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Hiram W. Johnson Papers
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March 3, 1933.

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

Situation New York delicate STOP Reported to me last night worse than today STOP Right now stated moratorium unlikely but situation may change any moment STOP Sum of conclusions now from those who know best no closing New York although all admit no living soul can prophesy with any degree of certainty STOP Discussions are going on in New York about closing of stock exchange which some bankers insist would precipitate crisis STOP Senate has just passed resolution authorizing Controller to declare moratorium District of Columbia STOP Will try to keep you advised.

HIRAM W. JOHNSON

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, March 5, 1933.

My dear Boys:

The Congress has adjourned. We have had the Inauguration and a new President now is in office. Of course, the last couple of days have not only been the crazy days of an expiring session, but the city has been over-crowded with visitors, with all of the noise, and confusion and mess of a great celebration. Yesterday, I went to the inaugural ceremonies, and later in the afternoon, your Mother and I went to the White House to the great rout designated a tea, which the Roosevelts were holding. I confess to you that this is the first inauguration of a President that I have, officially or otherwise, attended. I think Roosevelt did very well in his inaugural speech, especially with the financial clouds that have darkened these days. The Lord only knows what is going to be done, but ^{that} he is going to endeavor to do something quickly is certain. The pulling and hauling now proceeding to take this country off the Gold Standard is all behind the scenes, but none the less tremendous, and if I were to hazard a guess, it would be that a very brief period will see gold as the sole standard abandoned. Thereafter the inflationists will endeavor to have their day, and

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God knows what will happen then. What was heartening in Roosevelt was his outspoken references to the money-changers, and how they had failed and fled. There is no man in the G.O.P. who would have dared uttered any such thing.

I don't attempt to write you a description of the Inauguration. You have that in nauseating detail in the press. Indeed, today I don't intend to write you at length any way. We are all tired out, and we are going right on this week, beginning with the Walsh funeral from the Senate tomorrow. **What** a tragedy his death was, and what a pity it came just as it did!

With the closing of the banks in New York my last hope to get home in the interim between our adjournment yesterday and a special session went glimmering. First, the Senate will be in session for a week or more in any event; and secondly, I have no doubt at all that the calling of the special session will be advanced, so that it will quite impossible to think of going to California, and then returning for it. My guess is that if things don't improve, we're likely to be here until midsummer. Of this I will write you during the week when things get a bit clearer.

My love to all in which Mother Joins,

Affectionately,

Dad.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, March 12, 1933.

My dear Boys:

It seems an age since I wrote you last, so many things have happened, and so many thrills have played havoc with our nervous systems. After I wrote you last Sunday, I received a request to come to the White House, and I sat there in consultation with the President and a number of his Democratic advisers while he was discussing generally the pending conditions. He outlined then what he had in mind, and what has since partially been accomplished. His desire was to call a special session, as he did call it for Thursday last, and have that special session deal with three subjects: first, the banking situation, next, economy, and next unemployment. The remarkable thing about him to me was his readiness to assume responsibility and his taking that responsibility with a smile. On Wednesday night again I was sent for and sat in conference with the Democratic representatives of the President and himself, and his Secretary of the Treasury and Attorney General until about one in the morning. He outlined, although it was not then in such shape as one could read it himself, what his bill was contemplating. Nobody present knew very much about it, and next day when we passed it, we knew just about as much as we did the night before, but what struck

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one like me sitting there in rather detached fashion, was that the man had decision, was ready to act, and was shoving a lot of people of more or less ability, generally less, who had not been accustomed to rapid motion, into an alert activity. I made one contribution to the discussion Wednesday night, which was probably wholly out of turn, but which I want to record. The hoarding provisions of the banking bill were being discussed, and I said I did not blame the American people for taking their money out of banks and hiding it, that they had a perfect right to do it, under the disclosures that had been made concerning the activities of banking institutions and of the great supermen of finance. In my earnestness I got up from my chair and walked directly in front of the President and made him a two-minute speech. I complimented him upon his inaugural, telling him that he had eloquently said that fear, unreasoning fear, afflicted our people, and that above all, we required that confidence be restored. I told him his remarks had struck an answering chord with the American people who had been robbed by the banking institutions and bankers, and that the fear he described could be allayed, and confidence could be restored if he would take the Mitchells and the Morgans and all the great bankers of Wall Street, and neck and crop, kick them into oblivion, and that a public declaration that the "new deal" was to consist of a new banking system in which those who participated in the present one would be relegated to obscurity, and a Federal Reserve Board would be selected, which would regulate

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Wall street bankers instead of permitting Wall street bankers to regulate the banks in this country. It was amazing the number of nods of approval I had from the men who were present, and even from the gentleman to whom I was talking.

The difficulties with the President in a banking program consist in the amount of gratuitous and other advice given to him by those who have been parties to what has happened in the last few years. They really constitute our financiers and banking economists. He has been trying to do what he could without them, although I have no doubt he has talked often to them. He gets somewhat mixed in his plans as evidenced when he was going to open the banks after we had passed the bill on Thursday, Friday morning, and found he could not do it without being guilty probably of discrimination or injustice. The fact, however, that the Democrats weeping great salty tears made their appeals that we must pass the bill on Thursday in order that the banks could open Friday morning, and then just after the bill was passed and signed late Thursday night, a new moratorium was issued, has caused an undercurrent of dissatisfaction and resentment in the congress. If the scheme is not successful, this dissatisfaction and resentment will grow. On the heels of the banking bill now comes the so-called economy bill, which deals with the Veterans Bureau, and other departments of government. Nobody since I have been here has dared tackle this subject before. Sentimentally it is almost impossible to resist the ap-

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peals of the veterans, and yet we know the amounts expended by us in their behalf have grown beyond all reason. The bill will be passed by the Senate, just as it was passed by the House yesterday, and if the reductions are made as contemplated the President will have displayed greater "guts" politically than any other man whom I have known in office here. He has following this a scheme for the development of the Tennessee Basin, reforestration, and employment by the army (not as soldiers) all of which are designed to aid in unemployment. Like the banking bill no one can tell whether they will do the job or not, but at any rate, this man is trying, and in doing it, is not sparing himself. I do not see how any living soul can last physically going the pace that he is going, and mentally any one of us would be a psycopathic case if we undertook to do what he is doing. And with it all, the amazing thing to me was there never was a note of impatience in all the hours we sat there Wednesday night, or the previous Sunday, and never anything but the utmost good nature. Of course, I do not think with my long experience and my cynical view of the animal made in the image of his Creator that any man in high position in this country can resist long the flattery and the blandishments of great power and wealth. I have, however, the first hope I have had in more than twenty years in this respect. I shall not be surprised if my hope is not realized, but I have got quite a kick out of the situation, thus far.

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I have written you a sort of personal reminiscence of the past week or so. I have not talked to you of actual conditions. Nobody knows how long we are going to be in this depression. The remedies applied are purely empirical. They may aid a little, or much, or not at all. You have frequently heard me advocating the old T.R. doctrine of "trial and error". While he does not say so, I think this is exactly what the President is doing. His trouble will come, however, if his first remedy lacks success. There may be a universal howl against his attempting another.

The plan here was to have us meet two or three days to pass the three pieces of legislation I have referred to. I am laboring under the opinion that when we shall have passed the second, our Democrats will be rather weary of well doing, and we'll then adjourn for a couple of weeks and meet again with a rather elaborate program. We're here for a good long time.

Senator Reed was going to read me out of the Republican Party. He made a statement to this effect publicly, and publicly I responded to him with some sharpness and asperity. I don't know that my reply got any great play in California, and practically the only eastern paper that published it in full was the New York Times. Well, the Republicans met in conference early in the past week, and while I was invited to attend, I said that I would not under the circumstances be in the

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position of asking anything of anybody or any conference, that it was a matter of indifference to me what the conference did. The conference met and Reed was practically alone, so he never made his motion to relieve the four of us, who were bolters, of our committees, or read us out of the Republican Party. And singularly enough the Committee on Committees of the Republicans that afternoon not only put me upon all of the committees that I had been on in the past, but asked me to go upon the Naval Affairs Committee as a representative of the Pacific Coast in addition, and I laughed and said that at their request I would take another committee assignment; and then not content with that, McNary, who was in strong opposition to Reed, asked me as a favor to him to go upon the Republican Legislative Steering Committee, which I did. So the upshot of Reed's suggestion was that I was permitted not only all my present committee assignments, but asked to accept two others by the Republican Party. One little thing about the incident pleased me greatly. McNary, who was selected the leader of the Republicans in the Senate, told me that all of the old standpatters came to him concerning Reed's desire, and said that they would not under any circumstances vote to oust me, although they were indifferant to the ousting of the others who had in the campaign left Mr. Hoover for Mr. Roosevelt.

With love to all, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

DR

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

March 14, 1933.

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

My dear Jack:

I have just received your good letter of the 11th. I can't tell you how delighted I am that you have been interested in your work at Sacramento. I will write you more of this hereafter.

I wanted you to know of something which has transpired here in the banking situation. The Giannini outfit have been exceedingly nervous concerning the regulations and the reopening of their bank, fearing that the people who had so bitterly opposed them a year ago, in the proxy fight, would endeavor to job them in the matter of reopening. I think there was some ground for their suspicion. I told them that I would do for them exactly what I would do for any other constituent, see that they obtained justice. The banks, as you know, were to reopen yesterday, that is the national banks that were 100 per cent solvent, and state banks under the rules with which you are familiar probably. At midnight, Sunday night, I learned that a decision had been reached to refuse permission for the Bank of America to reopen, and that a like decision had been reached concerning the Anglo Bank.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

Monday morning, very early, I began to ascertain what I could, and do what lay in my power. Fortunately, when accompanied by my colleague, McAdoo, I reached the Treasury Building, the subordinates of the Treasury, including Moley, who is handy man for the President, had about concluded their midnight order was erroneous. I told the Secretary of the Treasury, his chief deputies, and his counsel, that if he blackmarked these two banks, he would do irreparable injury, and I descanted upon the subject, painting the picture as I really believed it would exist, if these two great financial institutions in San Francisco were blackmarked by the Treasury Department. The upshot of it was (I do not pretend that my insistence did anything more than confirm the later opinion of the officials) that in the presence of McAdoo and myself, Secretary Woodin signed the order for these two banks to open. I really believe it would have been a great financial catastrophe to San Francisco if the Secretary of the Treasury had adhered to the original decision. After I returned to the office and everything was done, Ray Baker telephoned me. He had been trying to get me all morning while I was away, and was in a great state of perturbation, and did not know what had happened. I told him the narrow

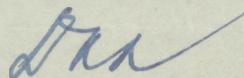
Mr. Hiram W. Johnson - 3

escape we had had, and subsequently during the day, I received a telegram of thanks from Fleishhacker. I thought this particular incident you might like to know. I have given it to you only in sketchy form, but with absolute accuracy.

My colleague and I are apparently upon the friendliest terms, but he is the most avid man for publicity and power I have run into for many a day. Just how long we'll hit it off I don't know. I am engaged today in straightening out an endeavor of his to get an appropriation for southern California's earthquake disaster. He, of course, is capitalizing that politically, just as he capitalizes anything that is happening here in like fashion. He can put it all over me in this direction, I concede.

I was immensely relieved to read what you said about Philip. Mother joins in love.

Affectionately,



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, March 19, 1933.

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

My dear Arch:

You have been on my mind for a long time, as you may well imagine, and I have been keenly alive for any opening that might present itself. Your Mother has your letter in which you mention two things that appeal to you; the first of these, the Philippines, is the biggest plum in the administration, and it is utterly beyond me. The second one, the United States District Attorney in San Francisco, could only be won after an intensive, knock down and drag out fight with the entire Democratic organization in California, and after that sort of fight, I could not be successful. I think ~~it~~ would be utterly futile for me to make any attempt in that direction. What I had in mind, and I want you frankly to correct me if I am all in error respecting it, was to obtain either some employment for the Government that would be in line with the regular practice of your profession, or some attorneyship for some Federal Board or Bureau, whose activity centered in California. The death of Senator Walsh was a very severe blow to me for many reasons. From the personal standpoint I felt it, because I was on such terms with Walsh that I

would have had no difficulty in frankly explaining to him my situation, and asking his aid. I think he would have given it. I was only awaiting his installation in office before going to him and checking up with you then whatever we could see among the possibilities. His successor, Mr. Homer Cummings, I do not really know. I met him once casually, and that is all. Yesterday I had the first talk about positions in California that I have had with McAdoo. He had a list which he called off to me for northern California, which was the result of conferences in San Francisco by all the Democratic organizations, and the so-called leaders. He was taking this list as the decision of the Democratic Party, and evidently expecting to put it over. Upon it, the United States District Attorney was to be McPike. Every presidential appointment practically in San Francisco was filled. McAdoo subsequently in the afternoon telephoned me and said there were other places where men could be placed in San Francisco than those we usually considered. He mentioned Pacific Coast representative of the Inland Waterways Corporation, and District Manager of the Merchant Fleet Corporation. Places of this sort might be very well for some people, but I can not imagine they would interest you in the slightest. These Democrats are a hungry and a hoggish lot. They have no idea of doing anything else than taking all the offices, and particularly is this so with all of their local organizations.

Of course, it is my hope that you should continue in your profession. If any aid could be extended in that direction, or in any other, of course you know that I am here, ready to do anything within my power. I wish that you could write me fully, and let me be the repository of your confidences and troubles. You can be very certain, my dear boy, that no living soul would listen more sympathetically or be more anxious to help.

I am sending this as a separate letter from the one I usually write you and Jack on Sunday, and if I get the opportunity today I will write both of you my regular weekly gossip.

With all my love in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

Dad.

Reading the above, I'm not certain I made clear what I'd like to do. I wanted to obtain such employment as lawyer as could be obtained, that would bring you sufficient (tho' perhaps not a great) income to enable you to continue your practice and tide over immediate necessities. I'd hate to see you give up your profession, and hold simply a political "job." Maybe I'm thinking of something that you might not care for so write me your own ideas.
Dad.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, March 19, 1933.

My dear Boys:

I thought at one time that Roosevelt was to be accorded no honeymoon period, such as generally has been given to other new Presidents. In this, however, I was wrong. He is now enjoying that time, and he is at the very peak of his popularity. There is something fine in the way in which he has taken hold of matters, and I don't care whether he blunders or not in a particular measure or a specific policy, he has had the guts to go on and do as he thought he ought to do. In the three measures which, thus far, we have adopted, he has endeavored to lead the way, and force action. Behind the banking bill, there is the slumbering passion of state banks that is bitterly denunciatory of the President's proposal. I think the hostility has waned somewhat, but there still exists a rather inarticulate criticism, but a very bitter criticism nevertheless. The so-called economy bill dealing with the veterans may or may not have serious political repercussions for him and for all of those who voted for it. The result, in my opinion, will depend upon its administration. Certain among the veterans, and of course, many among those who have profited by the benefits derived were roused to a pitch of fury by the legislation. I could never get greatly excited over the beer bill, but there are many who think we'll reap vast advantages from it. I am fearful that with

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the sale of beer will come such an orgy that thinking people will have a revulsion of feeling concerning the prohibition laws. It might have been better to have attempted nothing of this sort until there had been a repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. If the new coming of beer engenders a wide-spread disgust, it might have a serious effect upon that repeal. At any rate, what a welcome change there is in the White House. The glum, self-opinionated, superman, who had come to believe himself a direct descendant of God, has yielded to a regular human being. How long our new man may continue just as a regular human being, the Lord only knows, for the position with all its powers and its innumerable courtiers, not only destroys one's sense of human values, but has most evil effects upon the shrinking, or timid, or small individual. I have tried to hold myself as aloof as possible from asking favors, so that I might preserve my independence unaffected by personal obligation. Perhaps I am too finicky in this sort of attitude, and perhaps with the greediness, and the hoggishness, and the hungeriness, and absolute madness of Democrats for patronage, it is utterly unnecessary for me to make any effort in this direction; but at any rate, with a realization of my years, and those that remain, even though there should not be the slightest recognition of the fact by anyone else, I want to die as I have lived, and have what no other person would consider in the slightest degree, the peculiar self-respect

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that I have ever maintained in my political life. We have passed the Roosevelt program without much difficulty or opposition. There are many things yet to come, and as time goes on, unless the fates are more generous to Roosevelt than they have been to any of his predecessors, differences of opinion, of course, will occur, and with differences of opinion ultimately will come violent opposition. I am delighted to render any assistance that I can at the present time, and to go forward in behalf of the presidential program, if it does not violate fundamental ideas of my own, but I am by no means blind to the possibilities, and I am perfectly certain of what I shall do if the time comes, which I hope it will not, when I must choose between what I deem the welfare of the country, on the one hand, and the presidential program or policy upon the other. Of course, if this time comes, there will be no question of my choice.

The East looks upon the twenty-first day of March as the first day of Spring. I am looking forward to just a day or two now when we can plant a few flowers in the yard, and I can watch them grow. Thus far, March has been blustery, with very much rain, and nearly everybody here is afflicted with severe colds. We have lost two of our members, each of whom, in his peculiar way, was an excellent Senator. Walsh, who had been appointed Attorney General was a very distinct loss. Howell, strange character from Nebrasks was an absolutely honest man,

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but lacking in tact. In the automatic body in which I serve, it is not surprising for both of them to be forgotten in a very few days.

Our household is in fairly good shape at present. Both Mother and I have had slight colds, but otherwise we're all right. We had expected that there would be a couple of weeks vacation here while the program of the president was being worked out in detail, but it has now been decreed that we'll continue right along in session, and the various measures of the administration will be presented as they are prepared. This will occupy us, undoubtedly, through the month of April, but we ought to be able then to adjourn and come home. If I am to be a candidate next year, I will have to begin then some activities. I confess the difficulties of running in a Republican primary, and I can only be a candidate in this fashion, are well-nigh insuperable, but I knew this when I took my position last year, and I would do the same thing if I had to all over again, and I am very glad from every standpoint that I acted as I did. I was hoping that the legislature would amend the direct primary law, but with the passage of time, I am beginning to believe this will not be possible. If the primary law could be amended, so that a voter could obtain what ticket he desired on the day of the primary, I think I could win next year. With the law in its present shape, I think the chances

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are vastly against us. Necessity probably will drive me into another candidacy, the last, doubtless, of my life. I can't tell you how much I dread it.

What a terrible thing was the earthquake of the south! The communities however affected were saved the awful aftermath of our calamity. They had no horrible conflagration, with no means of stopping it like we had in San Francisco. If I remember well, our time of disaster, there were no such frantic appeals for aid as have come to us from the southern territory. We were granted that aid, of course by everybody, just as everybody has gone to the bat in behalf of southern California, but some things that are asked now were not asked nor expected by us in 1906. I had in this matter, as well as in another recently a very good index of the character of my colleague. He is extremely friendly and ostensibly we get along beautifully. He is perfectly mad for power and publicity. I think I see him endeavoring to construct a political machine within the national administration, and I know that in the matter of newspaper headlines, he goes to any length. I received the news of the disaster late Friday night from the news agencies here. Immediately I wired to the Los Angeles Examiner for particulars, and for suggestions as to anything that might be done here. The responses I received the next

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morning were that the situation was well in hand, and that subsequently details would be sent to me as to any aid, if any were desired, the Federal Government might accord. That morning, however, Mr. McAdoo immediately introduced a bill for an appropriation of \$5,000,000.00. He is new at the game in the senate, and so asked me to aid, which, of course, I was very glad to do. I went before the appropriations committee with him, had the bill reported out, and when reported to the senate, I personally passed it by unanimous consent. This was done without any real plan in mind, or any survey having been made of necessities, and in the interim between the quake and the action of the committee on appropriation, two of his candidates for very prominent offices, flew back here, being photographed on the way in various poses, and anxiously seeking reporters to tell of the quake, their experiences, and the like. One of these was a gentleman named Evans from Culver City, where there was no damage done at all. He is a candidate for First Assistant Secretary of the Interior. The other was named H.H.Cotton. He is connected with one of the Hellman banks in Los Angeles, which was taken over by the Giannini organizations. Mr. Cotton is Mr. McAdoo's candidate for comptroller of the currency. They and he (of course I would not want this repeated, at least at present) were capitalizing the disaster for their own publicity. The bill for the appropriation got into the House last week, and there it was

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re-written entirely by the House providing for loans from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for rebuilding, etc. We'll thresh the matter out during the week and try to get some sort of legislation which will meet the views of the people here, but the jam in which we find ourselves at present would have been wholly unnecessary, but for the anxiety of these people to capitalize the situation. In another direction, McAdoo was anxious for publicity and I think he rather kicked his foot. When the beer bill was before the committee of which he is a member he inserted a wine amendment permitting wine of an alcoholic content of 3.05 per cent. Of course, this was absurd, but at once it was advertised as an inclusion of wine in the authority accorded beer. The grape organizations of California wired me protesting vigorously against such an inclusion. The day the beer bill came up in the senate, McAdoo was ill at his hotel. I telephoned him concerning the wires I had received, and suggested he eliminate his amendment. He did not want to do this, and then I told him it would be necessary for me to make plain the California position and let his amendment go through as he desired. This I did as you'll observe by the record. It was rather embarrassing, but I did not propose to let go by the idea so resented by our wine men that they would derive any benefit from such a provision as he had advocated. I don't know how long we'll last in

8.

our present apparent friendly association. He expects to hog every political job there is in the State of California. I don't much object, but there are one or two people who came with me in the fight I made for Roosevelt, who ought to be recognized, and I shall endeavor to have them, in some fashion, recognized. Whether I can succeed is a very different thing. I have never had a fight over patronage, save in such instances as McLaughlin's, where on definite grounds I went to the bat in the matter of his confirmation. I once went to Coolidge on the Louderback appointment and told him distinctly to his face, I did not want any of his patronage, did not ask any, that I was not seeking any then, but that Louderback was an unfit man, and as lawyer and a citizen of San Francisco, I had the right to say so, and I put him upon notice, and gave him the knowledge that he was doing something reprehensible and outrageous from the standpoint of the law and of the judiciary. It was probably the only time that I ever had a face to face quarrel with a President, but I did not mince words then, and I stood upon my independence in the matter of patronage, and told him in practically so many words to take every office he had within his gift in the State of California, give it where he pleased, and made him distinctly understand, I neither asked, nor sought, nor desired any office or favor at his hands, that I was making my request solely from the standpoint of public service and the decency of the Federal

9.

Judiciary. It is just among the possibilities that I could go to Mr. Farley or to Mr. Roosevelt and by asserting the vast service that I had rendered to them in the last campaign, plead and beg with them, that they might give me some offices in the State of California, but you, as my sons, with dispositions akin to mine understand how such a course would be impossible for me. And, by the way, when Louderback's impeachment came up, I thought very serious^{ly} that if I were in his place, I would not like to be tried by one with my views concerning him, and I had such a lively recollection of what I had said to Coolidge when he was appointed and of some other matters as well that since have transpired, that I asked permission to stand by, and unanimous consent was given me thus to eliminate myself as one of the judges in the trial. I am perfectly certain that if I had served in the trial I would have leaned backward, but I do not think a judge should put himself in any such attitude.

I try to follow things in California but not very successfully. I rather conceived the idea that Rolph came through his troubles, although perhaps with some scars. He will doubtless be a candidate again next year, and if his only opponent is a man like Merriam, I think it not unlikely he may succeed.

With all my love in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

March 25, 1933.

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

My dear Arch:

Your friend, Mr. Brown, the architect, called upon me yesterday with a note from you, and I was very glad to see him, and very glad to try to aid in what he sought to have done here. I found on investigation that they are holding up the building program just temporarily awaiting amplification in other directions. Ultimately, there will be no difficulty, in my opinion, in having the contract signed, and the work proceed for the public building in San Francisco, in which Mr. Brown is interested.

I am writing you this note on Saturday, because tomorrow your Mother and I may go upon a little excursion, and my usual Sunday letters therefore I will be unable to write. As I look out of my window, though, this Saturday afternoon I am doubtful of the excursion, because it is now snowing, and has been for some hours. It is not a heavy snow and it melts as soon as it touches the ground, but I would not undertake a ninety-mile ride,

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 2

such as we are contemplating, if the storm continues. This is the most terrible climate on the face of the earth. We get one good day, warm and springlike, and the next one like this, with the thermometer about the freezing point, and with sleet and snow. These changes have been responsible for a bad cold of mine, somewhat in the nature of the flu, that has kept me pretty miserable for a week past, although not sufficiently intensive to keep me at home. I have wondered all week how you were. Why can't you send me just a brief note occasionally? I realize you have not been feeling well, but the last note I had from you some little time ago, indicated you were getting back slowly. When I don't hear from you, my dear boy, you give me some bad days of fretting and worrying. I can understand your mental state, I think, even though I am three thousand miles away, and I want you to know that I am thinking constantly of you and of anything I can do. I was hoping by this time in answer to my letter asking you to write me in detail that I would have had a reply, but having none, keeps me in a stew that you may be sick again. Please write.

We're plugging along here thus far at lightning speed. When we're not in session, we are in committees, and so all of us are at the highest tension. It is the purpose of the President now to present his entire program as rapidly as it can be drawn, and have us in this particular special session

act upon that program. We're almost at the end of his brief honeymoon legislative period. I do not think from now on, measures will be passed with the celerity that characterized the passage of those measures which were deemed imperative in the financial crisis confronting us. Not only will there be far greater attention paid to the details of legislation, but there will not be unanimity of action, which has characterized the first few weeks of this session.

There is a committee here from ~~the~~ Sacramento consisting of Judge Welsh representing the depositors, Robert Devlin, representing the directors and stockholders, and a man named Palmer, who is treasurer of the Standard Oil Company of California, representing some large corporate depositors and some financiers who are willing to put up some money, all in connection with the California National Bank at Sacramento. They hope, through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and the Secretary of the Treasury to get approval of some plan of reorganization, and singularly enough, the people of Sacramento seem to rely upon me to accomplish the result for them. Of course, I can do no more than put them in touch with the various officials, and commend them and their activities. From what they have told me the failure of the California National was really a very severe blow to northern California. I find there is more hope and more confidence as I have written you before in what may happen in the

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 4

future, but underlying it, too, is a very considerable pessimism about anything getting done within a reasonable period.

Mother is in apparently good shape, and our household running along as usual. Mother frets and worries about you just as I do. She joins me in begging you to write.

With all our love,

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

March 25, 1933.

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

My dear Jack:

I received during the week your letter and also your note from Sacramento enclosing a communication of Mr. H. R. Saltmarsh of Crescent City. I immediately wrote a brief note to Saltmarsh telling him how very glad I would be to render any service I could in the matter of his harbor. We were very happy to learn that Philip was up again. We have imagined that he had a very narrow escape from that dreadful operation. I hope that he will get thoroughly well and never have to face again the possibility of a mastoid affliction.

We have been very interested in what you are doing at Sacramento. We have been very glad that you are doing it. I like to see you in contact with human beings in the mass, and particularly those in official position. I was glad to read that you think the California Senate is a pretty good body of men. Most men want to do what is right, but unfortunately in politics, self-interest, fear, and environment often play havoc with their first and best impulses. A Governor is not worth his salt who permits a legislature to run wild. His position of power is such that if there is

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

anything at all to him, he can control a legislature, and if he stands as he ought to stand, those who constitute the legislative branch of the government soon learn not only to respect him, but to lean upon him. Of course, Rolph, whose mentality has deteriorated with the years would be a slender staff for any one to lean upon, and unfortunately, he is so constituted that he never determines a question by its justice or injustice, its right or its wrong, but he reaches his decisions from ^{influences} ~~impulses~~ that are anything but complimentary to his principle, or to any one's intelligence. He may hit at times upon the appropriate course, to pursue, but it is purely a hit and miss game with him, in which the merits of the problem have little place.

This special session is going through now with the entire program of the President. We're all at high tension here with our hours thoroughly occupied. When we are not in session, we are in committees, trying to know something about the measures presented. The president has the admirable trait of daring to do, instead of the hesitating, halting, timid, and feeble Hoover method of playing both ends against the middle. Roosevelt's honeymoon legislative period, however, is probably at an end. His measures will be scrutinized now with much more care, and they will not be passed with the same celerity which characterized those of the financial crisis. He is a prodigious worker, and while I think some of his plans are not thoroughly

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

digested, and this will become apparent as the days go by, still he has plans and acts.

I am writing this on Saturday afternoon, because, tomorrow, Mother and I have contemplated an excursion of about ninety miles away into the Shenandoah Valley. I am not sure that we'll go upon it, for as I look from my window, I see the snow falling in a drab, miserable, and cold day. This rotten climate gets many people who are strangers to it, and it is one of the reasons the mortality is so high in the senate. It has got me the past week, and I have walked about with an incipient flu, not sufficient to confine me to the house, but sufficient to make me thoroughly miserable. However, this has been the best day I have had for ten days past. The Lord only knows when we'll be out. My guess will be in about two months, but there is no certainty to that. When we do come, however, we'll remain until New Years under the Lane Duck amendment, which goes into effect this year.

I was sorry Hiram was inoculated with the horrid serum. I presume it is necessary, but I have a little of the prejudice of those who oppose injecting such stuff into the human frame.

Mother is apparently in fairly good shape, and unites with me in love to all,

Affectionately,

Dad.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

April 1, 1933.

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

My dear Arch:

It is so long since I have heard anything from you that after spending some days eagerly scanning each batch of mail, and hoping for a letter, ~~that~~ this morning I wired Miss Morrill of your office asking her to advise me how you were. I have been fearing you were sick again, and I would rather know the fact, even though it would be most disquieting, than continually to be in the dark and imagining all sorts of things about your health. For the love of goodness, for the sake of your Mother and myself, write us. I do not say to you all of the things that naturally come into my mind, but, my dear boy, you should understand.

I shan't attempt to write you a lengthy letter today. I am writing you again on Saturday, because Mother and I contemplate another little excursion tomorrow. I had it out with McAdoo yesterday about "cooperation" as he termed it, and with fluency and fervor, I told him that "cooperation" where he expected me to concur in appointments he had already made did not appeal to me, and that I would see him in Halifax

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before I would indulge in any such "cooperation". Every job that there is in California, he and the Democratic committees have parceled out, and he is ready to make his recommendations for them. I have been waiting to hear from you as to what ideas you may have in respect to any way that I can be of assistance.

Do let us hear from you, please. With all the love of your Mother and myself,

Affectionately,

Dad

P:S: After dictating the above I have received your wire saying "Mrs Morrill reports me all well". I can't tell you how relieved I am. I am carrying the wire home to Mother, so that she may rejoice with me in it. If you could know, my dear Arch, the pleasure and relief it is for us to have just this little wire from you, you would not neglect us so long in writing. Again my love to you.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Saturday, April 1, 1933.

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

My dear Jack:

I find myself writing you again Saturday afternoon, because of another contemplated excursion tomorrow of your Mother and myself. Last Sunday, at the invitation of Ickes, who was accompanied by the Superintendent of Parks, Mr. Albright, we went to Wakefield, the birthplace of George Washington, where the old original home of Washington has been made a public park. It is about ninety miles from Washington, through the rolling Virginia country. At the home there is a lodge with a very pleasant dining room attached to it, at which a fairly good luncheon was served. We enjoyed our day very much indeed, notwithstanding on the day preceding, there had been quite a lengthy snow storm. The day was sufficiently pleasant however to destroy all vestige of snow. The little cemetery, where a number of the Washington family were buried has been cleaned and refurbished. Albright, whom I think possibly you met at Yosemite when we were there, is a perfect encyclopaedia of information concerning historical places, as well as being a pleasant gentleman, and he made the trip doubly pleasant. Tomorrow, we go to the Shenandoah Valley, to some public park there, and I hope that the trip will be as

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pleasant as the one a week ago.

I received your letter during the week with your comment upon what is occurring in Sacramento, and your relation of your interview with Rolph. He is a rather tragic and pitiful object now. There is nobody who comes into the office from California, who speaks well of him. All talk of him disparagingly, and tell me he is through. Of course, I am utterly incompetent to judge, but I have a lurking suspicion this may not be wholly accurate. He will have, when he runs again, the prestige of office, of course if there is any prestige left, and innumerable appointees, who if loyal to him, will give him a cohesive strength that no other candidate can hope to start with. In addition to that, we have seen him rouse himself in a campaign, and by his very perspicacity and industry accomplish great results, when his chances were supposed to be slight.

Mother and I were both delighted to observe from your letter that the boys were in good shape again. We rejoiced very much about Philip, and I think he was singularly fortunate in the termination of his sickness. I have been intending to write both to Hiram and to Philip, but these have been such terrible days, with so many callers, and so many demands upon my time, that my correspondence has gone to the dickens. I am determined, however, that each week I shall write to you and Arch, and because you have told me that the

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boys read my letters as well, I have salved my conscience by insisting that my letters to you are to them, too, and I want them both to feel this way.

Roosevelt keeps up his astonishing efforts. He has an energy I little suspected, and a capacity for work I have never seen excelled. As I wrote you before, I can not believe that any one human being can thoroughly digest all that he is undertaking, but the very undertaking is the delightful thing to witness. It would be quite impossible for me to describe to you the change in the atmosphere here, or in the sort of government which now obtains for the moment. We're nearer our philosophy of government than we have ever been in my lifetime in this nation. We have never in our recollection had a President who would write such a message, brief but pithy, concerning the control of the banks and the sale of securities; and not only does he write his message, but immediately follows it with a bill embodying his views. It happens that this subject of the flotation of securities in our country I have been very much interested in since the investigation I held a year ago. The abuses of the investment houses and the international bankers are brought out in bold relief. We demonstrated then in my very inadequate effort that many of the great banking houses were palming off securities they knew to be of little value, and with an utter lack of conscience that was shocking and disreputable. Roosevelt now takes exactly

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this view and seeks to provide a corrective. I have had several bills pending upon the subject, and Mr. Huston Thompson, who was writing the Roosevelt bill, whom I have met on several occasions, has been in consultation with me. We'll get some sort of measure applicable alike to foreign securities and domestic, which will measurably do the job. When I was at work upon the subject a year ago, the entire force of the Administration, was utilized against me, and the State Department had the effrontery to appear before the committee in the endeavor to smother me in the disclosures. I write you all this as an illustration of the difference that exists here now. Of course, here and there, there is a fly in the ointment, but taking the situation as a whole, it is most refreshing. The Democrats are cocky, arrogant, and brutally ruthless in the pursuit of offices. Many of them have no stomach for what Roosevelt is doing, but up to date, none of note dare oppose him. One disquieting thing occurred this past week when suddenly on Monday in the Foreign Relations Committee, Robinson, the Democratic leader, demanded that the World Court be reported favorably and put upon the floor of the Senate. I did not know that any such move was impending, and was not present at the time, and some of those upon the committee, insisted the matter should be continued until Wednesday at the regular meeting when I could be present. On Wednesday, Mr. Robinson renewed his motion. I contested it and

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made quite an elaborate argument against the motion. I insisted not only that the time was wholly inappropriate, but that we should devote ourselves to the crisis in our domestic affairs, and that it was the height of folly to inject such a controversial question upon the floor, which could not put a single man to work, or remedy a single depressing circumstance. I went further and argued to our Democratic brethren that it would be an egregious blunder for them, when we were all striving to carry out a definite program for our people, to render us asunder on a European contraption. I said to them that I had contributed my mite to the President's success in the election, that I was proud of the work that I had done, and more proud of the President's activities and his forthright expressions of his philosophy of government. Finally, the matter was continued for another week. And here is an incident that shows what I thought was the thoughtfulness of the President. Thursday night Mother and I were invited to dinner at the White House. There was quite a distinguished company present, numbering probably twenty. I sat on one side of the table at Mrs. Roosevelt's right. Your Mother sat on the other side of the table at the President's right. Just before we began dinner, the President leaned across the table, and with that infectious smile and laugh of his said: "Now Senator I want you to enjoy your dinner. I know you will enjoy it when I tell you that the World Court will remain for the present at least in the Foreign

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Relations Committee." That was the first intimation I had had of his decision. I know that he had been subjected to an immense amount of pressure from our internationalists, and I knew also that the Democratic platform, as well as the Republican, declared in favor of entrance into the League of Nations' Court. A man who felt less sure of himself, and who was at all timid, never would have made such a remark, and particularly under the circumstances. Next day, the Democratic leaders told me that the motion would not be pressed. The whole atmosphere of the White House is different. It used to be we were like so many sticks when we arrived, herded into one of the rooms, where we stood about looking at one another, until the announcement of the President and his wife. When we entered this time, immediately we were shown into the room which in the past we have been familiar with, and where we expected to stand, first on one leg, and then on another, and wonder who was standing next to us, but as we entered, there was Mrs. Roosevelt herself insisting on presenting each guest to every other one, and herself going from group to group, pleasantly and sweetly. The President himself was a bit late, but as soon as he came down from the elevator, Mrs. Roosevelt said, "You must come and meet my husband now", and we all trooped out where he was smiling, with a pleasant word for everybody,

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and we went into dinner. The stiff formality of former days was utterly absent, and it was much more like dining with intimate friends than indulging in a state dinner. In one thing, confidentially, they failed, and that was in the dinner itself. The ordinary meal I have at home at night was infinitely superior to the meal there served. But always in instances of this sort, the menu is of little consequence, and in the inbred courtesy of our hosts and the enjoyment of being with them, we forget what we were eating. Because the boys may be interested perhaps in a White House bill of fare, let me say to you that we had a very indifferent chowder first, then some mutton served in slices already cut and which had become almost cold, with peas that were none too palatable, a salad of little substance and worse dressing, lemon pie, and coffee. Afterwards we had a movie, and we reached home a little before eleven. I think I saw signs of weariness in the President's face, but he assured me he enjoyed the work, and that meeting the innumerable people that he did, and dealing all day with intricate subjects, was his greatest enjoyment. Rather pathetically, he said, "You know I can not play tennis or golf and get about in the fashion the ordinary individual does, and my pleasure is meeting human beings and dealing with problems". I commented to Mrs. Roosevelt upon his equanimity, and the patience I had seen him exercise in the conferences that I had attended,

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and his unfailing good humor, and I asked her if he ever got mad. She said really he never did, and she then gave the reason that we have often heard here concerning him, that he went through such a fiery ordeal in his extraordinary and terrible illness, that it gave him stability, and he had learned patience and toleration.

I wrote Bill Mikulich this morning about jobs. I assume he will show the letter to you. My colleague is the most avid man for publicity and power I have ever met. He regards a job for some individual not only as so much subsequent political power, but as a matter of personal prestige. Yesterday I expressed myself with fluency and fervor to him when he mentioned "cooperation". Today, he had his right hand man, Elliott, telephone Harrison, and perhaps others at Sacramento, to have the Democratic support in the legislature thrown in favor of the amendment to the primary law. This is the first instance of "cooperation" that he has shown, and undoubtedly it was superinduced by my very plain speaking to him.

I did not entirely understand just the outcome of the sale of your ranch, but I do hope that if it accomplished nothing else, it relieved you of the terrible strain you were under with it, and saved you from future payments and worries in respect to it.

With my love in which Mother joins to all of you,

Affectionately, *Dad*

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SUGGESTION HAS BEEN MADE OF APPOINTMENT LOU HANCHETT IN CONNECTION WITH RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION STOP APPOINTING POWER HAS JUST INQUIRED POLITICS OF HANCHETT BECAUSE SELECTION MUST BE OF REPUBLICAN STOP I HAVE SOME RECOLLECTION HE WAS ANTI HOOVER BUT A REGISTERED REPUBLICAN STOP PLEASE WIRE ME FACTS WHETHER HE WAS AGAINST HOOVER AND WHETHER A REGISTERED REPUBLICAN STOP THIS WILL COMPLY WITH LAW STOP IF YOU SEE FIT SHW HIM THIS WIRE STOP DO WHAT YOU DEEM BEST IN THIS REGARD BUT CONFIDENTIALLY-
 HIRAM W JOHNSON.

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COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

April 6, 1933.

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

My dear Arch:

I have yours of April 4. I was more glad than I can tell you to receive it. Immediately we telephoned to the Immigration Bureau concerning Elkins case, and wired you.

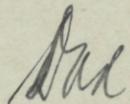
As I wrote you before I am entirely out of the patronage of the State of California. I am perfectly sure, however, that there will come opportunities outside of the regular appointments, and when they arise, as I think they will soon, I shall take the matter of any which I think might fit up with the powers that be here. What I want is some sort of a decent attorneyship. I would not ask, as you suggest, any Democratic organization in California to do a single thing, for they have neither consulted me, nor even suggested that I might suggest something. Indeed, they have totally ignored me, and the entire California patronage is in the hands of McAdoo. He is more greedy than even Shortridge was, and I thought Shortridge the limit. It may be that with the innumerable applications he can not avoid it, but I do not think he would let go an odorless excavator driver if he could fill the place.

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 2

I wired you about Hanchett the other day, because the President told me Arthur Curtis James had recommended Hanchett for some sort of connection with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Roosevelt said that the law, apparently, required him to appoint a Republican, and he asked me if I could give him any data in connection with the matter, and asked me about Hanchett generally. Of course I did not want to knock Hanchett in any way, and contented myself in saying he was a man of ability. I wired you because I thought it might give you a contact with someone who might have something to do with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in our State.

With all my love, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, April 9, 1933.

My dear Boys:

This is our first summer day, not summer in reality, but warm and pleasant, and with all of the feel of advanced spring and approaching warm weather. I am at the office, as usual, trying to get rid of some of the things upon my desk. It is quite impossible to clean up, because the telegrams which pour in here each day now give one enough to attend to for two or three days. It is amazing the number of things in which California and Californians are interested, and the amount of relief they desire. This morning, for instance, the cattlemen made a tremendous appeal about farm relief bill in one particular. The University of California, and certain of the farming organizations are most emphatic in their desire to save the agricultural appropriations for agricultural stations and extension service from the axe of the Budget Bureau; citrus growers of northern California, Oroville, Fair Oaks, Maxwell, and the like make a real appeal for help from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and tell a dreadful story of loss of their homes, etc., while the territory of southern California, which was in the path of the earthquake is shouting to high heaven for loans or gifts to enable them to rebuild destroyed school houses, and the State Bureau of Education with

2.

many members of the legislature unite in strong telegrams. The Bureau of Light and Power in the City of Los Angeles feels that there are certain sections of its contract with the Reconstruction Finance Corporation by which money will be obtained to build its conduit that are unjust and unfair and inserted for the purpose of injuring a great municipally owned plant. These are a few of the things that came by wire this Sunday morning. If all of these, with the others that are before me, were personally attended to, it would take me some days. I can only do what little is possible by 'phone, and perhaps one or two calls to ascertain situations and render such aid as is possible. In addition, the senate is in session with very important legislation, some of which I am anxious to participate in. I am not relating these things to you with the usual self-pity that characterizes public officials. I was illustrating simply that these are tough old days in which old men get very tired by night fall. Of course, those of us who are young, vigorous, and active, ^{and} like Caesar can do several things at the same time, don't mind them.

Mother and I had two really delightful Sundays. Last Sunday we went to the Shenandoah Valley, and thence to what is to be the national park in the Blue Ridge. It was a fine, enjoyable ride, the road through the mountains was beautiful with a view unsurpassed. There is a little blue haze constantly over

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these mountains, and because of this, the range takes its name. We lunched in a really perfect little hotel at Luray, and then drove through the Blue Ridge, descending on the other side, where Hoover's camp on the Rapidan is situated. We went into the cave and through it. It was an excellent selection, and I could imagine that the camp had a very great charm for one with Hoover's peculiar disposition. It was the first time that your Mother and I had been in its vicinity and had made this particular drive, and it was particularly enjoyable. On our way home, we encountered a tremendous rain storm, and the last two hours of our journey, we were in a pouring downfall, but it really did not detract however from the pleasure of the ride. We got home a little before eight very tired, but with the finest memories of the day.

I intended to spend some little time in describing the two trips of ours, the historical interest of the first, and the strange people who inhabit the Hollows of the Blue Ridge we learned of in the second, but the day is so beautiful I am going out with Mother for a ride somewhere, merely to get in the air, and will postpone to a future time when I have a little more leisure my desire to tell you what most interested us.

We're going ahead at lightning speed still, although there is much more inclination to scrutinize legislation submitted to us. The differences in the views as to the effectiveness of the legislation are as far apart as the poles, likewise

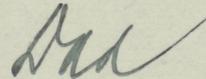
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the divergent opinions as to the final effect seem wholly irreconcilable. I presume only time can tell whether those who insist we're on the up grade are right, or whether those who just as earnestly assert we are going to see very much worse times within sixty days are merely lugubrious in their prophecies or have a clearer vision than the others.

I hope that you all keep well. We can stand most ills (while I have my full share, although you may not think so) if we can but keep well.

With love to all in which Mother Joins,

Affectionately,

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

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, April 16, 1933.

My dear Boys:

I am going to desert you today and not attempt to write in my usual fashion. I have already been dictating here for more than an hour, and have not made a dent in the stuff that is piled up on my desk. I have got to study, too, this afternoon, the plan that I have for creating within the structure of a bill protecting our people in the matter of the sale of foreign securities, some sort of corporation or commission which, with the consent of those who purchased these defaulting foreign securities, particularly South American, would take such action as might be ^{appropriate} appropriate, and endeavor to salvage what little might be obtained. I am trying to follow in this the British corporation of foreign bond holders, but I find it a rather difficult task.

Your Mother and I keep our health, and the weather is the usual Washington weather, one good day and two rotten days. Indeed, if the proportion is no greater than that, we feel happy. It looked a week ago as if we were going to have real spring and that summer was upon the way, but our hopes were blasted during the week.

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We're fiddling along with more legislation than any one man or any legislative body can accurately digest. I am still in the mood of trying anything that may be suggested, and the country is still in the mood, in my opinion, of following Roosevelt in anything that he desires. He is likely, however, to become a cropper at any time. I hope not, but he is attempting so much that all can not succeed. The Farm Bill we have been discussing is really the most bizarre thing that was ever suggested to a set of sentient beings. If it were not for the feeling the most of us have toward the President, it would not have a corporal's guard supporting it in the Senate.

My love to all, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

Dan

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

GEORGE W. NEVILLE, CLERK

April 18, 1933.

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

My dear Jack:

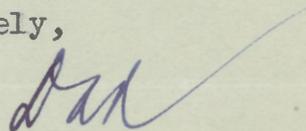
Last evening I received your letter of April 15th, in which you detailed the situation at Sacramento concerning the amendment to the Primary Law. It looks to me like this is a dead horse. The amendment is wholly logical, and really should have been adopted, but laws oftentimes are either made or unmade by the prejudices and self-interest of the lawmakers. I don't think you ought to bother with the thing at all. It is just as well for you to keep out of it, so that it may not publicly appear that the amendment was designed for my benefit, and that we personally were pressing it. Were I on the ground, I would not have any objection to this, and indeed I would publicly avow not only my interest in it, but would argue that it be adopted. I am very much obliged to you for writing me as you did, and for your offer to go to the bat, but I think at this time it would be not only practically useless, but inexpedient.

It makes me feel very tender toward Havenner, and old Bill has done everything he could in the matter, too.

I am writing this hastily, and, as you suggested,
sending the letter marked "Personal" to the Hotel Senator,
Sacramento.

With all my love, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dad', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

B

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

April 20, 1933.

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

My dear Arch:

It has been fine to have several letters from you this week, and I not only congratulate you upon the fact, but felicitate myself upon the pleasure they have given me.

In your letter of April 11 you sent me a letter to you from Edward H. Clark, Jr. Mr. Clark has a most excellent idea. He is entirely right in his suggestion that the rigging of the market by the underwriter or dealer in securities should be prohibited. We proved here conclusively that the custom of some of the investment houses was to rig the market and really expend a considerable sum of money in doing so until the securities offered could be sold at the price desired to the public, and immediately upon accomplishing this, pulling the plug, when, of course, down went the securities with a dull thud. The mode of disposing of these securities was just a recognized part of the "shell and pea" game operated by the financial houses.

With a bill of my own to control the offer of foreign securities I am running parallel with the administration bill.

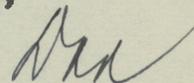
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I am doing this because I found in the Banking and Currency Committee some individuals with no stomach for a real bill. I have kept my bill, therefore, before the Judiciary Committee, have had a subcommittee report it favorably, so that if the Banking and Currency Committee does not within a brief period do its duty, through the Judiciary Committee I will endeavor to present an act with teeth in it, at least in respect to the foreign offerings.

How strange your minds run! With all of the hurly burly here, and with my hours so occupied that for the first time in my life I have been getting really ~~worry~~ *worry*, when I observed that Tanforan had begun its races again, I scanned each day the entries. I followed BRIGHT HOPE in her first race, and my heart sank. When she ran third in her second race, I felt a little better, and when last week, she won a race, I was inclined to give a great big cheer. How is she, and why is it that she will run last one day, and first on another? Don't you think it's a rather strange thing for an old fellow here perfectly obsessed over what he is trying to do, looking at a lousy racing chart in California?

With my love, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,



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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

Sunday, April 23, 1933.

My dear Boys:

This week has not only brought us new and more revolutionary legislation but it witnessed as well the advent of the McClatchy family here, and later in the week of Colonel Snook. I was terribly shocked at C.K.'s appearance, and feel very badly for him. I have tried as much as it were possible during the week to be with him, and in an hour or so, I am to take him for a ride again. His daughter, Mrs. McClatchy and a nurse are with him. Mrs. McClatchy strikes me as far from well, and of course, like all very sick people, they have little thought of how another must utilize and economize his time. I have such a great affection for the old man, though, and feel that I am so in his debt, that I am very glad to do any little thing that I can for his pleasure and entertainment. Colonel Snook, who came Friday with a gentleman named Read, on a matter of very great importance to the fruit industry, seems to me just a dear old man now.

Coincidentally with the arrival here of distinguished foreigners for the so-called economic conference our country takes its first revolutionary step towards inflation. The world assumed that we went off the gold standard last week. We really went off the gold standard on the fifth

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day of March, and we have been off it ever since. We're now going to embark upon the road, which the economists from the wheat fields of the middle west have demanded for some years. Everywhere here now the word is inflation. A few old people like myself ready to take any dose do not view this particular one with any degree of favor. There is a certain sort of patten in which we all indulge about commodity prices, cheaper money, stimulation, and stabilizing, and if we jump a few hurdles, it is not difficult to reach the conclusion that more money means more money for all of us, and that higher prices mean simply stimulation of trade, which will, in its stimulating effects, bring greater employment, increased business, and a modicum of prosperity. It seems axiomatic that if by legislative fiat, or otherwise, we make a dollar of one hundred cents worth fifty cents, we'll be able to purchase just one-half the goods we have heretofore been able to purchase; and pursuing this a bit further, the necessary commodities which are sold will have to be sold, if we halve the dollar, at just double the present price. In the matter, therefore, of purchasing power and commodities, it would seem to be wholly axiomatic that prices will increase as the value of currency decreases, and will decrease as the value of the dollar increases. Now, this looks all right from the standpoint of the farmer and of those who produce the necessary commodities. The swelling trade, it is asserted,

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will make itself felt in every direction, and be of inestimable value, so, some of our economists say, not alone to the particular classes we have suggested, but to all classes. This may be, but I am stupid enough to be just a little doubtful about it. There is an enormous wage earning class in this country, and the great salaried class. I can not escape the idea that these two very numerous classes will in the future be paid exactly the same number of dollars that they are paid today, and these dollars will buy of the commodities required a less amount in proportion to the amount by which the dollar is inflated. Of course, our friends who are preaching inflation will in a way admit this, but overcome it by beautiful generalizations of community advantages derived from an expansion of the currency. I notice, however, that the American Federation of Labor has begun at once agitation for increased wages in order to avoid the loss consequent upon inflated currency.

Perhaps it is because I am so full of this subject that I have just touched upon it with you. I am going along, because we have got to do something and I am willing to take another shot in the dark. I think, without making a hard and fast rule, and leaving the discretion with Roosevelt, the dangerous experiment may be controlled. Certainly, in another two months it would be out of the hand in the Congress.

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I was asked yesterday morning to meet with Messrs. Moley and Bullitt of the State Department, as they expressed it, to advise them in the conferences they expected to hold yesterday, and hereafter with representatives of European powers on the foreign debt subject. Of course, inasmuch as the request was one that was really made by the President, I went down yesterday to the Secretary of State's office, and confidentially met with these two young gentlemen. I am writing the briefest sort of synopsis of the interview, merely for future preservation. They told me, that the President had said that I knew more about the particular subject than almost anybody else, and that he did not wish any definite action taken until they, who had charge of the particular matter, had advised with me. The amenities having been thus established, and presumably the wild animal having been stroked into an affectionate purring, Bullitt began to talk about settlement of our foreign debts by the payment of a very large sum representing the present worth. I listened intently while he was explaining some suggestion which had apparently come out of thin air, and which was - into the International Bank of Settlement thirty per cent of the sum that would be agreed upon would be paid to be retained by that Bank; that for the remaining seventy per cent, the debtor nations would execute their promises to

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pay with a solemn engagement, which would be included in their obligation that their budgets would annually contain the amounts necessary to meet ultimately full payment; that we, in this country, as against the seventy per cent would issue our bonds, retiring the Liberty Bonds which now outstanding represent in reality the money we have loaned to Europe. Mr. Bullitt took great pains to say that this was not his proposition, and Mr. Moley concurred, but the former looked at me so expectantly that I thought I could read what was passing in his mind. The first question I asked him was how much better or more valuable was a promise of the defaulting nations to pay in the future than the solemn promise they had made in the past. Well, this was exactly what had occurred to him. I said to the two gentlemen that I knew nothing of finance, and readily admitted that in the beginning, but I did have a sense of my own personal dignity, and of the dignity and honor of my country. Thereupon I launched into my viewpoint, which, in a word, was that I would not in my own personal affairs, and I would not for an instant in relation to our country, bargain like a fish wife concerning that which I thought was due to me personally, or to the nation; that in perfect good humour and amity we could await the payment of the instalments that had been promised, and if any nation said it could not pay, and we believed it, we could act generously and say nothing, and in any event, we would do nothing whether they paid, or whether they didn't, but we could continue

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tohold our obligations. I insisted that these representatives of France and England were here now because they knew that a great nation could not withstand indefinitely the taunt of welcher and defaulter, and I asserted as vigorously as I could that we could better lose the entire amounts that were due to us than these nations could win these sums and for all time thereafter be tainted as breakers of pledged faith and solemn obligations. This did not mean that we should immediately collect everything due to us, or that if the circumstances demanded, we should not be charitable and generous, but would simply mean standing upon our rights, ourselves determining what ultimately should be done. Both men finally agreed with me, but I have little confidence in what may finally be done. I have not attempted to write in full all that was said in our long conference, and I shall be very much interested in learning the progress of negotiations, which are to be conveyed to me from time to time. It is quite possible that although these gentlemen agreed thoroughly with me before I left, that those above them may deem my attitude too irreconcilable, and insist that I be shunned in the future. I know full well I am entirely right. I asked these two gentlemen in the course of the conversation if they ever played poker. Both of them are enthusiastic devotees of the game. I asserted then that they were sitting in that delightful pastime, that they held the top hand, and it was ^{un}necessary for them to do anything more than

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maintain that top hand and await events. Our very inflation and the provision in our inflation bill regarding silver will enable these European countries to escape (particularly if we change the content of the gold dollar) the payment of the full sum due. And in the matter of these debts, we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by sitting tight.

The few little flowers we have in the garden are beginning to bloom. I have a short five or ten minutes in the evening to walk about the little yard, and I can't tell you how I love the violets, which without cultivation, and seemingly of their own volition, suddenly unfold themselves apparently for my enjoyment. These violets are practically the only thing that will thus bloom in profusion in our shaded little place. I have five azalea bushes and they are a mass of scarlet now. Our lilacs, the recent winds and rains have pretty well destroyed, and our old pear tree, filled with its beautiful white blossoms, that to me are just as beautiful as the Japanese blossoms around the Mall over which every body goes crazy, had the blossoms blown from it by the heavy rain storms. This rotten old climate gave us two good days this past week, and the rest of them rain and cold. One day the thermometer was 80 and the next day 46.

I am restless and impatient. I have been reading clippings that have been sent to me from various papers in California and I see that our amendment to the primary bill has been

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denounced in unmeasured terms by certain of the press. I don't mind this, and I don't mind defeat of the amendment that was proposed. I have always had to take the harder way, and it may be just as well, if I go up against the gun again, to take the more difficult road. What I do resent, though, is that apart entirely from our interest in amending the primary law, the endeavor is being made in the Legislature by other measures to destroy it entirely. This presents a fundamental question which years ago I fought out in California. When I read of Requa, Tuller, Keesling, and others making their appearance before the Assembly Committee for the destruction of the direct primary, I skipped hastily to read who responded, and when I saw that of all those who had grown up with me in the government of the State of California, who had fought the good fight there, and who were supposed to be a part of the forward looking movement, not a single individual faced these scrubs upon the very fundamental theory of popular government, I felt a real sinking of the soul. However, in this rotten game one who remains in it must neither expect too much nor permit himself to grow cynical.

The health of your Mother and myself, I am very glad to say to you, continues O.K.

With my love to all,

Affectionately,

Lnd