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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

July 4, 1930.

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

My dear Arch:

I am writing you on this, the fourth of July, because from this moment on I shall be intensely engaged in the Treaty fight. While I recognize that the contest is hopeless, it is well worth while, from the standpoint of one who looks forward to doing only what he deems the most appropriate for his country's welfare, and does not expect to serve for any very great length of time in public office. I am singularly alone in the fight. There are a few people who are with me, some of them are of little value in a contest, and others have only the slightest knowledge of what is at stake. It is this that finds me working today and in the next two days will find me very hard at it indeed.

Late last night, as you doubtless have seen in the press, we adjourned. We had an exhibition yesterday of what I have so often spoken of, - the utter cowardice and futility of the Democratic Party. We could have maintained some sort of dignity for the Senate, had the Democrats stood up upon the Veterans' Bill, and in my opinion, we could have compelled the House finally to have acted as the Senate desired,

and ultimately we could have passed the bill over the President's veto. The political-American Legion, however, frightened our Democratic brethren, and in the language of Mr. C.P. Huntington, they came down the bank and quit like a lot of dogs. However, apparently, that is part of the game concerning which one must be philosophical here.

Notwithstanding the hot weather, I think your Mother and I are in fair enough physical condition, although I confess to you I am at an end of a depleted vitality. My opinion is that in the special session, which meets Monday, we'll be hurried along because of the overwhelming vote against us, and that we are not going to occupy a very great length of time. There are various parliamentary modes in which we may indulge, and in which probably we'll indulge, but were I in charge of the other side, I feel perfectly certain all of these could be readily checkmated.

Of course, I will keep you advised of what is happening, but my opinion is we'll be ready to leave here in a couple of weeks, unless, in the meantime, we break under the strain.

At 10 o'clock this morning, there is to be a little ceremony in signing the Rivers and Harbors Bill, which was

in my charge, and which I piloted through the Senate in good shape. Watson, the leader of the Republican majority in the Senate, asked me last night if I would like to be a part of the ceremony, intimating that the White House would be very glad to have me there. I said to him I thought it better for both that I should fulfill a long-standing engagement this morning, which rendered it impossible for me to be on hand. I am now fulfilling that engagement.

Mother joins in love to Martha and yourself.

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN
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COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

July 4, 1930.

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

My dear Jack:

Of course, we were both affected by your telegram of the death of Victor. He was the dearest old boy that I have ever known. In my memory most vividly remains the picture of him at our abandoned house in Green Street, where he dashed between your Mother and me whenever I would touch her, and while he would look at me reproachfully and growl, he never attempted to bite or even snap. I see him in the days when you whistled over the 'phone and he went home. The tragedy of having dogs like Victor is the affection we acquire for them, and then their passing. Poor old Spartan, never in Victor's class, but a dear old fellow nevertheless, is on his last legs.

As you doubtless have observed by the press, we finished last night the regular session. We meet again Monday morning in the special session upon the London Treaty. There is an absolute determination to force us ahead with the greatest celerity to have this Treaty ratified at the earliest possible moment. The thinness of our lines will enable the opposition to accomplish their designs. I am writing this note to you on the 4th of July because the next two days I shall be very busy preparing for such parliamentary ^{moves} ~~methods~~

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as may be made. Unfortunately I have to do the whole job alone. There are a few people with me in the fight, but none of them with the keenness of interest that I have, and only one or two with any adequate conception of what it is all about. I do not think we'll be engaged for a very long time in the contest, and I am looking forward to leaving here in a couple of weeks, unless the strain breaks us. I have always prided myself on a fair amount of vitality, but I confess it has been very sadly depleted the last few months. Whether because of that, or because of age, or some reason that I do not know, I scarcely feel equal to the physical endeavor the fight upon this Treaty entails. I do wish, however, in what I now think is the closing term of my official life, to leave behind me, at least, a record of what I deem essential for the country's welfare. I have succeeded in making this record fairly well, in spite of the power upon the other side, the newspapers, and the propaganda. The Treaty was presented to us May first. The intention then was, and the expectation as well of those upon the other side, of having it ratified within the week. At least, I have made a case, which by a few of our people (the greater number of those who take any interest in the matter) is understood and appreciated, and I will see that this case is made upon the floor now. More than that, unfortunately, can not be done.

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The cur dogs in official life, who lick the boots of power, far exceed in number the Victors.

I was glad to see from your telegram that you left upon the KEMAH for a few days upon the Sacramento River. I hope that this will be the finishing touch in your complete recovery, and bring to you a return of your strength. Mother and I have been of course greatly concerned over your condition. We both pray you, my dear boy, to be very, very careful. We send our love to the dear kiddies and yourself.

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

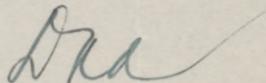
July 12, 1930.

My dear Boys:

I can't let the Saturday pass without a brief affectionate word to you. It has been a corking week, in which the weather was hotter than Tophet. I have had to sit in the Senate all day long without luncheon, keeping guard in the Treaty matter. With our very thin ranks we have done mighty well. How long we can keep it up, God only knows. My opinion is we'll break during the next week.

We're well, and we send you all our love.

Affectionately,



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

July 21, 1930.

My dear Boys:

Yesterday saw the end of our Treaty fight. The end of it was exactly as I had written you heretofore. We had one more vote than I expected, fourteen in all, probably fifteen with one of the doubtful pairs, but certainly the fourteen. There never was any question of the outcome, but I never have felt more proud of a contest in which I engaged. I'd do exactly the same thing if I had it to do over again. The fact that the Eastern press, with the exception of the Hearst papers and the Chicago Tribune, have berated me outrageously would no more deter me from entering into the struggle again, than it affected me in the slightest in pursuing my way in these past weeks. Hearst may be all that we sometimes think of him. We may have for him the utmost contempt in some of his activities, but he made here a real American fight. He did not make it as intelligently as it might have been made, but this was due not to him but to the lack of intelligence of his subordinates. I am old enough now to look at contests of this sort from an entirely different angle from that motivating most of my colleagues. The

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politics of the situation and the immediate triumph are of no consequence. The long range vision, and the effect upon the Republic are alone the contributing causes to my activities. I think that this generation is sowing the seeds of ultimate dissolution. With our knowledge of history, we can readily understand that in the life of the nation long decades, even eras, witness the slow process of decay. Neither you nor I, nor my grandchildren will see the end, but we have started on the way, which means ultimately dissolution. With this firm belief in my last years of official life I am glad to have done the little I could to have made the fight even if it preserved only ^A record. I have never said so many harsh things to my colleagues as I said to them during this struggle.

I faced them yesterday in the Senate Chamber, as I have in the past two weeks, voicing sarcastically an utter contempt for the most of them, and singularly enough the cowards liked it. Generally speaking, they came to me at the end of it, salving perhaps their consciences many of them, and told me what a magnificent fight I made, what a remarkable exhibition I had given during the past week. The thing has taken a great deal out of me. I am no longer able to without paying its repeat, toll what I have done in this struggle, and sit long weary hours on guard in the Senate, to go without my meals, to be ever on the alert, and to be ever ready to

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smash in bitter and contemptuous speeches. Last Friday, Mother sat in the gallery during the long day and evening, and it was ten o'clock at night when getting McKellar to "spell" me for a short period, I got down to the re^se^eaurant and ate for the first time since very early in the morning, an egg. The rottenest crew in the contest were the Democrats. They were really with me, but Robinson held them with an iron hand. The next rottenest crew were the American Legion, whose local national committee were with us, but whose national commander was bought by some favor from the President and refused to permit the Legion to take any attitude in our favor. The most disappointing element in the contest were the so-called Insurgents, who are at heart pacifists, and who believing that this Treaty "knocked into a cocked hat" the Navy were for it. However, the whole thing is done now, and it is useless to indulge in any descriptions of the contest, except as you may be interested in it. I do not say useless to indulge in vain regrets, because I have no regrets. The one statement I gave out yesterday, when the whole thing was over was that it was a great British victory, and I am not clear that even this was carried in the press.

Mother says it will take her a week to do the things that are essential at home before we can start for San Francisco. It is my hope then to come out to San Francisco.

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There is only one good thing that came out of the special session, and you can laugh at me at this. We put through a resolution for our mileage, and this mileage of mine amounts to about \$1200.00. I don't know how I would have been able to come out to California without it. It will enable me to meet some obligations here, and come back to our beloved San Francisco.

Mother joins in love to all.

Affectionately,

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

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 2, 1930.

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

My dear Jack:

I received your wire at Chicago. It was fine of you to send it. We had a good trip for two days, but the last day from Chicago here was wretchedly and miserably cold and disagreeable. I have just come down from the senate, and I presume within a very few days I will be in the old groove again here. We miss you all very, very much, and I am writing you this note merely to tell you that.

Mother joins me in love to the dear boys and yourself.

Affectionately,

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 6, 1930.

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

My dear Arch:

We were terribly shocked yesterday to receive a telegram from Jack of the death of Doc Dow. Today he has wired us some of the particulars. This was a lightning stroke very close to us, which affected us very deeply. My relations with the Doctor were always more than pleasant; indeed, generally speaking, he was a companion at play, and the only side of him I saw much of was delightful and congenial. I feel as if the little circle in the Mills Building, of which I was a part, death has entered, and when I recall that only a short time ago Gus passed, I have not only an intense regret for both, but a mighty solemn feeling, too.

I wrote you at once on our arrival here last Tuesday. I have not got into the old groove yet. I am not certain but what the activities in which I have indulged the last few months have dulled some of my enthusiasm for the life here. It may be purely climatic, and in a day or two I may have the old zest, but certainly in the three or four days we have been here, I have not felt quite as I used to. I am not

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writing you therefore of things that are transpiring here as yet. Doubtless, by the end of next week, the old interest will have revived, and then I will gossip with you again. Singularly enough Mother seems in about the same humor. Indeed, a singular weariness and lassitude apparently overwhelm both of us. The only one of our party who exhibited unrestrained joy at arrival was Tubb. Every move of his indicates his pleasure at being here again. I think probably it is because he gets the opportunity to run a bit. He has recovered his old time vigor and shows no result of his recent encounter, except the not entirely healed wounds he received.

It has been rather disagreeably cold since our arrival, much more so than, as I remember it, in late years. It seems to be the disposition on all sides to avoid an extra session, if it be possible, and this should enable me to be out in the latter part of March.

Do take care of your health. You are ever in my thoughts, and I am hoping and praying for the miracles that I really do not expect. Remember, my dear boy, I am always here with at least a heart full of sympathy and an intense desire to be of any possible service.

Mother joins in love to Martha and yourself.

Affectionately,

Dad.

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 12, 1930.

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

My dear Arch:

I received your letter written a week ago just after you had received the news of the death of Dr. Dow. I am still singularly affected by the doctor's passing. As I wrote you, I feel as if a lightning bolt had struck very close to us. I confess I really enjoyed the little childish pastimes in which I indulged with Mikulich and Dow, and sometimes yourself, and particularly ~~in~~ the last few months I could be with you in them gave me a very soothing surcease from activities that were very difficult for me. I have been wondering if the doctor's recent worries contributed to his death. I presume when a certain age is reached, there is a relationship between one's **mental** and physical condition. This morning we have the news of the death of one of the old members of the Senate, Overman of North Carolina, for whom everybody in the Senate, because of his years and his rather sweet disposition, had only kindly sentiments. He had reached an age, however, where sudden death might not be unexpected. I notice Dr. Dow's age was given as only 56. I have wondered just how old he was, and I am rather doubtful whether 56 count the full number of his years.

Hoover injected into the legislative hopper the World Court. This means another hectic and bitter fight, from which, of course, I do not shrink. It will be somewhat different from the hopeless contest we waged over the London Treaty, because some of the pacifists of the Senate, who hate every thought of a Navy, are opposed to the Court. And some others, who long ago were in the League of Nations' contest, yet hold their aversion to anything connected with the League. The Democrats regard the Court as a Wilson policy, and quite overwhelmingly will favor it. The principal opposition will come from the Republican side, and I think it will be a fairly formidable opposition. The country is permeated with organizations of poseurs of peace, who have been propagandizing through all the years, and who, aided by the international press, will probably whittle away some of the strength we now have. It will be a good fight in a good cause.

There is only one Eastern paper that publishes the Tanforan entries, the New York Times, and each night I have looked at the entries for the sole purpose of seeing the name of BRIGHT HOPES. I presume the poor little nag never recovered from her difficulties, and that is the reason I have not observed her entry. Tell me, when you get around to it, how she is.

Neither your Mother nor myself have become as yet acclimated here. I don't know just what is the matter with us, except that we are not ourselves. We are both hoping that a

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very few days will make the change essential, and that we can go on in the old way, but certainly up to date, we have been afflicted with an extreme weariness that is just depressing more than anything else. As I wrote you recently, the only member of the family, who glories in the change is Tubby. He has become his old self, and raises hell on every occasion, and displays an anxiety for investigation, and an inquisitiveness that if permitted to run outside our fence, would probably get him into most serious difficulties. I think the life in the hotel was quite irksome to him.

We have missed you very much. You were more than good to be with us as you were during our stay in California, and both Mother and I loved it.

Give our love to Martha, please, and we send full hearts to you.

Affectionately,

Dad

HIRAM W. JOHNSON, CALIF., CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 12, 1930.

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

My dear Jack:

I was under the impression that Hiram graduated today, Friday, and I was expecting to send him some little word of greeting and congratulation. I was surprised to have your telegram the other day that he was then graduating, and immediately upon its receipt I sent him a wire from Mother and myself. Mother sought to reach him at the Lowell High School with a very brief telegram, but I doubt very much if it was sent in time to catch him at the school. As you remarked when I was in California, this is an epoch in the lad's life. He enters a new phase now, one of the most interesting, and changes overnight from boyhood to young manhood. It seems incredible to me that time has passed so rapidly, and that he has attained the years now, which make him no longer our dear little lad, but a collegian. The next few, of course, will be trying years, for you particularly. You will have to keep in mind just what we were when a new world was unfolded to us, and the singular feeling we had for the period from which we had just emerged. A youngster's relationships change, and his outlook, even in respect to those about him, is essentially different. You are

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. in relation to the proposed purchase of the land owned by the State of New York, and in reply to inform you that the same has been referred to the proper authorities for their consideration.

It is the policy of the State to dispose of its lands in the most advantageous manner, and it is the duty of the State to secure the highest price for the same. It is therefore necessary that the purchase of the land should be made in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
 Your obedient servant,
 J. B. Thompson, Jr.
 Secretary of the State

My dear Sir:

Very respectfully,
 J. B. Thompson, Jr.
 Secretary of the State

December 15, 1890

RECEIVED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE
 DECEMBER 15 1890
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE
 ALBANY, N. Y.

RECEIVED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE
 DECEMBER 15 1890
 OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE
 ALBANY, N. Y.

COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE

John B. Thompson, Jr.

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singularly fortunate, however, in having a boy of ^{poise} ~~boys~~, with stability of character, and if you can adjust yourself to the altered situation, which does in no degree modify the affections, I think you may have even an added pleasure in his new activities. Perhaps you will read what I have written with some degree of impatience, but ascribe it to the fact that I imagine, with an added generation through which I have passed, ~~I fondly believe~~ I see things with a greater clarity.

The death of Dr. Dow still depresses and oppresses me. In the childish pastimes in which I indulged with him and Mikulich I greatly enjoyed myself, and then again, my relations with him were exceedingly pleasant; but what appalled me, as I wrote you, was that the blow fell so close to us. I have had many very strange thoughts of late, and these doubtless have been caused by the fact that since my arrival here I have been obsessed with the feeling of ~~Creeping~~ age. Today or tomorrow I probably will write you of my personal affairs, merely that you may put it away and have it.

With the lugging in of the World Court by Hoover, I will be in another difficult, and perhaps losing fight. We're in better shape, however, than we were concerning the London Treaty, for some of the pacifists in the Senate who were against anything relating to the Navy are against this League of Nations' Court; but the propaganda and the press will whittle away some of the opposition, and the pressure

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of both political organizations will be utilized to the full. However, I do not shrink from a losing fight, and in this contest, there is some hope. One of the factors that may aid is the present unpopularity of Hoover. On the Republican side, he is practically friendless. Party hacks of course will do as they are told, but if a secret ballot were taken upon the Republican side of the Senate, I do not believe that Hoover would have five votes. Privately, those who are leaders on the Republican side say that if he is renominated in 1932 he will be defeated, unless, of course, some unforeseen change shall occur within the next year.

I observed Goldman ~~and~~ Sachs was quoted at $6\frac{1}{2}$. I have heard nothing of the matter since I left San Francisco. You will remember that at your instance, Mrs. Bowles called upon me, and talked to Theodore and myself of her situation. She wanted nothing done because she feared first that any activity on her part might affect the bank, and secondly, after her second call, she believed that on the first of December Sachs would make some proposition in relation to the stock, or for transferring ^{the} bank to local stockholders. When I departed from California, the matter was thus left. I deem this your case. I do not think that Mrs. Bowles, unless with the passing of time her views altered, will wish to engage in any litigation; but I think you ought to keep in touch with her and the situation, and if she makes up her mind finally to fight, whatever you and Theodore deem appropriate ought to be done, with you

4.

in conjunction with us as attorneys. I rather think Devlin and Williamson ^{are} ~~are~~ determined to begin ^a ~~a~~ case if they ^{can} ~~can~~ not get some settlement out of Goldman ~~and~~ Sachs or the directors of the Bank. The first thing that we advised Mrs. Bowles was that if she desired to proceed, she ought to proceed while Sachs was in California, that there might be personal service upon him. This unquestionably was the view that Devlin and Williamson took; and as I told you, I think, they obtained a written stipulation from Sachs before his departure, that in case action was commenced, service might be made upon Goldman ~~and~~ Sachs by service upon Nion Tucker. Allan Chickering represents Goldman ~~and~~ Sachs, and he will talk to you, as he did to me, concerning the paper executed. I hope you not only keep in touch with this matter, but if Mrs. Bowles calls upon Roche, that you will be a part of every conference and consultation.

With my very great love to the boys and yourself, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,



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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 26, 1930.

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

My dear Jack:

This morning I received your long letter of December 23, and also your airmail letter of December 21. I am writing you hastily now concerning the Goldman-Sachs matter. Of course, I am ready to go to New York and take this matter up. Like you, I think, however, a definite policy should be agreed upon before we enter into any conference. I have this morning a letter from Theodore, in which he says that Devlin and Williamson are coming east, and will probably see me, and asking me to wire him whether I could go to New York and participate in a conference with Devlin and Williamson and the Goldman-Sachs Company. I gather from his letter that he has the same opinion we have, - that before conferring with them, we should have a definite plan of action, or a definite proposal or statement, concerning which we should be rather firm and unyielding, and ultimately give Goldman-Sachs Company the alternative of accepting what we propose or taking the consequences of a lawsuit. The difficulty in the matter before I left, and as I think I wrote you, is that what should be done by our own end of it, is wholly in the air, and there is no certainty that Mrs. Bowles, the only one in reality

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

that we would represent, has the determination to state what she demands, and if her demands are not granted, go through with an action. The difficulty, too, lies in the fact that we were all, before I left, perplexed about the kind of action to commence. All these things may have crystallized in your various consultations. I am writing you now, sending the letter by airmail, which will bring it to you, I assume, Monday morning, that you may know I am ready to do anything that you and Theodore may agree upon, and that I strongly advise the end toward which you are working, getting the stockholders together, with a very small executive committee, sympathetic with you, who will be authorized to determine the course to pursue, and who have the guts to go through if once they start. I will wire Theodore that I stand ready to go to New York at any time. I don't want to go there with a mere bluff, though, and I would like that those, ultimately we are to represent, would agree exactly upon their course, and then go to the bat, and go through.

Tomorrow I will write you my usual Saturday letter.
With love to the boys, and lots to yourself,

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 27, 1930.

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

My dear Arch:

Yesterday I received your note of December 22 expressing yourself in such sweet fashion concerning my World Court speech over the radio last Saturday night. My trouble on the radio is that I want to compress so much into the time given me, and therefore I speak so fast. Nearly everybody who has spoken to me about the matter tell me I talk too rapidly, and I am quite aware of this. The Columbia Broadcasting System here paid me a very high compliment Saturday night, because I ran over my time two and one-half minutes, and notwithstanding their program all over the East, they let me go on.

We're all in the air here about what will happen upon adjournment, March fourth. The President does not want an extra session, and nearly all the Senate are opposed; but rows are becoming so numerous and so fierce that it is impossible for us to tell what may happen. The man in the White House has no conception at all of what he wants to do, and he is so timid and so wobbly that he wishes to pursue one course one day, and another, another. I should not be surprised at anything happening. It may be that the Foreign Relations Committee will about face. We are skating on very

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 2

thin ice there in the matter of the postponement of the League of Nations' Court. It may be that Hoover will make up his mind that a special session will cause us some discomfort, it may be that a certain group in the Senate will get so sore and disgruntled that they will force a special session in any event. I am therefore unable to say with definiteness, as I expected I could by this time, just when we will be out.

Of course, it was a very great pleasure to talk to you all Christmas night, but afterwards I was filled with an infinite sadness. I had a letter from Jack yesterday in which he mentioned how Dow's estate had shrunk to almost nothing. The estates (?) of the rest of us long since shrunk to the other side of the line, and must be preceded by a minus sign. I wish I could impress upon you that there are worse things than this, however. If we had to go about, as some poor fellows we know, dragging one leg, or fighting for breath, we might with justice spend our time railing at our fate; but when we have the ordinary vigor of manhood, and with the ability to think, not well, but rationally, and the ability to earn enough for subsistence and existence, we have not very much stamina, or strength and stability of character, if we spend our time crying for the moon. However, I presume it is a trait of human nature to weep for that which we don't need, but which we want because somebody else has it.

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 3

You may readily understand, my dear boy, how interested I am in anything you do, or in any thing in which you are interested,, when I tell you that I ~~was~~ looked every day at the New York Times to see whether or not your horse was in the Tanforan races. I suppose the poor little thing did not recover from her sickness, and that is why she did not start. What are you doing with her anyhow?

I may just as well admit to you that we had a hell of a Christmas. Your Mother and I were wholly alone, and we did nothing but talk of the rest of you during the day. Our only bright spot was at night, to which we looked forward with such intense expectation, and when we were told by the telephone company that there was trouble out of Chicago, and that we would be delayed at least two hours, we were heart-broken. We determined, however, to wait as long as possible to get through to you, and it was a short time after that when we were able to make the connection.

I wrote you last Sunday very briefly. You can't realize how hurt your Mother and I were because we had no letters from you. Up to yesterday when your brief note about the radio speech came, we had had one brief letter from you, and none from Jack, although each week he has sent quite a lengthy night letter. I have been pretty hard at it here, and yet I find time regularly to write both you and Jack. We left California four weeks ago yesterday, and it is rather a long time to go without hearing, except in the briefest

Major Archibald M. Johnson - 4

possible way from our dear loved ones. Yesterday, Jack's good letter came, and also yours of December 22nd. I used to plead with you to send us a note once a week, if it consisted of only three or four lines. Remember, my dear lad, our hearts are in California, and we are no longer young and our principal topic of conversation is of those we care for in California. Once a week, therefore, can you not send us just a few lines about yourself? I think with that telepathic understanding I have of you I have some realization of why you don't write; but please let nothing interfere with sending us some brief word.

Mother joins in love to Martha and lots to yourself.

Affectionately,

Dad

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

M. A. CONNOR, CLERK

December 27, 1930.

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

My dear Jack:

I received your good long letter of December 23 yesterday. It was really fine to have it. Immediately I wrote you concerning the Goldman-Sachs matter. I am perfectly ready, as I wrote you yesterday to go to New York, as Theodore suggested, but as I said to you, I think I ought not to go there on a bluff, but with a definite plan of action, to which I would very accurately adhere. I think that the directors had an awful nerve to make any proposition to Goldman-Sachs without consultation with Mrs. Bowles, or others, who were great losers by the fraud. Some of these stockholders should be relieved of any compunctions they feel about going after their own directors as well as those who represent Goldman-Sachs Company. I notice what you say about Pioda threatening suit against the Bank. I wonder if this is on account of Goldman-Sachs stock, or relating to the old transactions concerning ~~the~~ Golden State Milk Products. It would be bully if you and Theodore could come east, and we would together go to New York. Of course, it is perfectly useless to suggest that Theodore come. The very

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr., - 2

thought of a trip outside the borders of the State frightens him to death, and he could not be persuaded under any circumstances to undertake such a mad venture. In my telegram to him, I suggested it, realizing its futility. It would be bully, though, if you could come, and together we would go to New York and talk "turkey" to these birds, and have a few days together here too. If you get together your organization, there is no reason why there should not be finances enough profitably for you to take the trip. Think it over.

It was a shocking thing to read of the shrinkage of Doc Dow's estate. It seems simply impossible. I presume the Hamilton lands you refer to, are those in Colusa and Glenn Counties, and of course, they must be a great burden. It is a singular sort of coincidence that in talking about the matter, your Mother and I thought that the wise thing those interested in the River Gardens Farms should do, would be for you to take the Doc's place and manage the corporation. I hope that you do, and I hope that the remuneration will be such as to relieve your mind. I think, of course, that you are quite right in insisting that the Honolulu stockholders, who I understand are the heaviest, agree in advance to everything you desire. Of course, I don't need to tell you of the necessity in dealing with people like McCandles, to have a definite, written contract for a specific period of time. I should think John McNab

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr., - 3

would be sympathetic with your views. I saw something of him, as probably you know, in the Baird estate. He has one thought, and that is, the money he can derive from any particular transaction. However, he was not difficult to deal with, and when he realized he could be taken care of financially, he was very anxious to close the transaction. Again, I say I think you are wise if you can make suitable arrangements, to take the job. You can do it in connection with your law business, and while the periodic trips may be more or less a strain upon your vitality and patience, you grew somewhat accustomed to that sort of thing in connection with your own agricultural venture.

Mother and I had a miserable Christmas. We spent our day wholly together and alone, and we thought and talked only of you, and our loved ones in California. In state we dined alone, and we maintained a pretense of course in keeping with the day, but our hearts were far away. The time could not pass quickly enough for us until evening, and when the telephone company notified me that there was trouble at Chicago, and they did not know when our call could get through, that there ^{would} ~~may~~ be a delay of a couple of hours, we were heart sick. We determined to sit up anyway, and take our chances, and fortunately they got us through a little after eleven. Then was our only Christmas, - the few minutes we were talking with our children and our grand-

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

children. This rather atoned for the rest of the day. It gave us the sweetest pleasure that human beings can have, but afterwards an infinite sadness.

For both you and Hiram it doubtless is better that he go to the University of California. If we could have put aside our love for him, and thought of him solely as a lad of amazing possibilities, who should be trained accordingly, I might have preferred to have him go to Harvard, or possibly Yale, or Princeton. But life is too short, after all, to disregard the sentimental side. I am sure that you and he will have pleasure in his choice of the College, and I think his companionship, even though he is undergoing the inexorable metamorphosis of nature, will be the sweetest and most consoling thing to you in the days to come.

It was very good of you to wire me after the radio speech I made on the League of Nations' Court. My difficulty in making ~~this~~^a radio speech is compressing what I want to say in the time accorded me. The Columbia Broadcasting System was very kind here by not shutting me off, notwithstanding its programs all over the East, at the exact minute, but permitting me to run two and one-half minutes over my time. I talked so rapidly, however, that many people here have told me, it detracted from the delivery. I am also this past week in the Fox movietone, where I did a better job than in the early part of the year when I went in the movietone

Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr., 5

upon the London Treaty. The only distracting thing about the movietone was that it had to be made in the open at the Capitol here, and the morning it was made, it was bitterly cold with a high wind blowing, and my hair blew all over my head, so that it detracted somewhat from the pulchritude your Mother prizes so highly.

Mother and I received your good Christmas notes yesterday. Please send us once a week at least a few lines. We're in an awful mess here, and nobody can tell exactly what is going to happen. We may adjourn on the fourth of March, without the necessity of returning here until December, and we may be forced into an extra session very soon thereafter. With the nastiness that has developed here, it is utterly impossible to tell just what will occur. I have fondly imagined that I would get out in the early part of March and be able to remain until December. I am not certain now.

With our love to the boys, Miss Schow, and lots to yourself from Mother and myself,

Affectionately,

Dad

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Hiram W. Johnson Papers
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December 30, 1930.

Hiram W. Johnson, III.,
973 Green Street,
San Francisco, California

My dear Grandson:

It was a fine and an interesting letter that you wrote to Granny and me, and I want you to know how very welcome it was to both of us, and how very, very much we both appreciated it. I have been hoping that you may find time occasionally to write to both of us from now on, and that you and I will become regular correspondents. This may be impossible because of your studies at the University, and if these studies do interfere with any such plan, of course, we can not complain. Really, my dear boy, to hear from you is a great pleasure for Mother and myself, and the pleasure your letters give us is quite beyond description.

You know, there are certain stages in one's life, certain changes mark the periods; and you are emerging now from one into another. It is very difficult for me to realize that you are not still a little boy, that you are now approaching young manhood, and that the changes which come to all of us, have imperceptibly brought to you, apparently, overnight the metamorphosis from school-boy to collegian. As the law of nature takes us from one period to another, we ourselves scarcely notice it,

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it is a rather lamentable thing that it requires old age to have anything like an adequate understanding. You are so equipped mentally, however, and so fortunate in your attainments, that I sometimes thought you may be the rare exception, which will enable you even at your age thoroughly to understand yourself. If this you can do, you have solved the biggest problem that comes to human beings.

I wrote your Father the other day that I thought, on the whole, your decision to go to the University of California was wise. My affection and pride had led me the last few months to think somewhat along the English view and endeavor to "fit" you for a very high place in your future activities. This was because I thought there were limitless possibilities for you. I dreamed that I might live long enough to see my grandson occupying the highest positions of usefulness and worth. I had grown therefore to the idea I would like to see you go to Harvard, because, after all, its opportunities are greater and its intellectual horizon I think broader. Doubtless, though, it would not be just to your Dad, who thinks so much of you, to deprive him at this particular times of the pleasure he has in being with you, and perhaps it may not be wholly fair to you, to send you from a home, which, apparently, you prize, so highly to a life wholly among

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strangers. The decision having now been made, write me, please, what you are particularly devoting yourself to in your studies. I would prefer, of course, history and political economy for you, with what is essential in English, and a thorough mastering of at least one language.

You see I am writing to you in very different fashion from what I have written you in the past. I used to write you as my little boy and grandson. I write you henceforth as man to man, to my dear grandson still, but to one whose mental faculties need no writing down to.

We have been having a merry old time here in the congress. Most of what has been done is the bunk, and I have little interest in it. We lack the statesmanship to deal adequately with the very serious problem of unemployment. We make our gestures by appropriations, which may accomplish a little, but which can not reach the root of the disease. I am not quarreling with others for what they do, because I admit very freely I don't know what to do myself. Our country, in common with the world, has been suddenly hit hard. Nobody knows why, and none yet can tell when the wound will heal. It leaves us all numb and confused.

We no sooner got back here than the agitation was commenced again for the condemnation of our home for Government purposes. I don't know how far it will get, but I imagine it will not be a great while before it will

Hiram W. Johnson, III - 4

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actually occur. At first I worried greatly about it, but I think now I am regarding it with some degree of equanimity.

Upon our return the happy one of our party here again was the little doggie you all dislike. He showed his joy in every way a dumb animal could, and I think that he has been delighted to get out of the fifteenth story of a hotel and again be in his own home. He has completely recovered from his bite. I was hoping that his encounter with Rolland would teach him a lesson, but I think probably he has already forgotten it.

We have had two snowstorms since our return, and it is really beautiful to see the ground gradually whiten and the air full of flakes. There is every indication of an extremely ^{cold} difficult and bitter winter. I have been hoping of course to get home in March, but everything here is so uncertain that I am by no means clear that I can get away then.

While I was talking on the radio the other night, I kept thinking of you boys, and wondering if you were listening. If ever I talk again, I am going to wind up by saying goodnight grandchildren, even though it is against all the regulations. I talked into the movietone here recently, and the Fox people have been showing it at the local theatres throughout their circuit. I think I did a little better job in this than I did on the London Treaty.

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Hiram W. Johnson, III - 5

Again let me thank you for your letter, and
express the hope that you may continue to write us.
Give Granny's love and mine to your Dad, and to
Philip, and to Miss Schow.

Affectionately,