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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

November 21, 1934.

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

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Until the receipt of your telegram I did not know that the SAUSALITO HARBOR PROJECT had not been finally adjusted, for the reason that upon his return from California, Secretary Ickes asked for the file, and told me he was going into it personally, and would write to the Senator. I know that Harry Slattery handed him your letter of October 19th.

This morning, first I saw Harry Slattery. He had the complete file of the case. The letter of October 19th apparently had been acknowledged, in a sort of "form" letter fashion by "Thoron" for the Secretary. In the file Mr. Slattery had copy of Secretary Ickes' recent letter to the Senator, and also the Senator's letter to Mr. Ickes under date of November 17th.

Mr. Ickes claims personally to have gone into the case, and to have found it exactly as he reported in his letter to the Senator. Harry Slattery expressed the opinion that he had a suspicion there may be some individual in some division prejudicial to the project, but Mr. Ickes says he hardly thinks so. At any rate, what they now plan is to get a financial man, and a legal man, in no way connected with PWA, but from another department, place the complete file before them, and have them render a report, without any knowledge of the report that has been made upon it. This is to be done at once. This was Harry Slattery's suggestion, in which Mr. Ickes acquiesced, as Mr. Ickes says he will be very glad to be convinced that the project is otherwise than as reported in his last letter to the Senator. I am to be advised when the above investigation is completed, and of course, I will promptly advise you.

Sincerely yours,

M. Connor

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

December 18, 1934.

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

My dear Jack:

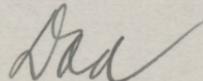
I take it, of course, it is thoroughly understood that there will be no gifts exchanged by any of us Christmas. I am writing this note merely to make assurance doubly sure. None of us is in any position to indulge in appropriate gifts, and in addition, they're really not necessary to express the very great affection we all cherish for one another.

I am back in the office as usual, and find, of course, an enormous number of Californians here, anxious either to obtain something for their particular localities, or jobs for themselves.

I don't think the plans of the Administration for the next session have yet crystallized wholly. I hope to know more about them tomorrow, when I expect to go to the White House.

Love to the boys and Miss Schow, in which Mother joins,

Affectionately,



HUBERT D. STEPHENS, MISS., CH. AN
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.
MORRIS SHEPPARD, TEX.
ROYAL S. COPELAND, N.Y.
JOSIAH WILLIAM BAILEY, N.C.
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FELIX HEBERT, R.I.
ERNEST W. GIBSON, VT.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

December 22, 1934.

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

My dear Jack:

I may not have the opportunity to write you tomorrow, so I am sending you this note of the events of the first week of our return.

The weather has not been bad, - a little colder than we have it in San Francisco, but not so cold as to interfere particularly with one's movements. This town is wild with Christmas, and apparently the shops are doing as much as ever before, and the populace rushing about in the manner Americans do at this season of the year vieing with one another in being fooled into buying something they don't need for somebody who does not want it. Of course, in the National Capital, where many thousands of new jobs have been created, and where Uncle Sam acts as paymaster to those who reside here, the depression is felt much less than any other place in the country. The wage slaves complained bitterly of a 15% reduction, and even of a restoration of two-thirds of that, little understanding how much better off they were than any other part of the nation. At any rate, the stores are

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jammed, and it is most irritating to go through the traffic. To one as old as I am the quiet of home is singularly appealing.

A great many of the Congressmen and Senators are here, and I found exactly what I expected, that the "Yes" men and the "rubber stamps" have been so multiplied by the election that there will be little independence in the forthcoming session, which means little real consideration of the legislation proposed by the Administration. It needs no argument to demonstrate that this is an evil thing in a democracy.

The big event with your Mother and myself this week was dining with the President Wednesday evening. In his usual very charming way he asked us to come to him, and we had one of those intimate dinners and conversations afterwards that are so much more pleasant than the big routs. His daughter, Mrs. Dall, and his confidential secretary, Miss LeHand, your Mother and myself, aside from the President himself, were the only ones at table. For a couple of hours after dinner we chatted of various subjects. I think I have mentioned to you in the past that apparently he had no political resentments, and I have been rather surprised at times that he would meet people whom he knew to be against him seemingly with the same good fellowship as those who were loyal and attached to him. I recognized long ago in my first conversations with

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him that he had an infinite cunning, and this probably was his protection against some who were treacherous or would conspire against him. In chatting with him intimately the other night I found that my idea that he was without resentment was a pure illusion that probably he himself had designedly created. He told with the greatest gusto of the Gridiron Dinner. Having learned that Mencken was to be the other speaker on the occasion, he had his secretariat gather together a lot of Menckenized stuff, deriding the American people and their intelligence, and generally in the unfortunate fashion that distinguished Sinclair, denouncing everything and everybody. He took Mencken on very cleverly by lauding him as a great writer, and then giving instances of his literary skill by reading the newspaper articles he had written about our people generally, their ability, their learning, their habits, etc; and some things he had said about the press and the correspondents, which showed his absolute contempt and disdain for them. He said if he had to wait ten years he would get back at Frank Kent of the Baltimore Sun and Arthur Krock of the New York Times. I was very greatly surprised at these utterances and the vigor and earnestness with which he spoke, but inasmuch as our views coincided concerning these very distinguished newspaper correspondents, naturally I was not very greatly displeased. It was, however, a new side of Roosevelt's

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character that he had kept, apparently, in check at other times, and it explained to me something of his attitude toward Cutting in the last campaign, concerning which I had the temerity to ask him. He had forgotten apparently of the service that Cutting did him in 1932. He did not mention at all the sacrifice ~~that~~ when Cutting supported him, it seemed that irrevocably he had made. He remembered only that Cutting had been forceful and bitter in debating concerning the veterans. He imagined ~~that~~ in that debate Cutting had held him up as one who little remembered the men who had been wounded or broken by the war. It was perfectly plain that the Democratic activities in New Mexico against Cutting had been not only with his consent, but doubtless from his orders, and while I had realized that this was the fact from my long distance telephonic conversations with Farley, I was sorry to have this confirmation. I don't know just what it will mean with the contest before the Senate, but I do think that it is small, and ungrateful, and cruel, and what little I can do to prevent an injustice being done Cutting here will be done.

The President is going to send in the World Court at the beginning of the session. I expressed my regret and told him that while I realized the power of the top-heavy Democratic majority in the Senate, if I were wholly alone, I would make the fight. He said, personally he did not care

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about the World Court, one way or the other, but adherence to it had been included in the Democratic platform, and for that reason, he would act. This will give me a difficult task at the beginning of the session, and probably an overwhelming defeat. However, "thrice armed is he whose cause is just", and the fact that I am certain to lose, does not very greatly disturb me.

I am greatly disturbed over the suggestion the President made concerning relief, and the plan he had in mind for employing in useful work those now unemployed, who were upon the relief rolls. It is quite possible that with the innumerable agencies at his command, and the investigations that have been made by experts of every character, he may accomplish in the manner he suggested what he seeks; but the scheme, at first blush, seemed to me as bizarre as anything Upton Sinclair has suggested. I am not going to write you now of this matter, because it may not crystallize into a definite policy, although he spoke as if his mind were made up. I will talk to you about the subject later on, and leave it as a sort of addenda to a connected story, of which this is the beginning.

We had a good time, really a delightful time, and I think it is very, very kind of Roosevelt to have us with him in this fashion. He addresses your Mother always as "Boss",

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and in his utterances to us is always kindly and intimate, and with his rare personality, and unerring good sense and good humor, he is the most pleasant of companions.

We found Joe and Fong had the house spic and span, and had done a great deal of work with the fence and the yard, and in painting the woodwork of the exterior of our home. I was very greatly worried for fear that those who hold the trust deed upon our dwelling would insist upon a partial payment of the principal which is due the first of February, but I have a letter from them now in which they say they will renew the obligation. I presume they will do, as in the past, demand a bonus for the renewal, but this I can not avoid, particularly in times such as these.

Since our return I have not heard from, nor seen Mr. Ickes. I noticed by the press that he was suggesting the return of Colonel Waite, with whom the publications hinted there had been some rupture when Waite left the Department. I got to like Waite, and I would be glad to see him back.

I received this morning your wire in answer to mine about your dinner Tuesday night. We are going to telephone you because both of us really want to. I will send you detail by wire. I have been hoping to hear from the boys or from you concerning their examinations, but I presume they don't know yet their markings. I hope everything comes out well with them.

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Mother joins in love to the boys
and to Miss Schow, and both of us, of course, at this
particular time send all of you the usual Holiday greetings,
but we send to you, my dear boy, very much more, not in
material gifts, but in boundless love.

Affectionately,

Dad

HUBERT D. STEPHENS, MISS.
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.
MORRIS SHEPPARD, TEX.
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FELIX HEBERT, R.I.
ERNEST W. GIBSON, VT.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Sunday, December 30, 1934.

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

My dear Jack:

This, Sunday, morning, there came to me here through the mail your two letters of December 26th and your letter of December 28th. I presume the Christmas deliveries have made the difference in time, which you will observe from these letters. I read your first letter with care, and I observed that the matter of most consequence has now been taken up by you with somebody named Martin, whom I never heard of, and a reply probably will be received within a brief period. When I was in California I suggested a number of times that in my opinion the wise thing to do, if you were going to proceed with this matter, was to have Mr. Pettit come on here and take it up personally with the various individuals who were directing what should be done. Of course, it may be that the whole matter can be worked out by correspondence, but it seems in this instance an everlasting task; and if some people are designedly trying to kill the whole project, they probably can accomplish the result by constant misunderstanding and misstatements, and interminable delay. At any rate, let me know when

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you hear from Martin, and perhaps some way will occur to me to work the matter out.

I have not seen Ickes since my return, nor have I personally conferred with him. After I wrote you last, he telephoned your Mother merely to extend greetings upon our return. As I feel at present I have no desire to discuss any proposition with him. I presume that within a brief period some public matter of consequence will arise which may render this necessary, but under existing circumstances I shall not endeavor to hasten that date. When this time comes unquestionably he will raise the matter of the correspondence which has passed between us, and doubtless the whole subject matter.

I am writing this letter instead of writing my usual letter to you, because I know your anxiety over the particular matter. I am sorry I can be of so little aid.

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

Affectionately,

Sam