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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

November 2, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

Of course our minds are filled with talks of the election Tuesday. The Willkie people have taken great heart from what they think are the gains of late, and really believe that he is going to be successful. Fulton Lewis told us last night (I mean privately) that the Gallup poll that will be published Monday showed a margin for Willkie, and the chances pointed to his success. I can't believe this, because perhaps I am too much of a realist. I still think Roosevelt will win, and win quite handily. The odds today, I understand, are eight to five, and seven to five on the general result in New York. These are the gamblers' odds, but it is noticeable fact that they gave Willkie on New York State a slight edge. He has got to carry every one of the states of consequence in order to win, and he simply can not do it, in my opinion.

We had two good examples of the southern Democrats published in the Baltimore Sun of yesterday; first

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

was old Glass who reaffirmed that he was going to vote the ticket of the miserable Democratic Convention; and second, it was related to me last night concerning Millard Tydings. He is the Senator from Maryland, and a very popular one. It was told me that he had come out for Willkie, and I thought this was a real gain; but when I read his statement this morning, he said that he would start in in January with an amendment to the Constitution to prohibit any one more than two terms for President, and he gets by with this sort of stuff. That there has been a real gain for Willkie is undoubted, but it has not been sufficient to elect him. By the way, I saw tucked away in the corner of a New York paper today that the odds in California were three to one for Roosevelt to carry it.

Hundreds of people have been wiring me for another speech, saying that it is very close in California, and that I could sway the result. It would not make any difference whether I could sway the result or not, I would speak again for Willkie if I were entirely certain that he would not subsequently talk at variance with what I might say. I felt safe on only one thing, and that is, the third

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

term, and Lord knows, that is sufficient. Willkie has *not* left us much else to talk about.

Do you know this has been a most wearing time with me? The propaganda from California, and that which was not propaganda, asking me first to fly out, and then to make other speeches, has had a very wearied effect on me; and then, when they began to pester Mother with wires from ladies all over California asking her to use her influence with me to come out there and make some speeches it got rather severe. I finally made up my mind I would do nothing more save the one little utterance election morning (from 12 to one) that I wrote you concerning. I did not see that I could accomplish any more, and the effort is rather difficult for me now, so I concluded to take your advice (?) about which you wrote me. I am a hell of a fellow to take advice - when it is my way.

Give our love to Philip, Hiram, and Miss Schow.

Affectionately,

dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

November 9, 1940.

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

My dear Jack:

Your letter of November 6 reached me yesterday. The postmarks on the envelope containing the letter were "San Francisco, November 6, 6 P.M." and " Washington, November 8, 8 A.M. ".

The reason Mother was so excited about the election was that she does not understand the thing at all, and when she learned, as I did, too, that they were taking out a spite vote on me with votes for Dyster and Anita Whitney, she got quite a bit ruffled. I think probably that reduced my vote by two or three hundred thousand. They did this in various ways that are too much trouble to detail now because they amounted to so little.

I was sorry that Ray Williamson was beaten. I had a note to make a statement for him during the campaign, but kept neglecting it until it was too late. It wouldn't have done any good anyway. This ought to teach these young men that no man can transfer his votes to

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

another in an election. I felt this was an indubitable fact, and so I was content to rest upon my only effort at a speech and a couple of very small attempts I made to say something for Willkie. I think from looking at the returns in the Call you enclosed that California proportionately has given Roosevelt the largest vote that he has in the nation. It is going to be hell here the next six months or a year. If we can escape the concentration camps we'll be fairly lucky. I know Roosevelt well enough to realize just how he is feeling. His is no humble spirit. He is feeling on the top of the world, and he is parceling out a number of people he wants to get even with. All the newspapers are talking unity (?). Unity with him means doing exactly as he wishes; cooperation, that you give your all to cooperating with him, and with no cooperation on his side .

I am not fit to write yet. Of course, I knew what the result would be, and I laughed at all the good people who were telling me what they were going to do in the campaign, but still, there is something even though you understand, that when you are hit you feel it almost as hard.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr - 3

Jack Neylan telephoned me night before the election. He told me Willkie was going to carry California, and he demonstrated it in forty different ways. I listened to him, and when he got all through, I said "Yeah". He said "You think I am crazy, don't you?" and I said "Yes, you are as crazy as a loon". He had all the young people engaged in ringing door bells and making an organized Willkie fight, seeing triumph just ahead.

The only time I got excited much was after the speech that I made, and I think I was justified in the responses that came in. Among them were the sweetest and finest letters that I have ever read, and more complimentary than any I have ever received. There must be some thousands of these, and it seemed to me that a great part of the electorate was thinking of the third-term as I was, and then, after a couple of days had elapsed, I thought, even though, thousands had written me, what a small part of the populace it was, after all. I think my head was level in not coming to California, as so many Californians requested, and not making another speech as so many others requested. When I got my feet on the ground after the first speech I never had much doubt about the course to pursue.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

This morning I went down to the Broadcasting studio to broadcast a few words about Judge Mathews in the dedication to be held in a week or so naming a lake for him, and establishing a memorial, in the southern California aqueduct. It brought back the speech I made October 18. There are lots of incidents that I will tell you when I come out. It looks as if there is about a 50/50 chance that we'll adjourn on or about the 18th. If we do, I am coming out, and I am going to rest and become able to sleep again. I can't sleep here, and when day in and day out you are afflicted thus, it soon puts a mark on you.

I do hope Philip gets along well. He is a mighty brave boy. Have they taken the x-ray you spoke of?

Give my love to him, and give our love to Hiram and Miss Schow.

Affectionately,

H.W.J.

COPY

November 9, 1940

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

Sonny:

I am writing you this in a rush because both Dad and I are anxious to have you to send to Fulton Lewis, Jr., who will be in Los Angeles on the 21st cards to any or all of the clubs to which you belong. They could be sent to the Don Lee Broadcasting Station in Los Angeles for him. I do hope you see him because we are devoted to him, and he has frequently been at the house to dinner, and he adores your Father so much, that I know you will see that he is well taken care of. I want him to know you, too, even though you are a pretty sassy boy.

I can see by the letter you sent that you evidently had poor Mrs. Klauser work her head off trying to get something. You do not give much about the final election. You probably had in mind the primary election - Ha! Ha! and lots of love and kisses.

Devotedly

P:S: Did Philip receive some Turkish cigarettes I sent him? Do not ask him or bother about it, but I am curious because some letters sent him to the hospital have been returned undelivered, and I am just curious to know if he got the cigarettes.

COPY

November 15, 1940

Mr. Philip B. Johnson,
University of California Hospital, Room 524,
Parnassus and Third Avenue,
San Francisco, California

My dear Philip:

I have been intending to write you ever since the election, and I am going to send you a very short note now, so that you will have heard from me, at least.

The election came out rotten, save from the personal standpoint, and I forgot all about that during the campaign. It is easy to look back and see the blunders of the campaign now that it is over. Some of these I saw at the time, and was outspoken in regard to them, but we had a singular candidate, - a man who was very pleasant, urbane, and suave, who made friends readily, but who was perfectly certain the Lord had taught him everything in relation to campaigns, although he'd never fought a single one. For instance, in the beginning of his campaign, he came to Los Angeles, - a territory which was distinctly against him, and had a beautiful meeting there. The crowd was variously estimated at from sixty-five to seventy thousand in front of him, and I listened very acutely to hear the blows he was going to give the other side; and, as I listened to him, my heart went further down all the time, and when he had finished, and had made his speech upon taxes I thought, 'O Lord, deliver us! '. Here was a crowd new to him, in a territory hostile to him, and if there is one subject, concerning which a mixed crowd is indifferent, it is the subject of taxes. We all have to pay them, and there is nothing that touched with such unanimity all the people, but we never think of them except when the time comes round for payment of them; and there is no subject which touches so many people, concerning which so few know anything. It struck me at once that Willkie was wanting in true mob psychology, and I found it so after.

COPY

Mr. Philip B. Johnson - 2

Again, he so circumscribed us that he left little or nothing for us to say, save the three term issue. He endorsed the foreign policy of Roosevelt, and I think the day before the election he wired London asking what we could do, short of war, to aid them. He was in favor of the Conscription Law, and he was a docile Democrat through 1939. With all, the last few weeks he made an excellent campaign, and had the other fellows scared to death. If the campaign had been six months longer, and he had had that time to adjust himself, he may have won, notwithstanding the almost prohibitive odds against him. You see he had a hundred and twenty five, or more, electoral votes against him to start with; he had a million regular employes of the Administration, and how many more, responsive to the various boards, agencies, etc., there is no means of telling; he had nine million people who were receiving the largesse of the government, and when you consider how far that reaches, one almost throws up his hands at the very figures.

They are now developing that a half million votes would have changed all these big states and given him the election. As it is, he received some eighty odd electoral votes, and that is all. I look back to 1912, when I was a candidate for vice-president on the Progressive Ticket with Theodore Roosevelt, and we had for a Third Ticket then eighty-eight electoral votes, more than Al Smith received as President.

Well, the election is over now, and the gentleman in the White House is laying stress upon unity. Unity means, according to him, that we shall immediately rush to cooperate in anything he says. Unity consists, in my opinion, of the hold-over in this country from the hysteria of the last few months, and it is all rot to preach the kind of unity that the Democrats are preaching now.

Mr. Philip B. Johnson - 1

COPY

By the way, in speaking of Democrats, I am reminded that next Monday or Tuesday, they will make an effort to adjourn instead of having our three-day recesses as at present. If they succeed in adjourning until the session begins in January I am hoping to come out to San Francisco. This will give us only a little over a month, and how I long for it.

We think of you very often, indeed. I think often of your brother. I am damned if I can make out whether he will be called, or not. I am hoping he will not be, for just as he is starting with his new work I'd hate to have him interrupted, but, down in my gizzard I feel that he is going to be.

You've had a terrible cross to bear, in which you have all your Grandmother's sympathy and love, and all of mine. We hope you are getting on all right, and bearing it bravely as you have done, thus far.

With all my love, in which Gran joins, I am

Your affectionate Grandfather,

COPY

November 16, 1940

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr.,
State Building,
San Francisco, California

My dear Hiram:

This is a rush letter so it will have to be short in consequence.

Fulton Lewis, Jr., is going to be in San Francisco on the 27th, at least that is the time he is scheduled to be there. He is a little shy, so you better leave word with the Don Lee Broadcasting people where he can reach you. I gave him your address, also your father's, but he may feel he is troubling you, so I would like for you to try to get in touch with him. He is to make a speech in Berkeley, and I thought you might like to drive him there and back. Do take him to see your house in Belvedere because I have talked so much about it. You will like him very much. He is a great big college boy, not much older. You are just going to be crazy about him. Please put yourself at his service. He has been extra kind to your grandfather, so please do this for Gran. Had a lovely letter from Frere this morning. Give him my love and tell him I will write him soon. Tell your sweet papa I am still awaiting Joe Zilch's answer.

Lots of love to you.

Devotedly,

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

November 17, 1940

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

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

My dear Jack:

Yours of November 15 reached me this morning. You are entitled to a smile over Jack Neylan's optimism. I must say that I have never heard a man so optimistic as he was prior to the election, and when I murmured to him once or twice Landon, he would give a snort, and say this was a horse of a different color this time, and go off into rhapsodies about Willkie carrying California. You know four years ago he was just as enthusiastic about Landon.

I was interested in what you said about Doctor Westphal, and the speech I delivered. I keep getting letters now about that speech, and just about in the language of the Doctor. I may say that I never suspected that it would go over as it did, and I have been somewhat astonished at the thousands of wires and thousands of letters have have come to me concerning it. The most enthusiastic praise is used by people, who should know better too. It is all very nice, however.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

I have not received any jerked venison from the Doctor. I will keep on the lookout for it.

I am glad you agree with me it was just as well I did not come out to California. Many people wanted me to fly out right away, and stump the state, and a great many more believed a couple of speeches there would do the job. I did not let my vanity run away with me, however, and I felt very certain nothing I could do would save California for Willkie. There was a great deal of disappointment among many people that I did not come out, but the election would have given them a different slant, and their ill-will toward me would vanish.

There was one thing that I worried about continuously, and that unfortunately I told your Mother, and she worried about it altogether too much. That was, the ability to lessen my vote materially because of my speech for Willkie on October 18. I could not find out what was being done in California, no living soul would tell me. I took it up with numerous people in the south, where I knew the particular elements were active, but all of them stood me off. My reason told me that they could not do anything that would really harm me, but that they might do sufficient to make my victory appear to be a very barren one.

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

I finally let the matter go. I see now that the plan was on, but I don't know what the dickens I could have done if I had known of it. In Los Angeles, for instance, there was something over six thousand votes for John Anson Ford, innumerable votes for Dyster, the Prohibition candidate, ^{until just before the election when he announced himself for Wilkie,} and Anita Whitney, the Communist candidate. I don't know how much damage they did in the north. And I don't know yet what vote I received, and I presume I will not until they notify me officially. I will be content with having been elected, and will brush aside the hope that I had of getting more votes than Roosevelt. Of course, with both nominations I should have had many more.

There is a most singular feeling regarding adjournment that I have ever observed here. Both sides, the Republican with unanimity, and the Democratic only less so, seem to think we ought to stay on the job, and while we cannot do anything with the three-day recesses, they feel unless some of us are present at each session, that there is likely to be put over on us some job. People don't want war, save the few organizations like William Allan White's, and the President, who are trying to edge us in so we won't know it until after it is accomplished. They could readily

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

dispose with the Constitutional requirements, and have some overt act get us fighting before a declaration. The congress will amount to less and less as the days go by, and the Executive will amount to more and more, until the time is ripe, and the people apparently favorable, and then crawling through some hole in the Constitution, or even using war as a cause, a dictatorship will be declared, and then we may all watch out. The President has been on the water the last two or three days. His guests are Harry Hopkins and the Attorney General, Mr. Jackson. Whenever these three are together, mischief is brewing, and within a few weeks we'll see in some plan presented, what they talked about. It is goodbye- in my opinion, to the good old government of the United States. I have talked with quite a number of people who were out campaigning both for Roosevelt and for Willkie. The are all pretty well agreed that the election went off on issues other than we thought. If you remember, I spoke of the insuperable obstacles that were in the way of Willkie's success. I did not stress them enough. It was these, added to which were the innumerable sums allocated to the different states for defense that did the

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 5

job. I believe that if the matter had been submitted to two men, utterly disinterested, neither with anything to hope or anything to desire, Willkie would have beaten Roosevelt an enormous number of votes. I wrote Philip the other day very hastily my views of the election. I made pretty plain Willkie's faults in the campaign, but I don't believe that I said anything about the enormous sums of money thrown into the campaign. I should add this to the reasons for the result.

I do hope Philip is coming through all right. Have they had new X-rays taken, or can they tell you whether the bone is knitting properly. I am somewhat worried about Hiram, too. I sent him some testimony that was taken at one time in the hope that it might clear up his situation. I'm damned if I can understand whether he is to be called or not, but I will bet a big apple that he is.

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

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

November 20, 1940.

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

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

My dear Jack:

Yesterday the House refused to adjourn. It is amazing the unanimity with which it was thought that they were going to vote adjournment. Just before they started voting I went over to the House, - something I seldom do - and saw Martin, the Republican leader, and certain Democratic leaders. They all seemed to think that the vote was going to be very close and there would not be more than ten majority either way. The Democrats were absolutely certain of their success. Martin was not. When the vote came forty odd Democrats had broken away from their party, and it was not even close. I came back a chastened man, and I have been thinking since what the distinguished gentleman will do. I think that if I can get some sort of agreement that they won't take the repeal of the Johnson Act up I will come home early in December and stay the month. I want to get back, if only for a month, but I don't want to leave that baby of mine without anybody to look out for it. The Democrats want to repeal it. The Administration wants to do

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

likewise, and it is only my strong right arm that prevents it. (?)

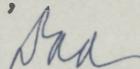
Another thing that I want to ask you about, and that is the loan upon the property here that constitutes our home. I have been paying 5% interest. The loan amounts to \$20,000. The interest I have been paying, therefore, is \$500 semi-annually. The principal becomes due February 18. I wrote asking the bank holding the obligation if they had any objection to renewing the loan. They were very courteous and answered finally that by payment of \$2500, which would reduce the loan to \$17,500 now they would renew the loan at 4½% interest. I remember you talked to me about getting a loan from the government once, but it went in one ear and out the other. Write me if you think I could obtain a loan from the government, and whether they would want to know all about your eye teeth, and what you did a year ago last night before they granted any loan at all. I don't want you to do anything toward getting a loan, simply wanted to get some information from you, and if you have it, I would appreciate it. I was thinking of telling them ^(the bank) I would pay the instalment they asked if they would reduce the interest on the remainder to 4%. This was just to do something and to make a drive for a little less interest. I don't want any dealings with the government, except

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

at arms length, especially at present.

With my love to the boys and Miss Schow, I am

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Dad'.

P:S: I have just learned the news of the death of
Mike Kelly, and I am awfully sorry about this.
One by one the old crowd vanishes.

COPY

November 21, 1940

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

My dear Hiram:

I have been trying to find out something about your status lately. I have not succeeded, and I don't know exactly what is going to be done with cases like yours. Inquiry of the Navy Department brought the information contained on the enclosed memorandum. It is my opinion that you will be called out within the next six months. It is true the President's order is required to call out your particular Reserves, and it is true the Department sees no immediate need for the special service of these Reserves, but once we have started the President playing with soldiers he is going to take advantage of all the power that he can, and he is given the power. I hope I may be mistaken in this, and that you have some other information that is more worthy of credence.

Hastily and affectionately,

COPY

Sunday, November 24, 1940.

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

My dear Hiram:

Thank you very much for your letter. It is pretty nice of you to be so kind about taking Fulton Lewis around. He is one of the finest young fellows I have ever known. He is a clean, high principled man and the kind I would like you to know. You are very wrong about his night-clubbing. He does not. He has a very charming wife and two lovely children. I thought he would enjoy seeing your house. You might take him to see Twin Peaks and show him San Francisco as best you can.

I wanted to say to you, but say nothing about it and maybe he will tell you. He has been so fair on the radio that a short time ago they were thinking of taking him off the air - I mean the Administration. If you edge around a little he may tell you the whole story. I wish your father would see him. Your father could give him his office number, and you your number. He will not be there more than a day or a day and a half, so you will not be bother long. He is anxious to get some more sponsors. Hastings and Co. I think sponsor him in Cal fornia, but I don't know very much about this. We think the world of him.

Now this is for you, young man because you take sides with your sassy father in his abuse of his mother. Just wait until I get out there and I will fix you. Better wear a board in your panties.

I hope Frere is getting along all right. I think of him every day and send him all the good thoughts I can. You may be surprised to find us at the station some day but we don't dare say any more because we do not now know. Tell your father show you my telegram to the sassy Joe Zilch.

With lots of love,

Devotedly,

COPY

Washington, D.C.,
November 27, 1940

Mr. Philip B. Johnson,
University of San Francisco Hospital, Room 524,
Parnassus and Third Street,
San Francisco, California

My dear Philip:

I have just completed paying for my transportation across the continent, and you are the first one I am sending the deep, dark secret to (it will be a deep dark secret for about six minutes) that I am bound for California. I expect to be on my way Sunday night, arriving in Chicago Monday morning, and then reaching San Francisco on the Forty-Niner Wednesday morning. Sometime during that fateful day I am going to the University of San Francisco Hospital, room 524, and see a wounded veteran there; so, don't be surprised when an old cadaver, leaning on a cane, walks in upon you. I am really filled with great anticipations to seeing you.

I have had a heck of a time arranging things so that I could come out. The chief obstacle has been the celebrated Johnson Act. There is a universal clamor in English circles for its repeal. Yesterday in the session while we were talking on three-day recesses, and the like, I arose and said I wanted to go to California to see my grandson who was in the hospital there, and I demanded to know whether anything would be done during the time I should be absent, and I was assured in open session there would not. To make assurance doubly sure, in the Foreign Relations Committee this morning I took up the matter again, and there was immediate and ready consent for continuing the whole subject until the next session, which begins on the third of January.

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I leave easy in mind, therefore, concerning this little bill of mine. When it comes up it probably will be repealed because so many people think that we ought to do everything asked by Britain now. While my sympathies, like those of everybody else, are aroused in favor of the British and against Hitler, and while I probably would go to great lengths to aid the British, there is just a feeling that the British have us on the run, and they will ask everything, and ask anything. So, I don't propose to let my bill be repealed without a fight.

Oh, how I long to get out and see my dear grandson, although I know I can't be of any value, still I want to see him, and talk to him. I don't know what about, but I want to talk to him. A broken down old man here is coming home. I'll be seeing you.

With all my love.

Your Granddad,