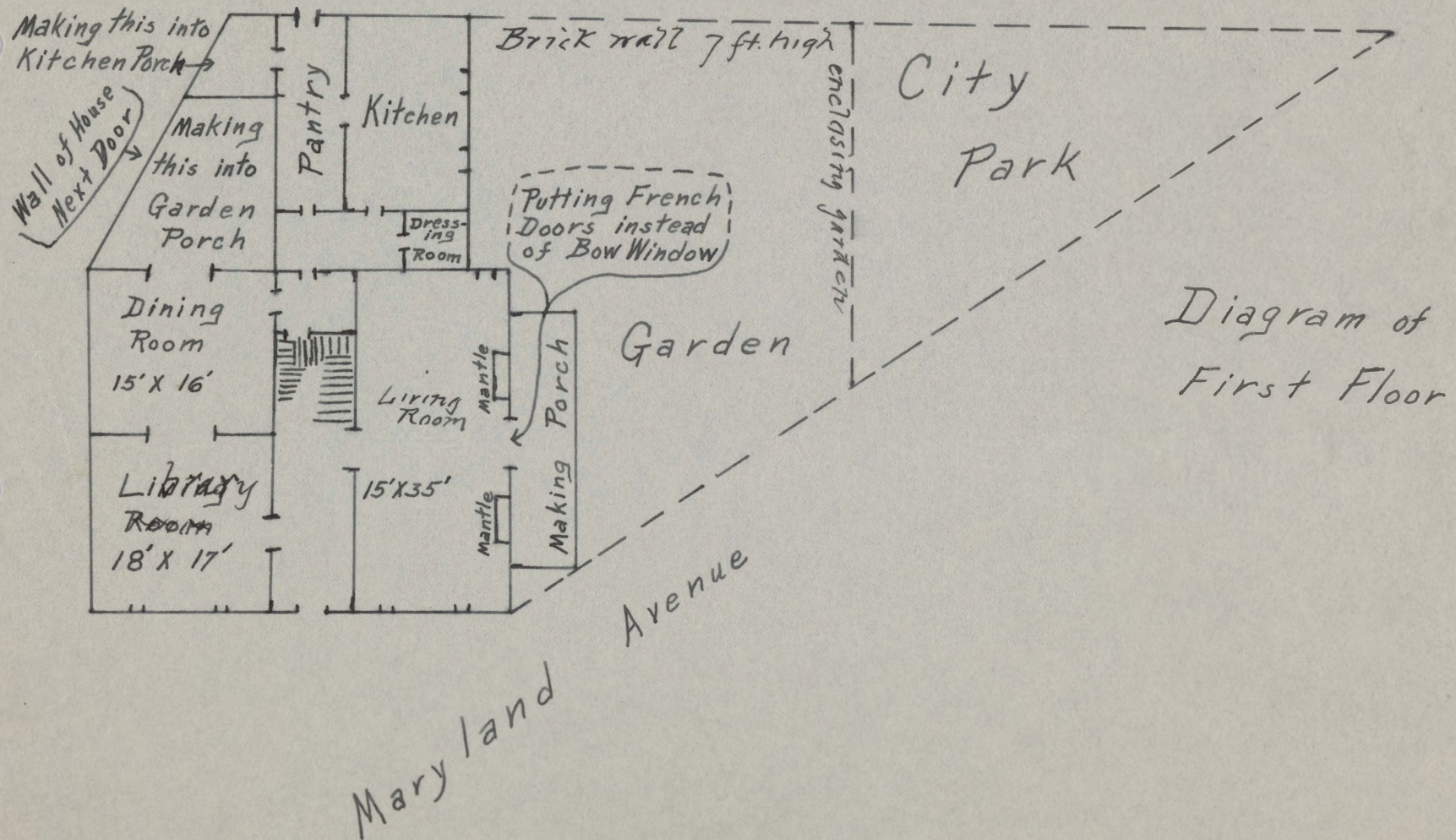
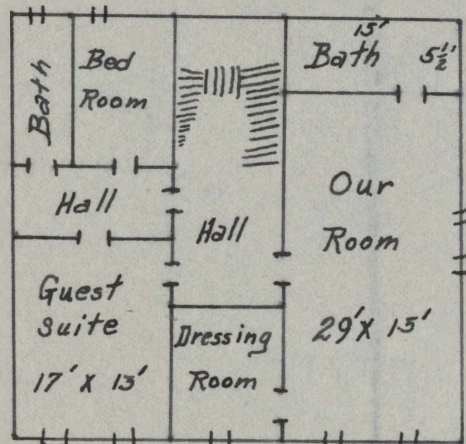
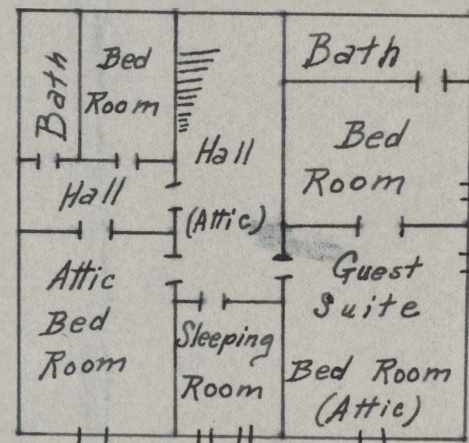


Diagram of
Second Floor



Maryland Avenue

Diagram of
Third Floor



Maryland Avenue

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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 11, 1929

Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Arch:

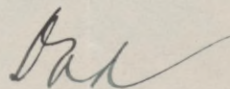
I have yours of March 7 this morning. I am so glad that Gus is progressing well. I have thought much about him, and I have been so sorry for him.

I was sworn in at the senate on the 4th of March. Mine was the first name of the second batch of senators. I was escorted to the rostrum by that distinguished statesman and eminent patriot, Samuel M. Shortridge. I did not attend the ceremonies outside. It was raining, and I was in none too good condition. The fact is both your Mother and I have had the terrible colds with which you are familiar, and neither of us is up to par. We ate our first dinner at the house Sunday, but we are still in awful shape.

During the week I will write you and Jack in detail about the house, and I hope I can then write you that Mother and I have safely weathered our present horrid colds.

With love to Martha and yourself,

Affectionately,



HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 15, 1929

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorneys at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Boys:

I intended to write you somewhat at length today but I refrain. We're full of trials and tribulations here, and just as I get heartily sick of an individual who constantly is telling hard luck stories, I am sure even your great affection would not be proof against repeated tales of our misfortunes or hard luck. I am postponing therefore until a future day, when physically both Mother and I are feeling better, a long, lurid, and a losing tale.

We're living in the new quarters, but still in the utmost confusion. Some of the rooms have been completed, and if you care to look upon the plan that I sent you, you'll see just what they are. Our own room on the second floor is in fairly good shape with a fine bath room and shower.

We dine in the room across the hall from us, which will be ultimately converted into a sort of guest suite. The rooms in the attic are fairly done, and Joe and Fong at present are sleeping there. The kitchen is usable now. A great deal of work is being done upon the dining room and the porch adjoining, but they require so much that I imagine it will be a week before they are completed. At any rate, we sleep fairly well and comfortably in the new quarters, and Fong does not

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seem to mind running up the flight of stairs to serve our meals.

In the last couple of days winter ^{has been} is transmuted into summer. The change is sudden, and because of its suddenness not too agreeable. We may have one or two dips of temperature during this month, but I think winter is now at an end. Mother is working long, hard days in the house, and while I know how wearing these days are, I am rather beginning to believe that she gets very great pleasure from it. It is amazing to me how she can direct what she wants, and have the workmen about her follow her directions and plans. I am utterly unable to visualize from a mere statement of what is to be built, how the construction would look upon completion.

The dogs and the cat, apparently are used to the premises. We kept them shut up for a few days for fear Spartan and puss would run back. Personally I am longing for California, and I am restless and uneasy. If you two, and I and Mother ~~would~~ make the world over again, I am sure we would think we could do a better job, but when we got through I am not certain that anybody else ^{or even} ~~than~~ ourselves would be at all clear as to the improvement.

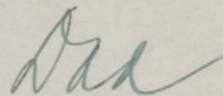
Write to your Mother if you get the time. Remember how tremendously busy she is. Night finds her awfully worn, and while I think probably she enjoys the work, I am in

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constant terror that it will destroy her health.

Love to all.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be 'Dad', written in dark ink.

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 18, 1929

My dear Boys:

I told you last week that we had encountered some difficulties and we felt so heartsick over them that I postponed even telling you about them. When we got into our new house I felt an immense relief, and notwithstanding the dust and dirt, the difficulties and confusion, and the hardships of living in one room while the house was being built around you, I bore it with equanimity, and in pleasurable anticipation of being comfortable, and settled finally in something that we ourselves owned and possessed, and concerning which there could be no controversy.

I forwarded you on Saturday two maps showing the location of our property and the location of the proposed new Supreme Court Building from two different angles. In 1926, the agitation here for a new Supreme Court Building found expression in a law authorizing the selection of a site by the Public Buildings Commission of Washington, which site should thereafter be acquired for the Government by the Secretary of the Treasury. The Public Building Commission duly selected blocks 727 and 728 as this site, and so certified to the Secretary of the Treasury. The Secretary of the Treasury confirmed the selection and began then condemnation proceedings for the acquisition of the site.

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These condemnation proceedings have been completed, and the money has been appropriated by congress , the last of it in the last deficiency bill at the end of the session, for the payment to the property owners in the two blocks. Tentatively the location of the Supreme Court Building was fixed as indicated upon map number one. The property we bought has been on the market here for about a year, upon which was a large sign, with the name of the real estate owner who had it in charge. One of its attractions was that it would overlook the two blocks upon which the Supreme Court would be constructed. The Supreme Court was very anxious to have its building constructed under a special commission, and the congress therefore created a special commission consisting of Chief Justice Taft, one other member of the Supreme Court, the ranking majority and minority members of the committees of the two houses on public buildings and grounds, and the architect of the capitol. On March 3, Sunday, this commission met and the Chief Justice proposed that a committee be appointed to acquire block 726. Until that time no person, so far as I have been able to learn, had the slightest idea that any other property was sought by the Supreme Court, and all believed that the Supreme Court building, with its site had been definitely determined, and was on its way. On the 12th day of March, Chief Justice Taft called upon me and said that he had heard something of my difficulties at Riverdale, that he was no Caraway, that he had just learned that I had

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purchased property in block 726, and that your Mother was engaged in a great work of remodeling and rebuilding the premises, and we were expending large sums of money in this, and he thought it but right therefore that he tell me that the court contemplated the acquisition of block 726 and its condemnation as a part of the grounds of the Supreme Court Building. The map marked number two shows the location of the Supreme Court Building with blocks 726, 727, and 728 as its site. The argument of the Chief Justice is that this makes the construction and the land upon which it rests much more symmetrical and sightly, and this is so from an inspection of the map. Blocks 726 and 727 are triangular in shape, bisected so that triangles are made of the two sides by Maryland avenue. While two square blocks with the building in the centre would be more symmetrical, encroachment upon Maryland avenue and the closing of Maryland avenue would be the destruction of the most artistic and beautiful view there is of the capitol on coming into the city.

Of course I was thunderstruck, and one of the hardest things I had ever done was to break the news that night to your Mother. Taft related to me that on the 3rd of March, a committee had been appointed consisting of Senator Reed of Missouri, and Mr. Lynn, the architect of the Capitol, to make the requisite investigations concerning block 726 preparatory to its acquisition. Since that time I have been with meticulous care investigating every step in the proceedings for the site and the

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construction of the Supreme Court Building. In block 726 there is a 5-story structure at the opposite corner from us known as the Methodist Building. It consists of apartments that are quite desirable and are rented out, of a very excellent and cheap dining room, and is a building of first-class construction which the Methodists from collections made all over the country have erected as a sort of monument to their faith, and doubtless, to their business acumen as well. I sent for the gentleman in charge of the Methodist organization, Dr. Clarence True Wilson, who, by the way, is a brother of John R. Wilson, an attorney in the Mills Building, and the news was to him a blow quite as severe as it had been to your Mother and myself. We are now allies. I have been quietly interviewing my colleagues, and he will do likewise, and between us we may stop probably this injustice, for it is a rank injustice. It was little short of an outrage that the property that we bought should be held out for sale for a year with signs upon it and the like, without one word of the purpose to condemn it ever being uttered. No one knew what was in the minds of those who now exhibit their purpose. Of course, the gown of the Supreme Court of the United States has^a most persuasive influence, and equally, of course, one like myself, can not vote in a matter where his financial interest is at stake. There can however be no ethical objection to a presentation of the facts, and that presentation will be made. If there is anything like an equitable estoppel against the Government and the Supreme Court, it exists in this instance.

Fortunately we are but a small part of the situation. The Methodist Building is worth at least three-quarters of a million dollars, and represents a tremendous industry and effort, and is a source of very great pride to its people. You'll observe by looking at the maps that the plan of taking block 726 embraces also the condemnation of a block of Maryland Avenue, which is a great, wide, beautiful street, leading to the capitol from the East, and is traversed by every traveler who comes over the Baltimore pike or from any of the great cities of the north. When you enter Maryland avenue the view of the capitol in the distance presents one of the most beautiful vistas I have ever seen, and the endeavor to close this avenue ought to arouse very great indignation. The progenitors of this scheme hope to bring it up in the special session. I am really deeply indebted to Taft, because of his warning. I would not know anything about the matter now if he had not called upon me, and I would have been resting in fancied security to have had a most rude awakening when the session begins. Forewarned, forearmed!

Condemnation proceedings by the Government ^{here a} are very different thing from condemnation proceedings as we know them. There is here no jury that passes upon the poor property owner's values. Hard-boiled Commissioners appointed by the Court, which, of course, is a mere functionary of the Government, do the job.

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This new endeavor of the Supreme Court will not succeed without a very violent struggle. The worst of it is that it deters me from the things in which I would like to be interested, and that it makes me a partisan in a governmental matter where my personal interest conflicts. This last I shall avoid as best I can, and shall refrain from participating in the ultimate determination. Of course, when the warning came to me on March 12 it was utterly impossible to do anything at all. Our work was then probably half completed, and the expenses of it had really all been incurred. We could only continue, and that we are doing.

I have another hard luck story too, but this is enough for the day. Weinstock used to say, and he said it in times of great stress to him, once I remember when the fire was destroying his life work, "Every cloud has a silver lining". I thought it was damn nonsense when Weinstock said it. I am unable to see any silver lining at the moment, but we'll hope for the best.

With love to all,

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 20, 1929

My dear Sons:

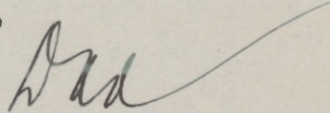
Day before yesterday I sent you a long statement in regard to our troubles with our new home. I am sending you herein, merely that you may understand the situation, the history of the site for the Supreme Court Building from its inception. I shall not again write you about the matter in any detail, because, first, I don't want to unload my troubles, and secondly, constant reiteration of one's difficulties, however arising, are a nuisance and a bore. I am feeling better about the situation now. Smoot arrived yesterday, and has become a decided ally. My colleagues, with whom I have been quietly taking the matter up, are sympathetic, and the Methodists have afforded me a little ray of humor. They see a deep, dark conspiracy on the part of the Catholics and wets to destroy their cherished property, and they are in the fight with both feet. I am hoping to stifle the attempted appropriation of our block 726 in its initial stages, that is, first in the Supreme Court Building Commission itself, and if unsuccessful there, in the Senate Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds. Today, for the first time it seems that with the very powerful aid of Smoot this may be accomplished. And now, I will dismiss the subject in my letters to you, with

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apologies for having taken up so much space and time in writing you. My excuse is that I have done nothing else since the blow fell on the 12th of March, and that since then your Mother and I have been really very greatly worried and concerned.

With our love to all,

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Ada', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

March 23, 1929

My dear Boys:

I can't let the Saturday go by without sending you at least a word. We have made progress, in my opinion, with the difficulties over our home; that is, I think we're bringing to bear sufficient influence to make the Supreme Court pause, and if we succeed in having the Court begin its construction upon its already condemned lands, we'll have, at least, stayed off the fatal day. From early morning until late at night, your Mother is at work and I can not see any end to it. The workmen in our two rooms upon our first floor last night worked until eleven o'clock. Mother is transforming them into two very beautiful rooms, one of which will be the dining room, and the other will be what you may term a sitting room or library. We're living in the dust, and the dirt, and the filth, and suppose we'll continue indefinitely.

Here, all are intent upon the extra session. Monday, the agricultural committee begins to hold its hearings. A bill will be passed, which will be the bunk. It may be that the endeavor will be made to take us into the World Court again at the special session. I would like to fight it, fight it intelligently and hard, but unfortunately I am distracted from the work that is really my province into the pin pricking

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worries, such as I have written you about in the past couple of weeks.

I hope this note finds everybody fine and dandy.
Love to all.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dad", written in dark ink.

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 1, 1929

Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Arch:

during which I had not heard from you,
Last Friday, after the lapse of a couple of weeks,
I began to fear you may be ill, and the more I thought
of it, the more worried I became. I have been in a
horrid mental state for sometime anyway because of our
troubles here, and this distressed mentality led me,
doubtless, to wire you as I did, asking how you were,
and I was very glad afterwards that I had done so, for
your good telegram came reassuring me. Of course, the
same day that your telegram came, your recent letter
arrived. Mother and I were interested in your description
of your single remaining great Dane pup. I trust he will
justify all your hopes. Our dogs have had rather a rotten
time of it the past month in the new quarters. We have
kept them pretty well shut up, because of the men working
in the different rooms, and of course, we have to keep Tubby
separate from the others. When they get within calling
distance, there is the very devil to pay, and it gets on my
nerves frightfully.

In conjunction with the people who run the Methodist Building, I have made some headway with my colleagues in the matter of the condemnation of the block in which the Methodist Building and our new home are situated. My anxiety is to keep the matter from coming to a fight in the congress, I do not, at the moment, quite see how I can do this, but it is possible. The very mention of condemnation, of course, destroys the salability and value of our property, and this calamity perhaps already has occurred. Our fight now is to retain our abiding place. There have been other difficulties in conjunction with the premises as well, but I made up my mind sometime since I was not going to annoy you with these pin pricks that have so affected me here.

The work upon our house proceeds, but gradually, and apparently constantly slows up. This doubtless is due to the fact that you have often remarked, how quickly the outer structure of a house will go up, then how long a time it takes apparently to finish, and as I have written you, your Mother literally has gutted this dwelling. She has utilized the four walls, but even the floors and the stairway have been practically made over; windows that existed once no longer are there in some cases, and in others, ordinary windows have been made into French windows. The house, I think will be a tribute to your Mother's genius when it is finished. It

will be not only comfortable but beautiful. The Lord only knows when it will be finished.

Two weeks from today our special session begins. The infernal thing, with the unfortunate difficulties here, knocked the spots out of my plans. I am postponing partnership with Sullivan and Roche until July, or until I can get to California, and this I regret exceedingly with my added expenses.

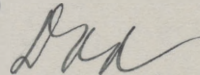
Yesterday your Mother and I went to the annual Easter function, which we have attended for many years in the past, the luncheon of the McLeans. Here are assembled the great and the near-great of Washington annually, Supreme Court judges, members of the Cabinet, Senators and Congressmen, newspaper men, and the like. I was very curious about yesterday's affair. McLean is the wettest of the wets, and in every function of his household, liquor has been served in the past in an indescribable abundance. Last week I said to your Mother I imagined, much as McLean disliked it, he would bow to power in yesterday's function. Edict has gone forth in Washington that social functions shall be dry. Of course, it is obeyed by office holders, but equally of course, those in private life have rebelled. Yesterday, I thought was the great test. Yesterday, for the first time in any of the McLean parties, no liquor of any kind was served. It was interesting to me, not only from the standpoint of the influence

4.

of power, but from the standpoint of the prohibition law itself. I think it demonstrates what may be accomplished. I know you wont agree with me in this, but we have found in Washington, since Hoover's election that those who hold office, and those who expect office, have altered their habits of a lifetime and yielded to the supposed dryness of the administration.

I do hope you are in good shape physically, mentally, and financially. You would not be a true son of your father if in the last attribute you were not in very bad shape, so I don't expect too much in that direction, but I pray for your physical well being. My love to Martha and yourself.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be 'Dad', written in dark ink.

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 1, 1929

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Jack:

I received your letter last week, and Saturday afternoon, Mother received the mortgage for execution for the San Francisco Bank. I dislike exceedingly to execute this mortgage, but perhaps I shall do so during the day, and then forward it to you. I do not need to say to you that when one begins to build practically a new house, no inconsiderable burden is assumed.

There is little to write you about happenings here. Our minds are centered upon the new home and the difficulties which we have encountered. Apparently, the confusion in which we live will last indefinitely. Slowly, the rooms are taking shape. Your Mother, as usual, is accomplishing the seemingly impossible. Before she finishes, we'll have a house of which we can be proud, and which will be an added tribute to her ability and artistry. Gradually, in conjunction with the Methodist people, I am making progress with my brethren over the condemnation of the triangle where we are situated. I am striving in every direction to prevent the matter coming to a real contest before the congress. The very suggestion of condemnation, of course, destroys

2.

not only the salability, but the value of the property, and these probably are gone in any event. Our endeavor is to preserve intact our abiding place.

Saturday, I tried to get out of myself a little and wrote a long screed upon the World Court. Part of it is carried in the press, but only a part of it. There is no doubt at all about what is going to happen. The administration aided by the various organizations, and the very powerful interests will take us into this court at the earliest possible moment. I think it will be a wicked thing to do from our Nation's standpoint, and of course, to my utmost I will oppose it. Reed, of Missouri, who was a leader of the opposition, is gone now. Borah, as usual, is running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. He may be relied upon to fight a while, and then sneak off with the administration, and cover his desertion with constitutional verbiage.

Horst has been here testifying before the senate agricultural committee upon his favorite theme of how to rescue the farmer. How strange are human beings! Horst really imagines that the whole world is listening to the testimony of E. Clemens Horst upon farm relief, and that his particular panacea is quite likely to be adopted. He and Mrs. Horst to use the feminine verb, of which we all grew so weary,

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are "thrilled" about what they think is their high position and prominence here. In reality, the whole thing is bunk.

Love to all,

Affectionately,

Dad

It was fine of you to remember
Mother on Easter. Your beautiful
lillies adorned our room and by
them we burned a candle. Thank
you very very much!
Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 6, 1929

My dear Boys:

I simply can't keep track of the weeks, to say nothing of the fleeting days so quickly do they pass. It seems to me that I wrote both of you yesterday, although I know it was Monday last. I have nothing particularly new, except to do that which affords me a little pleasure each week when I have time, talk with my two lads for a brief period. Next week, perhaps, I can write you a rather interesting story. Accompanied by maps, documents, and the like, I will send you the novelette, entitled "~~How~~ Fortune Passed Me By", or "The Thrills and Humors of a Near Millionaire". I think with the lapse of another week this startling tale will be concluded, and I shall not, in the slightest degree, destroy the pleasure you have in anticipation, by any suggestion of what is in store for you.

Yesterday, Walter Linforth and his wife, formerly Mrs. Brickell, called. Apparently, they were very happy. What a strange world, and how constantly new and interesting phases of psychology present themselves!

Today we're in worse confusion at the house than ever before. If you'll look at your map, or your floor plans, you can follow. The interior decorator or painter is engaged in the two rooms on the left, as you enter the first floor. These rooms are designed - the first or outer one as a sitting room or library for me, and the second or inner one is our dining

2.

room. Mother has paneled both, and it is amazing what a little strip of narrow board will make in the appearance of a room. She has cut wide doors between the two rooms, has built book cases in the wall in the sitting room or library that are arched; in the dining room two recess arches, one on each side of the fire place, that are ornamented in respect to the arch, and in the portion for three feet above the floor made into cupboards. She has cut through the wall of the furthest side of the dining room and made great French doors, and immediately outside in a very limited space that exists between the house next door and ours, has built a porch, which she has cemented over with a wall at the extreme end, that by virtue of plaster and brick, she has manufactured into a very pretty little vista. I doubt very much if you can understand from my inept description just what has been done, but as best I can I am endeavoring to tell you the appearance as it strikes me. These two rooms, I think, will be very beautiful indeed when finished. On the other side, that is, the right hand side as you enter the house, is a large living room, which is substantially as large as the two rooms I have just described upon the left hand side together. This living room gradually is taking shape. It, too, has been, paneled. From this living room upon the right, of course, as you enter the house, Mother has removed the old bay window, and in its place, has built French windows, which will open upon a porch into the yard, the yard consisting of the vacant lot number 800, which adjoins our house. As I said to you, the

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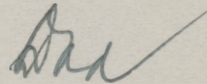
painters are painting the two rooms upon the left as you enter the house, so that you may see we are getting along there somewhat. At the entrance to the house this morning, they tore down the steps and the porch, and Mother is constructing some sort of a "trick doodad" as she would say, which I cannot, at the present, visualize, but which she tells me will constitute a stairway to the entrance from each side. In leaving the house today I had to go out the big living room on some temporary steps that the carpenter put up. We're still living in one room, and eating in the room immediately across the hall from it. This improvised dining room ultimately is to constitute, with the little room behind it, and the bath room, a guest suite. It is five weeks last night since we slept in the house, and my private opinion is it will be five months before we're finished, although I think within the next couple of weeks we'll be able to use our dining room and the space probably of the two rooms that I first described to you. Just as soon as the situation becomes clearer I will have some pictures of the place made and sent to you. It is among the possibilities that by the end of next week we may relieve ourselves of the terror of condemnation during the special session. I am straining every nerve to that end, and the sweet responses that have come to me from most of my colleagues have been very gratifying. Some, of course, are cold-nosed, and anxious to do whatever the "gown" commands. If it were not that I am dealing with the Supreme Court, I think the matter would be ended very

4.

quickly. As it is, the issue will remain doubtful until definitely settled.

I notice Bert Schlessinger died. His death recalled (and the very incident is etched upon my memory in the most startling fashion) the day during the graft prosecution when in a stuffy, jammed, court room in the old synagogue, I smashed him in the face, and for the day, broke up the court proceedings. We became good friends afterwards, and I was very sorry to note his death. One by one, the old fellows are passing away. But what matters it, God reigns in Washington! My love to all,

Affectionately,



United States Senate,

WASHINGTON, D. C.

At Home, 122 Maryland Ave. Apr 10, 1929

My dear Jack:

I'm curious about a certain matter, hence this note. I obtained last session in the Sacramento River matter a refund of something over four millions to the State of California. Incidentally it was one of the most difficult things I ever tackled, but an accomplishment as great as any I ever succeeded in. Involved in this four millions is a very large sum in Reclamation warrants. These warrants in great degree are or were held by the American Bank. Some day when the opportunity presents itself please ask how the exact status of these warrants, what if any value they had and whether the Bank will profit by the legislation. John Damm sent me a very fulsome telegram for the wonderful work I had done for the Sacramento valley farmers.

Affectionately
DWS

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 13, 1929

Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Arch:

I received this week your two letters, the last one devoted to the Federal Reserve Board's action in New York, and of the financial situation generally. I read with the utmost interest the statement of Mr. Catchings. I quite agree with his conclusion, that no board should possess the power now being exercised by the Federal Reserve Board. I can understand the results of the Federal Reserve Board's actions, but I am sorry to say I understand little of the inner working of the Board, and even less of the financial situation. I have the feeling that through the action of the Federal Reserve Board in relation to the high rates upon call money, vast fortunes were made by rich speculators, who knew what was going to be done, and that when over night the same board receded from the position it had taken, the same rich speculators again made vast fortunes, because they knew what the Federal Reserve Board was about to do, and in the end, those who were very rich and very astute speculators grew richer, while those who were

bucking the market as small speculators were ruined. There is a feeling here in Washington that this sort of thing ought to cease, and that something should be done, of one sort or another, to curb the wild orgy of gambling so prevalent in the stock market. The difficulty of course is that there are so many people here, like myself, who recognize there is something radically wrong, but who are utterly unable to understand the intricacies of the system, and are wholly at sea as to the appropriate remedy. A man like myself, who has reached ^{the} ~~the~~ years of discretion under these circumstances, hesitates to act at all. We have, however, from the middle west men like Capper and Brookhart, and the farm bloc generally, who have not the slightest hesitation in rushing into a field wholly unexplored by them, and of which they know nothing, with half-baked legislation. Moreover, I can not for the life of me see how in a stock market a distinction can be made between investment and speculation - that is between honest exchange and mere gambling; and until I can see this distinction, it is impossible for me to say what must be done, or what ought to be done. I can only be very certain of what I said in the beginning, that no Board ought to have the power that is now being exercised by the Federal Reserve Board.

We begin our extra session Monday. I can not find that anybody looks forward to it with any anticipations of pleasure. It is the sheerest bunk in relation to farm

relief, and probably in relation to the tariff, too. The Lord only knows how long we'll be here, but it is my opinion that in the midsummer when we roast and sweat, we'll suddenly decide to adjourn.

I think we have delayed the fatal day of the condemnation of the block in which our property is situated. At the original meeting of the Supreme Court Building Commission on the third of March, a committee of two were appointed to gather information requisite for the acquisition and condemnation of the land. The Commission met this week again. We had fussed so much about it and interviewed so many, that nothing was done looking to the taking of the property, and the commission tacitly agreed to go on and build the Supreme Court Building. Of course, if this is done, it seems that the building will be constructed upon the lands already condemned, and that we will be free temporarily. Mother and I actually were greatly relieved, but the danger will be impending just so long as we are here. I was very glad to meet with the sympathetic interest I met with in taking the matter up with my colleagues. I feel I could have whipped the Supreme Court in this thing upon the floor of the Senate, but it would have been most unfortunate and unhappy controversy. My effort has been to stifle the condemnation, if possible, in the Supreme Court Building Commission itself, and this has been accomplished apparently. I have advised

my Methodist allies, however, that they must not go to sleep, but continue their activities.

I saw George Cameron yesterday, and he said that you and Martha were in fine fettle. He tries to be pleasant, and I feel under some little obligations to him, but really when I have to sit and listen to a monologue for an hour and a half by him, as I had to do yesterday and probably will have to do again today, I feel that any obligation I owe him is more than paid for.

The house is getting along slowly. I have not the slightest idea when it will be finished. Certainly I can not see the end of it yet. Your Mother will when she has concluded her work make it into a very beautiful home, that is from our very moderate standpoint. Just as soon as it is possible, I will have photographs taken, and send them to you.

My love to Martha and yourself, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 13, 1929

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Jack:

This morning I received your letter of April 9 enclosing check payable to Mother for \$4867.90. Thank you very much indeed for attending to this matter for her. I wish you would do me the kindness to express to Mr. Tourney how very much I appreciated his kindness and his courtesy. What a difference there is in the way in which this bank acted, and the proceedings here under similar circumstances! The lowest charge made for a loan by any bank in Washington is 1 1/2 per cent. On the \$25,000 trust deed upon our house I had to pay 2 per cent. The cost of title examination, execution of papers, and the like, was a little over \$100.00. You will readily see by comparison with what you accomplished with the San Francisco Bank how much I thank you and the Bank for what has been done.

I note what you say about Alex. Heron and your experience before the Commission at Sacramento with the claim of Weeks and Day. I don't blame you for the strictures in which you indulge concerning Heron. What he did, doubtless, is in line with what has been done in respect to many other

2.

matters. George Cameron was here yesterday and related to me, from his standpoint, the occurrences regarding the cement people and the activities of the Legislature in relation to them. He told me that during the pendency of the matters Heron went to southern California, called together the cement men, and crudely stated to them there were pending certain bills before the Legislature in which they were interested, and which would be passed and receive the approval of the Governor, unless a price which he named for cement was accorded to the State by the cement men. You know my utter lack of sympathy with big business, and that I am swift to engage in a controversy or combat with big business upon the least justification; but if this story of Camerson be true, it constitutes a sort of thing, which, first is an unwarranted wrong, secondly, that no official with a sense of responsibility could countenance, and thirdly, which, in my opinion, is as rotten and reprehensible in principle as any gouging of the State by any combination of wealth. Cameron said that Judge Myers was the authority for this statement. It seems incredible to me that it could have occurred, but the incident that you relate would seem to lend it corroboration. Jones of the Bee is here. In a little different language he and Camerson said about the same thing concerning Young - that he was a 100 per cent right in his intentions, and a good Governor, but lacking utterly in the

3.

courage to govern for himself and as he thought. Neither of them seemed to have a high opinion of Heron, save for his ability in certain lines, and both asserted that he was the real Governor of the State.

I have been greatly concerned this week over the reports from California of the frosts. Apparently, the apricot, almond, peach and prune crops have not only been seriously damaged, but in large degree actually destroyed. I do hope that you were not caught in this disaster. I am extremely sorry for the people in the Sacramento Valley, whose lot has been pretty hard when at best. I am not clear as to the extent of the damage, but presume soon I will learn. The reports thus far I have seen certainly arouse all of one's sympathy.

This week the Supreme Court Building Commission met. I am glad to say to you that nothing was done concerning the acquisition or condemnation of block 726 in which our property is situated. I am striving as best I can to prevent any action at all. From the ready and sympathetic response I have met with from my fellows, I feel that I can probably beat the condemnation of the block on the floor of the Senate, but it would be a most unfortunate thing to have such a contest. I feel easier over this week's lack of action by the Supreme Court Building Commission. At its meeting on the third of March it prepared for action. I think that we prevented anything being done this week, and I believe now we'll have nothing to fear in the matter of condemnation, at least during

4.

the special session. I have heaved a great sigh of relief. I have advised our Methodist allies, however, that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and that they must not rest in fancied security, but be always alert and constantly proselyting.

I received your other letter earlier in the week. You must have had a glorious time on that three day vacation up the Sacramento River. Dr. Hogan told me that you had described the trip to him.

The progress at our new house is necessarily slow. Mother, of course, is accomplishing great results, but when we'll reach the completion, the Lord only knows. Just as soon as the structure is in such shape that photographs can be taken of it, I will obtain them for you, and try to send you an adequate conception, not only of the exterior, but of the interior. Out of the first floor, Mother has constructed three very beautiful rooms with a little annex through the French windows of the dining room, that is very nice indeed. The painters are not yet through with these three rooms, but sufficient of the coloring is now permanent to arouse even my admiration.

We begin our special session on Monday. Nobody is looking forward to it with any anticipations of pleasure. We'll continue until the hot weather drives everybody insane, and then suddenly we'll quit. When we quit I will be on my way to California, I hope.

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With my love to the kiddies and yourself, and in the hope that you were not hit by the disaster in the Sacramento Valley, and that you disposed of Ana when at its peak,

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON
CHAIRMAN

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 19, 1929

My dear Boys:

A couple of weeks ago I said that I was going to write you the sad tale entitled "How Fortune Passed Me By", or "The Thrills of a near-Millionaire". I had expected within the week after my foreword that the novelette would be completed, and that then the story could be told in the same philosophically humorous fashion in which it had appealed to me. I am writing you now semi-humorously but half seriously too, because I want my two sons to have before them the facts, in case anything should happen to me. Well, here is the yarn I spin, my hearties!

Your Mother and I own, as you know, in your Mother's name, an undivided half-interest in a tract of land in Los Angeles County, described as follows:

"Lot 7 in section 20, as on the partition map showing property formerly of Redondo Land Company, in the City of Redondo Beach, County of Los Angeles, as subdivided by James F. Towell, C. A. Edwards, and P.P. Wilcox, commissioners, surveyed August 1897 by L. Friel, filed in the office of the County Recorder of said County September 3, 1897. "

The tract embraces about 53 acres, and the other undivided half of it is owned by Judge Louis Myers, Meyer Lissner, and somebody named Bowman. Lissner has always kindly attended to the tract. The last few years it has been leased, first, to the Standard Oil Company, and then to the Shell Company under a

2.

regular oil leasing contract, by which a bonus has been paid in the last instance of \$10,000.00 for the year, with the right to the lessee within the period to bore for oil, and then with provisions for the payment of a royalty in case oil were discovered after boring. Long ago, we dismissed the idea that oil would ever be discovered on the tract, and regarded the income as a most fortunate windfall. We have always looked forward to the ultimate sale of the land for subdivision purposes in the rapid march of real estate events in Los Angeles County. A few months ago I received a letter from Lissner written with some reservations, and evidently with great caution, telling me that in his opinion there was a fifty-fifty chance that oil might be found upon our land, and that we thereafter might be on Easy Street. Of course, I read the letter with interest, but with no more than a slight temporary quickening of the pulse. Lissner began to send me thereafter clippings, and the developments thereafter were rapid and kaleidoscopic. Oil suddenly was found in what is termed the Lawndale District, within the extreme limits of which our land really is situated. The discovery well was a paying producer. There was an immediate rush to the territory, and millions of dollars - I speak literally now - have been expended in drilling. The Lawndale district became a new and important oil territory in the County of Los Angeles. More permits were issued for drilling in that territory than in any other

3.

in California, and the big companies like the Standard Oil, as well as innumerable wildcatters, were feverishly boring. Then came the news that results were disappointing, and I smiled to myself at another opportunity of fortune that had passed me by. The drilling, however, had been confined, in the main, to the territory northeast of the discovery well, and so far as I am able to glean from Lissner's letters and the clippings he has sent me, the results have been practically nil in the innumerable efforts in the territory just northeast of the discovery. I was prepared to dismiss the matter entirely, when somebody, who was drilling to the southwest of the discovery well, suddenly developed a gusher. Our land is southwest. When the news came, I got a real kick out of it, and then immediately thereafter I was advised that the gusher had gushed for a day only, and then settled down to a production of about eight hundred barrels per day, and then, because of some technical trouble, which I cannot describe, had blown up altogether. The Shell people have been boring in the southwesterly direction. The results have been kept secret. It is thought, however, that while real production has not been developed, this particular well is in oil sands with possibilities. Our existing lease is to the Shell people. It expires this month. Under its terms, and I speak from only the haziest recollection, within the year boring had to be commenced, or of course the lease was terminated. Naturally I have left to Lissner every detail of the

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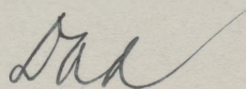
situation. He has acted so fairly, and squarely, and finely, and I am so utterly ignorant of everything in connection with the matter, that there was nothing else to do in any event. The other day, the Shell people approached him and wished a six months' extension of the lease, and he, as I gather from his wires, said this would be entirely agreeable, that the question was one of terms. The company offered \$5,000, one-half of the amount paid under the existing lease for one year. He demanded \$50,000 because of changed conditions. Finally, as I learned from his telegram of yesterday, they came up to \$10,000 while he stood pat on \$20,000. Last night he wired me they flatly declined to come to his terms and said they would begin immediately to drill. I think probably this is the best solution. Whatever value there is in the land for subdivision purposes can not be taken away. I am gambler enough to wish to put the matter to the touch and determine whether there is oil in the land. The Shell people, doubtless, wanted to stand by until they had developed other property, and then, if successful, proceed with our land, or if unsuccessful, let it go. I am assuming from Lissner's telegram of last night, in which he said the Shell people "declined to raise the bid, but decided to proceed to immediate drilling", there soon will be a derrick upon the land and reasonable prosecution of the drilling. As side lights upon the situation, I may say to you at one period within the last two months there was tremendous excitement among oil men in the Lawndale district and the

5.

highest hopes, and that within this period, these hopes have been dissipated, and the consensus of opinion probably is that this particular oil field is a washout. Lissner, with all his caution, singularly enough is fairly optimistic. As I wrote him, I feel like a man in a poker game with a tremendous pot drawing to a pair of deuces. I am praying that I may get two more deuces with three cards coming to me, and I think our chances are perhaps just about as great as would be the likelihood of making such a draw. The communications, newspaper clippings, and the like that I have had, have been better than a most interesting mystery story, and I really think that I have enjoyed them quite as much.

Well, this is my tale, my lads. I adopt the German perversion of one of our familiar quotations: "Ich habe geliebt und gelebt".

Affectionately,



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
Attorney at law,
Mills Bldg.,
San Francisco, California

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 26, 1929

Major Archibald M. Johnson,
Attorney at law,
Mills Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Arch:

I wrote you last week about the thrilling tale, which has been a part of our life really for the last few months. Since then I have had a letter from Lissner saying that on the 18th, which was the last day, the derrick was on the grounds, and work actually commenced. The cost of boring will, Lissner tells me, be about \$100,000.00. The wells in the Lawndale district have all gone down over five thousand feet, and ~~now~~ the two producing wells are over this limit in depth. Lissner says the point where they are about to bore is five thousand feet from the discovery well, and about three thousand feet from the Shell well, from which much is expected. I imagine from the map that we're about a like distance from the other producing well. From the newspaper clippings that have been sent me, I note, what I wrote you, that there was sore disappointment over failures in a part of the territory, and then a revival of hope and great optimism because of indications in the other direction. I have rather thought that the Shell Company would not invest \$100,000.00 upon the opinion of the geologists, unless they

had some hope of success. It is this that gives me any real encouragement. I will try to write you from time to time what detail comes to me. I am dependent, of course, for any news at all upon Lissner's letters.

There is little to write you about the house. It moves along slowly toward consummation. It goes without saying that your Mother will make a very beautiful home out of it. I can not yet see the end. We have been now nearly two months living there, while Mother has been at work in it since about the middle of February. She is utterly worn and her nerves are frayed. I can't blame her, and I sympathize with her deeply. I am useless as an aid, and more than useless because my nerves are equally frayed with what is occurring here. I would appreciate it immensely if you would write to her a good cheerful letter, directing it to her at 122 Maryland Avenue, Northeast.

I saw George Cameron about a week ago. While the subject of our conversation was mainly the San Francisco Bridge, into which with the best intentions in the world, he has butted, he spoke of you and Martha, and said that you were both in good shape. I do hope this is so. I judged from my conversation with Cameron that there is no subject, however profound or involved, upon which he has not fixed opinions, and no problem, national or international, local or technical, which he has not solved to his own satisfaction, and yet I got the idea from talking to him, that he has no malice, and that

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he is really kindly disposed. I do not know him, however, well enough to be entirely certain of his character.

We're moving along here pretending to solve the vexed farm relief question, and what we're doing is pure pretense, and sheer hypocrisy. Everybody knows it, and yet solemnly men talk and newspapers lie about it. I am hoping that we'll get through by about the first of July, and I am looking forward then to coming to California, and joining the Sullivan and Roche firm, and beginning life over again in the practice of the law.

Mother and I both send love to Martha and yourself.

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION

April 26, 1929.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.
Attorney at Law
Mills Building
San Francisco, California.

My dear Jack:

Last week I received your fine long letter detailing your experiences with Heron. I am not surprised that Heron did what you detail. It is a very remarkable thing that the men who prate most of virtue and who are always parading their goodness, are the ones who turn the sharpest corners in financial transactions. It is a pity that you could not have fought out the matter and demonstrated publicly just what Heron was attempting and what he accomplished. However, I recognize the position that your client took, and probably in the long run, that position will be the more profitable one. The trouble with our family is that we do not consider consequences when we think we are right, and really I would not have it otherwise. I was mighty glad to see that Bert Meek, and even old McDougall were just and fair.

I can't tell you how disgusting this extra session is to me. I probably described to you our times as I have characterized them to others here - a moronic era of the age of bunk. In the congress men gravely are talking about the farm bill which they madly repudiated for a number of years.

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They blandly oppose now what in a perfect hysteria they demanded for three long years of gruelling fight over farm relief. The great palladium of our liberties, the press, solemnly prints columns of stuff, and there is scarcely a representative of this rotten American institution, to utter a word about the awful hypocrisy prevailing. I would like to denounce it all, and I have been on the point of doing so several times, but I have the black shadow over me of - well, I will not go on, nor indulge in a personal whine.

I wrote you last week of the oil situation concerning our lands at Redondo Beach. Since then I have received a letter from Lissner in which he said that on the 18th, which was really the last day, the derrick was on the ground, and operations were about to commence. I imagine it will take about three months to demonstrate whether or not there is anything in our territory. We're about five thousand feet from the discovery well in the southwesterly direction, and about three thousand feet from the Shell well, concerning which there are great hopes. I imagine from the descriptions given me that from the other well that is producing, we're about a like distance. Lissner writes me that the cost of boring will aggregate probably about \$100,000.00. The wells in the vicinity have all gone down, as I understand it, about six thousand feet, and the producing wells are getting their results somewhere between five and six thousand.

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I hope to be home somewhere near the first of July and I am coming with the expectation of entering into partnership with the Sullivan and Roche firm. You can readily understand that the practice of law has no great charm for me, but more than ever, it is an absolute necessity.

I do not write you about the house, because there is little to say. It gradually improves, and you know, of course, mother will make of it a very beautiful home. She is worn and tired, and my heart bleeds for her every minute. I am praying that she will not break down before the thing is finished. The Lord only knows when it will be finished. I can't see the end yet. We have now been actually in the premises since the first of March, and she has been actually working in them since about the middle of February. I wish, in your fine fashion, you would write her a bully good cheerful letter. She needs it, and I fear I am a mighty poor companion these days.

Love to the boys, and much to yourself,

Affectionately,

Dad