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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, September 1, 1940.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
973 Green Street,
San Francisco, California

My dear Jack:

I have received this morning yours of August 30. I read it of course with a great deal of interest. I noted your feelings during the latter part of the campaign, and I confess to somewhat the same. I got very nervous at times because I could not tell what the result might be, and I was unable to measure in any way the strength of my opponents. I'll probably never be able to make you understand how the thought that this was my last fight weighed upon me under the peculiar circumstances; and I looked each day for something to issue from the White House, supposing, of course, that the President would not let a controversy between us that had such wide publicity rest upon his assault and my rejoinder. And then, I won't confess this to anybody else - I was so disappointed in the records I made because I labored under the impression that my voice had left me, and I imagined this would be very obvious. I don't feel the same way when I am talking to people, but the records impressed me as being the yapping of some sanctimonious old dead man. However, everything came out well, and I feel so grateful to you people in San Francisco.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

I wish that Neylan had omitted his suggestions to me which he made on Thursday. I fear that he is quite angry at me for the position that I took with him, but I could not take any other position. He spoiled for me the great joy I was having in the victory. Now, they have put me up against quite a quandary. I don't see how it is possible for me to do otherwise than support Wilkie. I think this support ought to be limited to California, and probably, too, upon the radio. I don't want to engage in any fixed campaign, either outside or inside the State. I don't want to be hustled into declarations which would put me at once in the forefront of the fight, but wish the next few weeks to recuperate in.

I received this morning a letter from Walter Jones of the Sacramento Bee congratulating me upon the primary. He took occasion in his note to express the following:

"I note by dispatches from Washington and other Eastern points that Mr. Willkie and Republican leaders were elated over your victory in California and frankly stated that they were hopeful of winning your support for Willkie's cause next November. I sincerely hope that they will be disappointed, for I cannot imagine Hiram W. Johnson, as I have known him for thirty years, taking the stump for a tool of the House of Morgan, Wall Street, the Power Trust and the Old Guard Republicans generally. And that is just what Wendell Willkie is, regardless of his professions of being a Liberal Democrat.

"If the Republicans in the East think that, because California voters gave you an overwhelming endorsement in returning you to the Senate for a fifth term, California will vote for Willkie, they are going to be badly disappointed in my humble opinion.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

Roosevelt supporters by the thousands voted for you because they honestly believe you are the type of man who should continue to represent this state in the United States Senate. But these thousands of voters who placed their trust in you would be grievously hurt if you should turn around and support Willkie whose political philosophy is as unlike that of your own as day is from night. Yours springs from the hearts of the people, his from the moneybags of Wall Street. "

Jones does not reason well in this letter, and he forgets Mr. Roosevelt's attempted purge of me, which makes it impossible, of course, for me to support him. I will try to avoid getting into this fight at once. I will keep out of it just as long as I can. I have been resentful toward Willkie because he has swallowed whole the Roosevelt foreign policy, and was enthusiastically for the conscription law. Without going into detail I consider this the most insidious act that has been passed in my long service here. He is now in a devil of a fight over some amendment of the Senate to the conscription law so that recalcitrant business men might be in cases of our necessary self-defense compelled to do his duty. I voted for this amendment. I was tepidly for it. I would have voted for any amendment that would have smeared the bill. I can't see under the circumstances that it is open to the objections Willkie makes to it. However, this is a small part of what he has done. If he had not broken the force of our opposition, and taken weak men into the Roosevelt camp on the conscription bill

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

we might have stood a chance of defeating it. He did not consult anybody concerning his attitude, and has not consulted anybody concerning any statement he has made. I don't consider myself, in the slightest, obligated to him. But I could not be for a third term, and I could not be for a man who asserted that I am unfit to be Progressive. Perhaps, I had better say this, or kindred pleasant words at once, and get the thing done with, but this won't get it done with, and I want a few weeks of rest and quiet.

Mother joins in love to the boys and Miss Schow.

Affectionately,

H.W.J.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 7, 1940

EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
973 Green Street,
San Francisco.

My dear Jack:

The Secretary of State has sent me three forms for the appointment of three voters to be members of the State Central Committee for the Republican Convention to be held at Sacramento on the 19th of September, 1940, - one of my appointees shall be of the same sex as myself, and two shall be of the opposite sex. He has also sent me proxy to be signed before a notary public or other officer authorized to administer oaths. I have a letter from Girvin asking that Arthur Dunne be made the male appointee I am allowed by the law. He says he is deserving of the appointment. Girvin asks also for my proxy to the Convention. Would you let me know at once what your views are in relation to these matters. I don't care a rap about them or about the Convention.

Hastily and affectionately,

H.W.J.

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EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, September 8, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

I am writing this probably for the same reason that you wrote yours of September 6 to me - because it is custom and habit, although I confess I am always glad to talk with you, and get your slant upon events, too. And, before I forget it, I will ask your opinion on how to phrase a matter. Wilkie is coming to San Francisco on the 19th. I think he will be in Los Angeles just before then. He will expect, and the Republican organization in the State will expect a greeting from me to him. I can scarcely get out of it, although I have little enthusiasm at this time for it. How would it be possible to send him an innocuous greeting? I confess I don't see how it will be, but I thought I would put the question up to you, anyway.

Mr. Wilkie has unfortunately gone his own way in dealing with policies pending before the Congress, and in nearly every instance when he expressed himself, he

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

has taken issue with the few people here who are endeavoring to aid him. You'll remember that he at once embraced the foreign policy of Mr. Roosevelt, and, to the astonishment of his friends here, he heartily and enthusiastically approved it. This is rather a blow. He approved the Administration's policy in reference to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements, and then for full measure, came out in favor of Conscription. I thoroughly believe the majority of our people, just the great inarticulate mass, are not in favor of Conscription, and anyman who has thought through what has occurred in the past, and what was occurring here, would have difficulty adjusting himself to militarizing this country. These are but a few of the things endorsed by Mr. Wilkie. In fact, he has so gleefully and earnestly adopted Roosevelt's policies that he has left us in fact no issue but the third term, and this he has not stressed at all, nor has he mentioned it thus far in the fight. But it is all that is left us from our candidate's standpoint. If I undertook to make speeches in this campaign, I would go my own way, be against the sort of thing that I have always been against, and be at cross purposes perhaps with the Republican candidate. He does not seem to care a damn, although from

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

what I have heard the last few days it would indicate that he is beginning to understand he has blundered. I can understand the man's situation. He won a great contest when nobody thought of him in connection with it until the very end. He finds now the great metropolitan dailies like the New York Times, the Herald Tribune, the Baltimore Sun, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, the Scripps Howard press, were willing to be for him if he would adopt their foreign policy, which, of course, is the President's foreign policy, and is dictated by a certain class in this country, who want war. Wilkie has had no experience in this sort of thing, and immediately he saw his chance to bring to his aid these great papers, and he did it. He forgot, or he never has known, that there were a great mass of people who did not give a rap what the newspapers said, who hold their own opinions, and that all of these people, or nearly all of them, are at variance with the great metropolitan dailies on the question of war. These people do not want war. The papers named do. The great mistake of the whole matter is that he gets us out on a limb, and saws the limb off.

I am glad the House yesterday stuck to their decision to give sixty days for voluntary enlistments in the Conscription Bill. I am glad of this, not because it is right,

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

or because it will accomplish in the long run any results, but for the reason that I would do anything in the way of amendment of the bill that would smear it, or might demonstrate its uselessness. Of course, I believe they will job the whole situation on calling for volunteers so that at the end of two months they can say that it failed, and the whole voluntary system is a failure, and I am well aware that there were a great many votes by Congressmen to delay the whole thing until after election. But it is just a remote possibility that they might have a surprise, but it does make the progenitors of the bill perfectly furious.

I am still "nuts" after the primary. When the final vote is printed by counties please send it to me. I want to preserve it. The latest figures that I have are 13,006 precincts out of 13,540 in the State published by the Los Angeles Times, singularly enough. How interesting that Patterson ran second after he was supposed to have talked himself entirely out of the contest! People here can not understand our primary law. When I try to explain it to them, they admit that it is logical, but habit has grown so with them, that they are unable to understand any innovations.

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I think I wrote you that Neylan telephoned me again and seemed to be entirely reconciled to the situation as I have insisted it should be in California. I did not want the immediate transfer of our organization. It looked as if it would be so like a desertion of those on the Democratic side. I can't of course ^{object} to individuals in it accepting employment, so long as they do not attempt to do it as an employe of my organization. I think that I will advise Girvin that when Wilkie comes to San Francisco he may proceed as he sees fit, close up our headquarters, and he, in his own individual capacity, act politically as he desires. I will permit the same thing to be done in the south, I believe. Do you see any objection to this? I want to say one thing to you, confidentially, that some of the people here who are bitterly opposed to Mr. Roosevelt, and who have been equally bitterly disappointed in Mr. Wilkie's talks, say they are going to vote for Norman Thomas. Of course, this statement is made a long time before election, and in most instances, I think the individuals will change.

There is one other thing that has been written or told to me, and that is that certain Democrats are contemplating putting an Independent in the field. I should hate to see this done because of the trouble it will occasion. Have you

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 6

heard anything of this ?

With my love, in which Mother joins, to Miss Schow
and the boys, I am

Affectionately,

Dad

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EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 9, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

I am enclosing you copy of an article
entitled "Mid-channel" by H.L. Mencken in yesterday's
Baltimore Sun.

This article portrays the political sit-
uation, and, insofar as it does, I agree with it.
I don't agree with very much that Mencken writes be-
cause he finds it necessary to disagree with everything
and everybody, and to be at war with the world, but he
has a flare for the use of language that very few writers
have, and he expresses himself where others fear to peep.

In haste, with love,

Affectionately,

DK

Baltimore Sun

Sept. 8, 1940

Mid-Channel

By H. L. MENCKEN

IT IS POSSIBLE, of course, that the Hon. Mr. Willkie may be elected in November, and there are even gypsies who, for sufficient cash in hand, are willing to predict it formally, but if it happens the honorable gentleman himself will have little to do with it. He will be heaved into the White House because a majority of the American people have decided, whether rationally or irrationally, to heave Roosevelt out, and for no other reason whatsoever. At the midpoint of the campaign he stands as plainly stalled as a fly in amber. Nothing that he has so far said or done has changed his chances in the slightest.

His difficulties are due in part to his failure to formulate and whoop up any genuine issue, and in part to his lamentable incapacity as a rablerouser. Facing one of the most adept and impudent demagogues in American history, he has tried to carry on the campaign as if it were a debate in metaphysics between two archbishops, both of them actual Christians. Nothing could be more futile. Roosevelt has walloped him day and night, usually without even bothering to mention him. And not once has he struck back with any ponderable force and effect.

That is certainly no way to beat a boob-bumper as devoid of all scruples of conscience as a labor goon, a journalist or an alligator. There is but one technic for flooring and flabbergasting such an antagonist, and that is the ancient technic of rushing him to the ropes, and whaling the living daylight out of him. He must be hammered mercilessly from the stroke of the bell, both above and below the belt, and every time he puts up his dukes in reprisal they must be slapped down again—not gently and politely, but with the violence of a boiler explosion.

In other words, the only way to shake and shatter a demagogue is to tackle him with demagogy worse than his own. In the case of the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt this is plainly a very large order; indeed, it verges upon the unearthly, not to say the unimaginable. But whatever it verges upon, the fact must be grimly plain that the Hon. Mr. Willkie is not up to it. His speech of acceptance was an elegant essay, and nothing more. His subsequent utterances have not been elegant essays, but only casual persiflage, swell for a golf-club locker-room, but of no more woof or zowie among the underprivileged than so many college yells.

THE FUNDAMENTAL difficulty of the honorable gentleman, of course, lies in the fact that he has no real issue, and appears to be incapable of framing one. When he swallowed the Roosevelt foreign policy all the rest of the New Deal rumble-bumble went down with it, and he has since presented the spectacle of a man choking on his own false teeth. So choking, he is estopped from hollering, which, in a candidate for office under democracy, is a burden almost as demoralizing as a sense of honor.

Of what use is it, in such days as these, to prove all over again that the WPA is a racket? Who, in fact, denies it? It was conceived as a racket ("We will spend and spend, tax and tax, and elect and elect"), it has been operated as a racket, and it will remain a racket until the end of the chapter. Racket or no racket, it is immensely less costly and dangerous than the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt's frantic effort to horn into the war. All the New Deal imbecilities put together have cost the taxpayer but \$25,000,000,000 in seven and a half years, but already, though it is only a few months old, the war adventure has cost \$14,000,000,000, and we are hardly at the beginning of it.

Moreover, the two lunacies, domestic and foreign, differ qualitatively as well as quantitatively. No matter how far the New Deal went in waste and corruption at home, it was always possible, at least in theory, for the American people to get rid of it by turning Roosevelt out, and putting in a new Coolidge. But they will have no such control over the process of saving humanity, once it is really under way. On that point various foreign gentlemen will also have some say—among them, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin and the Japs, not to mention the prehensile idealists of Latin America and the heroic goldbrick artists of England.

Yet the Hon. Mr. Willkie seems to be quite willing and even eager to join in this stupendous folly. The only criticism of it that has come out of him has been criticism of its method, not of its purpose. And at the same time he asks us to shiver over the WPA—no more, at worst, than a classical scheme, inevitable under democracy, to buy votes with public money. It is precisely as if a man down with delirium tremens or Asiatic cholera should complain bitterly of sunburn or chigger-bites.

I AM NOT arguing here that his position on the war is wrong, though I believe that it is; I am merely arguing that it hamstringing him in his campaign, and leaves him sawing the air. At a moment when the country trembles on the brink of an adventure that is sure to cost it many billions and may conceivably ruin it altogether, he devotes himself to denouncing trivialities that may quickly become irrelevancies. With a hurricane bearing down, he protests against a draft.

It is thus no wonder that his fight languishes, and the country hears him inattentively. In the face of the vast events that impend no one really cares much about the WPA, or about the TVA, the AAA, or any of the other New Deal schemes to loot A for the benefit of B. These things were important a year ago, and even six months ago, but now they are important no longer. They take on the archaic unreality of pacifism, paper-bag cookery and phrenology. If they were abandoned tomorrow it would make little difference. And if the Hon. Mr. Willkie came out for them tomorrow—as he almost

did in his speech of acceptance—no one would care.

Well, then, what is to be done about it? I can only reply that I don't know, and I gather that Willkie himself is in the same boat. If he could think of any feasible plan for smearing Roosevelt, you may be sure that he would be executing it at this moment, and with all the hearty innocence of a German Stuka bombing an English Sunday-school picnic. But the only likely line of attack is provided by Roosevelt's warmongering, and there Willkie is throttled by his endorsement of the Roosevelt theory that Hitler, after reducing England to dust, will turn his bombers on Omaha and Kansas City. Thus Roosevelt seems to be safe against his attack, and can afford to laugh at him, or to turn him over derisively to such gossip columnists as the Hon. Harold L. Ickes, the friend at once of Mayor Ed Kelly, of Chicago, and of God.

BUT I STARTED off by saying that Willkie may nevertheless win in November. How come? By the collapse of Roosevelt, and by no other means. It is, I believe, very far from probable, for Roosevelt's virtuosity as a demagogue is past compare, but all the same it remains imaginable. The plain people, you may be sure, have no real libido to sweat in army camps. They are, by a large majority, in favor of what the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt calls religion and morality, but not many of them itch to put down the enemies thereof personally.

There is, in consequence, some chance that the rap of the sergeant on the door may have some unhappy effects. It may be postponed prudently until after election, but all the same it impends, and for all anyone knows it may be working a profound change in proletarian ideology. A demagogue always faces such hazards. There is no telling when his customers may turn upon him and seek to devour him. It has happened to many other great succorers of humanity, and it may happen to Roosevelt, too.

There are also risks involved in the war itself. If England blows up between now and November 5 and the Japs simultaneously take to the war-path, the nation may be quickly sicklied o'er with a feeling that the best plan will be to make terms with Beelzebub. And if the English, under the very muzzles of Hitler's guns, nevertheless manage to throw him off, it will be hard to convince even morons that he is dangerous 3,000 miles away. Finally, there is always the possibility that England may go totalitarian on us, as France did, leaving religion and morality on a burning deck.

Thus Willkie is still in the running. Any of the three catastrophes that I have adumbrated may wreck Roosevelt before election day, let him croon his level damndest. But if they are realized, and Willkie saddled with the burdens of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover, it will certainly not be his own fault.

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JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 14, 1940.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson,
973 Green Street,
San Francisco.

My dear Jack:

Yesterday afternoon Earl Warren called upon me, and in the course of the conversation said that he had kept in mind my grandson's application, and that he was now in a position to take care of him. I thanked him thoroughly, and asked if I should notify Hiram, and he said, yes, that he would be home on Wednesday next, and then would see him. He said there was an immense amount of work to be done in his office, and he had to depend, of course, upon his employes to do it. I told him something of Hiram's background, and assured him that he was industrious and able, and he said he felt sure of this. He left shortly afterwards, and I immediately wired Hiram. I hope this turns out to be all that we desire, and that it answers completely Hiram's wishes. Now, it is up to the boy. I wish him luck.

Hastily and affectionately,

H.W.J.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, September 15, 1940

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

My dear Jack:

I have just received yours of September 13. I read with care the remarks you made about the State Committee. I will gladly follow your recommendations, but because of the equivocal way in which you put it, I do not immediately appoint yourself, but have wired you asking you your preference as to taking the appointment yourself or having it given to Girvin.

I have a letter from Bill Rich in which he mentions the two Los Angeles candidates seeking the job, and advising me of his opinion that Doherty would be the appropriate man as chairman, but that Doherty declines it. I don't know anything about the situation, and will gladly do whatever you suggest. Inasmuch as the convention meets on the 19th, and Girvin has my appointment of Dunne (sent *it* as I said before, prior to the receipt of his telegram) I have asked you in my wire today to advise me at once, and I hope you will do so. I don't give a rap about the

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

State Committee, but, apparently, our friends are getting somewhat excited about it, and I ought to do what I can for them.

Girvin's letter came today with yours, in which he asks that I consider his appointment. I would consider it only if you did not want it.

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

Hastily and affectionately,

HWJ

COPY

Sunday, September 15, 1940

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, 3rd,
Attorney at law,
Mills Bldg.,
San Francisco.

My dear Hiram:

The bare bones of the telegram I sent you regarding your appointment by Attorney General Warren is practically all of the knowledge I have upon the subject. Warren spoke of the amount of work that he had in the office, sufficient to keep the deputies working at top speed, and I then blew off some steam about your background, and your education in the law, and that you would be able to hold your end up. He said any graduate from Boalt Hall would have been through such a course as to qualify him. I did not discuss salary with him because I prefer that you should do so, and of course, I felt that I had no right to discuss hours and the like. As I wired you, he will return Wednesday and will see you that day, so be sure to be on hand then, and don't get restless if you have to wait. Warren is a very good man, I think. He is not the most eloquent man in the world, or the most finished product of the law, but I am sure he conducts an

COPY

Sunday, December 13, 1940
efficient and high-grade offer. I do hope everything
turns out all right, and that you will find things to
your liking.

Affectionately yours,

Mr. Nixon W. Johnson, Sr.,
Attorney at Law,
1111 Bldg.,
San Francisco.

My dear Nixon:

The bare bones of the telegram I sent you
regarding your appointment by Attorney General Warren
is practically all of the knowledge I have upon the sub-
ject. Warren spoke of the amount of work that he had
in the office, sufficient to keep the deputies working
at top speed, and I then blew off some steam about your
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 16, 1940.

EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

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

My dear Jack:

I have been so occupied that I have left everything, except that which was absolutely necessary to be done, pass in the last couple of days. I intended to write you a good long letter, but haven't had the time. Letters from Girvin and Hiram this morning, as well as your telegram, engrossed me, and I sent Hiram a letter, and Girvin, his appointment, and wrote you concerning Hiram's position.

We'll be better able to judge Wilkie's capacity after you hear him in California. I wish you would go to see him personally and talk to him, if you will. He is quite anxious for me to come to California and campaign for him there. I am not up to the campaigning part, although don't say so to anybody. While I feel I could make a speech, I do not want to burden myself with a number of them. After we adjourn here, which will be fairly soon now, I will come out and make arrangements for a talk in San Francisco, and one in Los Angeles, or in lieu thereof, for a couple of radio talks. I feel that he is displaying an immense amount of assurance and egotism, and very little of knowledge of campaigning. However, the crudeness

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

of his speeches may disappear with practice, although I think his voice giving out in one day in Chicago is rather ominous. He has left us merely but one issue, as you emphasize in your letter. There are so many in this campaign, even if he wanted to be a "yes man" to Roosevelt, in the matter of foreign affairs, he could make a blasting speech; but I fear that he thinks as most novices in politics, - that the big newspapers are the controlling element, and that if he can have their support, nothing more is required. I do not by any means discount the strength of the press, but it is mighty poor reliance in any political campaign, and less now than it has ever been. An amusing incident happened the other day that was related to me, in confidence, by a Senator, who is a correspondent of one of the press men with Wilkie. On the morning after the 27th of August, a memorable day to me, - Wilkie came out on the porch where the press men were sitting, with corrugated brow, and an appearance of grave doubt. He said he did not know how to comment upon this victory of Johnson in California, that it would seem to be a tremendous vote for isolation, and he asked the advice of the fellows sitting there, most of whom were very friendly to him, as to what he should say about it, and one smart young fellow spoke up and said say it is a tremendous defeat for Roosevelt, whereupon Wilkie slapped his thigh, and

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

said "That's it exactly", and forthwith made his comment upon the result. We can ascribe this to ignorance, or a slant on public affairs that is wholly erroneous; but like the remark he made in Cicero, jestingly, it is true, "Oh, to hell with Chicago" it shows a lack of experience that may get him into serious trouble if he does not watch himself closely. However, that may change with a couple of weeks of talking continuously.

I decided that I would send him no greeting, that a skimpy one would be worse than none, and I want to wait a couple of weeks while he is in California to see what he says I venture when he feels the atmosphere there, he will be rather mellow in his references to isolationists.

I was worried about your friend Mitchell. I did not know of his activity in the campaign, and if he is in fit condition to receive a letter I would be very glad to write him of my appreciation and my thanks. Tell me his condition, please.

I am greatly worried over Philip's condition. I fear that they will insist on more operations, and I shudder to think of it. I am sorry that Hiram and Miss Schow are also ill.

With my love, in which Mother joins, to Hiram, Philip, and Miss Schow, I am

Affectionately,

Ben

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

September 16, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

In accordance with your wire this morning I have sent appointment of Girvin as member of the Republican State Central Committee to meet at Sacramento September 20, 1940. He already holds my proxy, and he might as well file both.

I sent you the second telegram last night because on deliberation I felt it would be a good thing for you to mix more, and that, perhaps, this would give you the opportunity. It is needless to say to you that if I am elected in November I am through with campaigning, and I thought you might, if you desired, be a worthy successor to me. However, you have settled that.

Last Friday I was surprised to receive a call from Earl Warren, who told me that he could place Hiram now in his office. I immediately wired Hiram, and I suppose he has shown you the wire. I told him he was to report to Warren on Wednesday, when he would return. My conversation

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

was very brief with Warren, and it was the first time he had given me any encouragement in the matter, although he had always been very courteous and very decent. I thanked him profusely. This morning I am in receipt of a letter from Hiram, which I quote to you, but concerning which I think it wise for you to say nothing to him. He writes:

"In advance of seeing Mr. Warren on Wednesday next, as you suggest, I thought I had better write this. I cannot but feel that your recent great triumph in this state may have had something to do with the attitude of our Attorney General and it is the side of politics which does not bear too much of scrutiny. But this I desire to be sure of, knowing your feelings in the matter, and that is, whether the acceptance of this position by me would in any way bind you to any course you would undertake with the slightest degree of reluctance. If so, regardless of any attitude of mine in the matter I shall look elsewhere for employment. I want there to be no commitment, no understanding, no pound of flesh to accompany this offer by Mr. Warren, and if any there be, I must ask for an immediate notification to that effect by you. Barring that, I consider this a very excellent opportunity and look forward to it very much. As you know, Judge Roche has long urged it as the best possible beginning for anyone in this state both for training and political insight. "

I wrote him very hastily in response to this letter that there was no commitment, or understanding, or pound of flesh accompanying the offer of Warren, and that the entire conversation I had written him. I fear this evidences a state

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

of mind on his part regarding the appointment. For God's sake, if he wants the appointment, and he is willing to assume the duties of it, let him go ahead. He can safely leave to me any commitment, understanding, or pound of flesh. I would not enter into any commitment, express or implied, even to get him the appointment, and I have not. I don't want him to begin by doubting the appointing power, or by laboring under the delusion that there may be some dark and subtle bargain upon my part, or upon Warren's part. I repeat, nothing of the sort has occurred, and I wish you would, in some way, if he wants the appointment and is going to take it, advise him not to begin his duties in distrust and suspicion. There is not the slightest reason for either, as I again repeat.

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, September 22, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

It being Sunday again I am writing you briefly. I have received this morning yours of September 20. I note in what high esteem you hold the State Committee, and I think during the time that I have been in politics I have held it in equally high esteem.

I am sorry for taking a side-swipe at you, or a haymaker at Hiram. Life is too short for this sort of thing. I don't know just what the side-swipe was, but I'll take it that perhaps I did say something. Your Mother took me to task for what I wrote about Hiram, and she insisted that it was his excess of affection for me that caused him to write as he did; so, we'll conclude that she was right, and let the incident pass.

I am looking forward to return to California as soon as we adjourn here, although I am going to have the same hard time that I have had in the past in getting your Mother

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

moved. I expect to come out to California and there deliver a couple of speeches for Willkie, or if I am not in shape to do that, then deliver a couple of radio talks. I thought it best to say nothing about this until I reached California. Perhaps my judgment was at fault in reaching this conclusion. I am glad that you thought his speeches pretty good, and that he was going to the bat in fairly strong fashion.

I will write to Mitch.

With my love to both the boys and Miss Schow, in which Mother joins, I am

Affectionately yours,

Sam

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, September 29, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

I have received yours of September 27 this, Sunday, morning. I laughed when at the conclusion of your description of Philip's condition you say the whole thing has given you the jitters, just as my election did, and if you don't look out you will be cutting out paper dolls. If you have the jitters, I have developed a fine case of "softening of the brain", and I had to restrain it, too. I have just written Hiram that if I did not look out, I would be gibbering and gabbering like Chester Rowell, and saying yes and no, and talking of the world situation with just as much effect and as much importance as a South Sea Islander. Let us hope that the doctor will restrain his convivial habits and his appetite for firewater during the period that Philip is in the hospital. I wish I were there to go up with you. I really would enjoy it.

I did not understand what everybody was squabbling about in the Republican State Central Committee until I got a long letter from Girvin, although I am not sure that I understand it now, but I am in worse trouble myself regarding the

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

adjournment of congress and the Willkie campaign, and I don't know what to do. Of course, I am not satisfied with Willkie, but he is the only candidate we have, and he is trying to make a fight. He does not know how, but I think I observe a marked improvement in his recent addresses. The chances are that three-day recesses will be taken by the congress until sometime after the election. This would pretty nearly keep me here. I imagine that Willkie's friends would be just about as pleased if I spoke from here upon a national hookup than if I came to California and undertook to hold a couple of meetings. The trouble with the hookup is that I have no longer any voice, and this would, no doubt, be a trouble in any event. I feel in duty bound to make one speech, at least, for Willkie; although I don't know why I feel in duty bound to do so. The Republicans were very good to me in the primary and I feel a sort of obligated to them, and I confess the innumerable letters - some of which are no doubt propaganda - but most of which are not, that have been ^{sent} me in all sorts of precatory words begging me to come out for Willkie, have their effect. However, we'll determine next week what to do. Of course, my natural inclination would be to come to California, and there take up the cudgels, and remain in California then until the next session of congress. This would give me a couple of months' relaxation, and if any man needed it, I do.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

It won't make any difference my participation in the campaign because I am reconciled to Roosevelt's success. It is a shame and an outrage that this should be so, but I can't see it any other way. Perhaps in the remaining month before the election the situation may change, but there is nothing presently that I can see that will do it. It is the most hypocritical, lying, lousy campaign that ever was made upon an unsuspecting and unwary public, and worse, - successful to date.

I guess you were right about the result of the Republican State Central Committee. There are two things about the result that affected me rather peculiarly; first, I do not think that it was quite just that Hoover should be kicked around in the manner that he was; and secondly, I think it was wholly unjust that young Mr. Knowland was given the "go by". However, these are the cruelties of politics.

With my love to the boys and Miss Schow, in which Mother joins, I am

Affectionately,

Your father, Hiram W. Johnson

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JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 5, 1940.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
#973 Green Street,
San Francisco, California

My dear Jack:

I am writing today, Saturday, instead of tomorrow, because I am hoping to get at the writing of a speech then. It is a speech I shall either deliver here over a national hook-up, or which I will pack out to California with me and deliver to an audience there.

I don't know what in the world to do in the matter of a recess or adjournment that will be taken next week. The plan now proposed is three-day recesses, accompanied by a "gentlemen's agreement" that no business will be taken up at the three day allowance, and this to continue until the middle of November, unless, of course, we are called back either by our own officials, or by the President in the meantime. It will give me but a short time in California, and this will be devoted to the presidential campaign. I realize what the hauling and pulling will be in the event I come out, and I realize the disap-

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

pointment that will occur if I do not. The National Committee here wishes me to talk upon a national hook-up, and, of course, they will furnish the means. Your Mother is, of course, violently opposed to my coming to California, both for her sake and mine, and it may be that just as much good will be accomplished by the national hook-up as by appearances in the state. I am in doubt upon this subject. And the situation is complicated by my colleague, Downey. He has been loud in his denunciation of Roosevelt for very many reasons, but he left last night for California, and he told some people here that he was going to make some speeches out there for Roosevelt. He has no moorings of principle, and while a pleasant fellow to get along with, he will sneak one over whenever he can.

Would you wire me, or send me an immediate airmail letter giving me your opinion on the two methods of campaigning. I ought not to be so touchy about what people will say, but from the letters I have, a great portion of which, in my opinion, are propaganda, - there are many interested in my position on the presidential contest. This I could make perfectly plain by a national hook-up, but I doubt the efficacy of that method.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

We were delighted to have your letter concerning Philip, but I am oppressed by the thought of the boy in bed, trussed up with a long, bleak time ahead. I received a very nice letter from the Graysons in answer to my letter of thanks to them, and I note that each day they call on Philip. I think it is a fine and beautiful thing that they do, and have done. I do so fervently pray that the boy may get along all right, and emerge from his recent accident with a leg entirely cured. What about that? How does the recent accident affect his break?

I assume that Hiram reported for duty on the first. Is he happy in his position, and does it come up to his expectations?

Your Mother and I are both extremely nervous, but otherwise in fairly good shape.

I thought as I listened to Willkie the other night that he was doing better, but when I heard him at Pittsburg I thought he was infinitely worse. I think that he is a "gone goslin", and that it would take a miracle to put him in the race now. It is a case of

"Truth forever on the scaffold
Wrong forever on the throne".

My love to the boys and Miss Schow, in which Mother joins.

Affectionately,

DA

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EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
JAMES A. WHITE, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 10, 1940

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

My dear Jack:

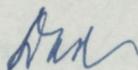
Phil Bancroft asks me to write a letter of endorsement for Assemblyman Raymond D. Williamson, who is seeking reelection.

Bancroft claims that Alexander Watchman is supporting Williamson's opponent - Edward M. Gaffney, and attacking Williamson's labor record. In a circular issued by Watchman, he says, in part -

"the present incumbent Assemblyman who now seeks reelection, was the campaign manager for the unsuccessful campaign of Bancroft, Associated Farmer, Number One labor baiter, hysterical supporter of Proposition #1, the vicious anti-picketing amendment that struck at the heart of labor."

Do you know anything of Williamson, and do you think I should endorse him and his labor record ?

Affectionately yours,



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EDWARD J. TRENWITH, CLERK
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 12, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

This is a skimpy sort of note sent at the end of the week because I have got to utilize my time tomorrow in writing a speech. It seems to me I said this to you a week ago, and I quite meant it, but every day there are so many people here to see me that I haven't had a chance to do anything that I wished.

I am in a tangle with the National Committee on my time. Martin and I agreed upon Friday night next at ten P.M., but late last evening there came notice from the National Committee that this time was not available. Martin, who was in New England traveling with Willkie, telephoned me this morning, and said, of course, I could not accept the time allotted by the National Committee - 8:30 to 9, and the making of transcriptions, and he would straighten out everything when he returned Monday morning. What I would like to do would be to come out to California, leaving here on the 19th and arriving in San Francisco on the 22d, or perhaps 23rd, but man proposes

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

and woman disposes. I will keep you advised of what we decide upon.

We received a pitiful little note from Philip the other day, - pitiful, not because he was at all downhearted, but because evidently the difficulty of writing enabled him only to write a line upon a piece of the District Attorney's paper. He claimed to be all right, but I am fearful that the old trouble will break out again with him, and I shudder at the consequences, if it does.

I saw a picture of Hiram in the Chronicle yesterday, and I thought it was fine. He is evidently a full-fledged deputy now, and I hope he is enjoying himself there.

With love to all, in which Mother joins, I am

Affectionately,

H.W.J.

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, October 20, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

Your Mother could not resist ringing you up to talk to you the other night. From the telegrams we have received we had quite a little triumph. There are over a thousand here now, and they are still coming in. The letters have just begun to come. The most amazing thing is that literally only five adverse wires have come, and so many fine ones that they have kept your Mother and myself in rather a lachrymose state.

I have been trying to get hold of what Downey said. He has been so bitter toward Roosevelt that I could not imagine him doing what he has. Roosevelt got him up to the White House, honeyed him up and down, and sent him out, but he is in a terrible fix. He assails my position, but he was an ardent advocate of Roosevelt and Johnson in 1912. You have, doubtless, seen the letter that he wrote to Farley this year in which he said he never would vote for a man who was a candidate for a third term. The letter would have precluded him from voting for Roosevelt

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

and Johnson in 1912, and precludes him from voting for Roosevelt now.

Another man whose record is equally rotten, and who plays the hypocrite in this matter is Norris. He made most of the speeches that were made when the Resolution condemning the third term was before the Senate, and then, of course, he voted for the Resolution. It passed the Senate two to one. He tries to say now that he took his stand with George Washington, and seeks to demonstrate ^{it} by some letter Washington is supposed to have written. But Norris was so bitter on the Resolution condemning a third term that no amount of casuistry can excuse him. He knows it, but still lies in trying to show he has not changed his mind. Now, all of this Norris record was sent to Girvin. Norris will leave for California this week and will speak in Los Angeles on the 30th. He is a thoroughly discredited character here by reason of his subserviency to Roosevelt. Perhaps he cannot be blamed because Roosevelt has given him everything he wanted in the Tennessee Valley Authority, and he is extremely grateful.

We have had our first snow, and your description of your weather seems like a dream. I can't tell you how sorry I am for Philip. As I understand you, the doctor

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

goes up today to bring him back. I hope he finds him
all right. Give the poor boy my love.

With my love to all the rest of the household,
in which Mother joins, I am

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 24, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

I received this morning yours of the 22nd, and was overjoyed to read the good news of Philip. May he continue to improve, and may the time of his suffering be shortened.

I wrote you about Sheridan Downey's speech, although I did not say all that I might have said concerning it. His professions of personal friendship have been very loud and overwhelming, and continued up to the day before he came to California, when he was called to the White House. I have said to you that he has denounced in unmeasured terms the President and the third-term. He has always claimed to be a member of the Bull Moose Party in Montana, and he was familiar, of course, with the charge that was then made against Theodore Roosevelt, and which he has always strongly denied. Roosevelt received a fraction and a half of the first term of McKinley, then was elected in his own right, and at the conclusion of his term refused another, although he could have been nominated and

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

elected with practical unanimity. Then, the interim of four years occurred, during which, of course, the whole machinery went to pieces, and it was then, starting from scratch, he became a candidate. I was going to send you a copy of his defense of his own action, and how he distinguished it from the ordinary third-term, but I presume the facts make it clear to you. I don't fear Downey, however. I am fearful of Norris. In the last eight years Norris has degenerated into an old man, still of some parts, and does not give a damn about the truth, or anything else. His whole life was wrapped up in the TVA and Roosevelt has been very kind to him. He tells a bed-time story, and tells it rather effectively, of how he sat in the White House, alone with Roosevelt, and told him, along with a whole lot of other mush, that he was leader of an army, that it was his duty to do or die, and not desert it; and the perspiration burst forth upon the brow of Roosevelt, and he did not answer - as I recall; but after the perspiration had burst forth upon Roosevelt's brow, Norris continued by saying it was his bounden duty to run for a third term; that he knows Roosevelt did not want to run; and then, after the perspiration burst upon Roosevelt's brow, Norris told him

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. -3

he (Roosevelt) was a prisoner in the White House, that the burden he was carrying was almost too much for any human being, and then the perspiration burst forth upon Roosevelt's brow; and then Norris told him that if necessary he had to die leading the fight. This is just the kind of stuff, with a little exaggeration, although not much, that Norris loves to indulge in now, and he does it designedly weeping, and really influences a great many people; and I can't say he is a liar, when only himself and Roosevelt were present, with the perspiration bursting forth upon the brow of Roosevelt, because it would be two against one, not counting the perspiration.

He was the bitterest man that spoke upon the Resolutation of 1928 against a third term, and said, in substance, it was fraught with grave danger to the Republic. However, this is enough of him.

I say to you, confidentially, that there has been a little backfire on the speech that I delivered last Friday night. Girvin telephoned me last night about Vallejo being aflame, and that the populace believed if Willkie were elected, they would not receive any more benefits, but if Roosevelt were elected, they would receive a due proportion of the favors yet to come. He wanted me to

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

make some statement that it did not make any difference who was elected, the benefits would go on to Vallejo, and it would be more prosperous, etc, but I declined to do this for I feared that if I were elected, and this community did not receive all that it thought was its due proportion of benefits it would look entirely to me as the guilty party. I received this morning a telegram from James F. Cheely, Business Agent, Sutro Iron Workers, Los Angeles, withdrawing their endorsement of me because of the speech that I had made. These are little rumblings out of which nothing may come, but which may cause something of a conflagration. Please keep your eye peeled for anything else of like nature.

The speech still overwhelms us here. The number of disagreements with it are negligible, and I am overwhelmed, and feel very humble at the innumerable wires and letters that are now coming in so extravagantly praising the address. The difficulty is that many of the letters want more, and I can not see the value of trying to duplicate what everybody claims, but which I know it is not, a great speech. Any attempt to amplify it would be an anti-climax. It is now ten days to the election, sufficient time if it were to have any effect, for this speech to have

Hiram W. Johnson, Jr - 5

have it, and my correspondents are so extravagant in their praises that I fear that there would be comparison of a later effort with it, which would be to the detriment of both.

With my love to Philip, Hiram, and Miss Schow, in which Mother joins, I am

Affectionately,

MWJ

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Sunday, October 27, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

Tomorrow, Senator George Norris reaches Sacramento, where he will remain Monday, and Tuesday be in San Francisco. In writing of him of late I have said he exudes poison now. He had some sort of a run-in with Willkie at one time, and evidently Willkie gave him the worst of it, and he has been just like a doddering old man, - He rouses himself into a fury, and can keep sustained effort for quite awhile. Now, this is not part of my fight, and I am writing you so that you may understand. It is wholly Willkie's fight. I have taken pains to write to Girvin and to the people in the south in detail the exact situation, but I think they are long on promises and short on performance. Their motto is "let George do it", and so I suppose they are paying little or no attention to Norris. He is a real danger to Willkie because of the poison he scatters about, and he is capable of maintaining a lugubrious demeanor while engaged in the process of scatteration. I have suggested to Girvin that Jack Neylan prepare himself

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to respond, not respond for me, and I want to make this perfectly plain, but to respond for Mr. Willkie, whose fight he is guarding in California, and I have sent both Girvin, and to the south, sufficient of the record to make a reply quite readily to Norris.

The responses to the speech that I made are still coming in. They are the most fulsome I have ever had. I don't think the speech deserves such praise, but I have been very glad, nevertheless, to have them. It would warm the cockles of your heart to read the innumerable letters that have come, as well as the telegrams, in respect to it. Now, a great many of these people ask me to come to California, and say I could change the result there. I have made up my mind not to come out. The trip is too arduous, and I don't think I could accomplish anything like these good people say. I am going to try to get on the radio again the end of this week. I don't think that will do any good, but it will be a substitute for the personal appearance in California, and let these good people - literally by the thousands - who have written me, feel that I have not let them down. Of course, no one man can transfer his political strength; and

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

then, in addition, I feel that if the speech that I have already made possessed any such attributes as many people have attributed to it, no other speech I would make would possess similar characteristics, and the delivery of it, would be simply an anti-climax. These good people have rated the first speech so high that it is not within the bounds of possibility for me to make a speech approaching it. I realize this is all damn nonsense, but it is so, nevertheless. I would like to get out of making another speech altogether, and let the situation rest as it is today. Let me know your opinion?

It is obvious that Willkie has gained some of late, but his gains would have to be enormous to elect him. I don't think it is within the realm of possibility that he can win this fight, and the cold-blooded "polys" here feel the same. He has made a gallant fight, though, and I would like to see him win, but I think the people who are now claiming success for him are simply whistling with the wind. What are the betting odds in California ?

Give my love, in which Mother joins, to Philip, Hiram, and Miss Schow.

Affectionately,

Wm

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

October 30, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

I have received this morning your note of October 28 in which you answer my question as to whether or not I should make another speech. I have about made up my mind that I will not do it, unless something should occur that would require me to act quickly. I will probably be one of the "minute men" on Monday (which makes me smile broadly) in the rally to be conducted beginning at midnight to one for an hour on the beginning of election day. Joe Martin advised me yesterday that they were thinking very seriously of calling the roll of the states, and have somebody respond for each one, and have him make a one-minute speech, and tentatively I told him I would go on the roll for one minute for California. This ceremony will take about an hour, and what in the world he expects to accomplish by it that early in the morning on election day I can't see, but I am willing to go the route. I hope that my one minute effort at that time may answer the press-

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ure that has been enormous on me to make all kinds of speeches. I really don't think that I could improve upon what I have done, and I have done it just far enough ahead, so that it has not been forgotten, and, according to my letters, they are playing the transcription all over creation. I listened to the transcription the other night, and I must be growing extremely deaf because I did not recognize my own voice. Although your Mother thought the voice came over splendidly, I could not see it at all.

Kennedy got back from the Court of St. James, immediately went into a huddle with the President, and last night delivered himself of a lying address. It has been rumored here that he is to be in charge of all our preparations and of the great building program. I don't know how true this is. If you will look at my letter of last February when he surprised me by a visit at my office, you can see something of his attitude then. It is now entirely changed.

Give our love to Philip. Tell him how we think of him, day in and day out. Tell him, too, I will be glad to write him some letters very soon. I am fed up with the politics, and with the annoyances that I have been

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

subjected to, although that which came from the speech I made was music to my ears.

It is six days now until election day. Although Willkie has made some gains of late, he is just clinging on by his finger nails in the big states, any one of which if he lost, he would lose the fight. I don't think it is in the cards for him to win, but I feel a great admiration for him in the fight he has made. I think very accurately you sized him up in your last letter - before the one today - . He just does not ring the bell, although at times he says things that are attractice. I should think the odds on the election would be at least five to one. They tell me that in New York they are seven to five now. If the election were held three months from now we might be able to carry California, but California is always some months behind in sentiment.

All my love, in which Mother joins, to Philip Hiram, and Miss Schow.

Affectionately,

H.W.J.

COPY

October 31, 1940

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, 3rd,
Attorney at law,
State Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Hiram:

In response to your note of October 29
I have airexpressed today to your friend, Donald
B. Robertson, Denver Tramway Corporation, Tramway
Building, Denver, Colorado, a transcribed record
of my radio broadcast of October 18.

Hastily and affectionately,

Your Grandfather,