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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ED AHEARN, CLERK

Sunday, March 1, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

I have this morning, Sunday, received your letter of February 28th. Pretty good work in mid-winter for the airmail, don't you think? I do hope that finally the Sausalito Harbor Project is near completion, so far as the preliminary authority and contracts are concerned. I feel no certainty about it, and should not be at all surprised if some new obstacle were interposed. I presume another week ought to determine the matter definitely.

I was sorry to read of your difficulty, but I learned something about it some years ago when Arch suffered with it. I found it not uncommon, but if it is the same sort of spinal hurt that I then knew about, the worst feature concerning it is the possibility of repetition. I think Harry Cosgriff at one time had difficulty of this sort. I do hope your cure is speedy and permanent. I am all right again, back at the office, a little sour about the session, disgusted with many of the people here, not greatly enamored with the political situation. Each time I get out of patience with the



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President, however, I compare him to those who are his opponents, either as candidates or advocates, and I must say that, generally speaking, he is so infinitely better than those who are yapping at him, or those who are seeking the nomination, that I feel there is little or no comparison. Kent, for whom I don't care, stated, I think, the situation admirably, when he said that this election would not be between the Democrats and Republicans, but would be between Roosevelt and those who are anti-Roosevelt, and that the personality of Roosevelt would be the dominating factor in either direction during the campaign. That restless mentality of his will keep him as busy in politics as it does with policies, and like all men, who have had his extraordinary popularity, he thinks he is the cleverest and most cunning individual ever created.

Sometimes an election is won or lost upon the pin-pricks of a campaign, - the unnecessary incidents precipitated by men drunk with authority, or who have not sense enough to foresee the consequences of their miserable little injustices or tyrannies. Those about Roosevelt are piling up these pin-pricks, and while each one of them, separately, could be passed by with a word, all of them, cumulatively, may create quite a furore. Such incidents as



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keeping a couple of speakers off a women's meeting here recently, pulling the Marine band out from that organization because some speaker waded into the "New Deal", the breaking of General Hagood the other day, because he said WPA money was stage money, and a dozen other little things of this sort constantly occurring because some lousy bureaucrat feels his oats, and <sup>then</sup> add to these little incidents, and a great many of them have occurred in the past few months, the President's wild desire to monkey with the situation abroad, which, if it had been done by any other man, would have caused some of us here to be severely critical and denunciatory, and his restlessness to deal with international matters in a manner contrary to the sentiment of the American people, and you have a kaleidoscopic condition which may change during the campaign over night.

Without asking for it, and without any knowledge that it was coming, I received some little prominence from the eastern press in the "neutrality" fight. Krock, who runs the bureau of the New York Times here and is the head of all the correspondents, gave me the credit in his paper, which does not like me, for the result. TIME, my opinion of which you know, squinted at the same way, and so did the LITERARY DIGEST. Indeed, the consensus of opinion here was that my wickedness prevailed, but I really feel that our



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country had a very narrow escape. The older I get the more intense becomes my love of country, something which is out of date now, and regarded by our "intellectuals" as an indication of mental decay.

Mother is in good shape again, and so am I, and with the weather improving, things will be probably very much more comfortable for us. The last few days we have driven along the Potomac and have watched the ice break up in the river. A warm rain and a couple of warm days have caused practically the disappearance of the snow. I have tried to tell from the local press just what territory was flooded in the Sacramento Valley. Did the levies of the River Gardens Farm hold?

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

Affectionately,

*Dad.*



ROYAL S. COPELAND, N. Y., CHAIRMAN  
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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Sunday, March 15, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

This morning I have your letter of March 13th and I am glad to report to you that Mother is better, although she has by no means got rid of the disagreeable cough which accompanies her bronchitis. Mother has a rather intimate friend here named Mrs. West, who, sometime since was inoculated at stated intervals with a serum, which would prevent colds. For a long time she boasted inordinately of the great benefit the serum had been, and how it had enabled her to be free of this miserable and irriating affliction. About a month ago, however, she got the worst cold she had had in all her live, and had more difficulty in getting rid of it than ever before. She is not quite so sure about the serum now. When <sup>ago,</sup> a short time/ I was laid up and just crawling from the house to the office with knees and feet swollen and painful, on one day indulging to the extent of my ability in fluent and fervent profanity, Mother quietly suggested to me that I ought to see the dentist; and as I remembered my two and a half months with the rascal when I was last in San Francisco, and



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the fortitude with which I submitted to untold tortures upon the theory of eliminating infections from the teeth, I renewed my efforts and surpassed any past performances in damning the medical profession in general, and dentists in particular.

I read what you said about the Yacht Harbor. There is nothing to do, and nothing to say now. During the week I received the copy you sent me of your letter to the Department.

When Fleischhacker was here week before last, he spoke of you and what he was going to do for you. He was most kind and considerate, and I appreciated immensely the regard he expressed for you. I do hope that everything turns out as you desire. While he was here, he dined with the President. It was very interesting to observe the pride that he felt in the occasion. I was talking incidentally with Senator Wheeler just afterwards, and he told me upon the day that Fleischacker called upon me, likewise he called upon Wheeler, and Wheeler told me that Fleischacker said he was for Roosevelt. This struck me as very strange, and I am not certain that he can stand the strain of it during the long campaign. During the same week Mr. Cutler was here, and he spoke of you in the same sweet fashion that Fleischacker had. Both of them may have



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talking because they knew the way to my heart, but it was very good to hear what they said.

One of the most singular pacts ever entered into politically is that which it is supposed here has been made between Borah and Roosevelt. That they have had some meetings and some intimate talks is undoubted; that Roosevelt thinks Borah is doing him a great service by hammering the rest of the Republican Party I know from statements made to me personally. But knowing both gentlemen, how fond each is of intrigue, how each is most cunning, and both are clever politicians, I think I can see more clearly than many here what has transpired at their meetings, and I see just two none too scrupulous politicians, each endeavoring to out-fox the other. Roosevelt fondly imagines that Borah prating of "liberalism", and finally during his campaign, denouncing other candidates in the Republican primary, will so disrupt the Republican Party as to make it even a weaker weapon against him; Mr. Borah, believing the President can render him tremendous aid in his primary fights, looks forward to victory in the primary, and then tearing the hide off his adversary Roosevelt in the finals. There is such a thing as being too cunning, and perhaps one or maybe both of these gentlemen will learn that before the conventions are over. You probably have noticed that the Democratic opposition to



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Roosevelt is gradually crumbling, and men like Glass, who has called Roosevelt by every epithet, and who has denounced every policy of this administration, and who has won the title of "hero" from all the reactionary press for his courage, his independence, are now declaring for the glorious old Democratic Party and the Democratic nominees, no matter who they shall be. This is the sort of thing I never could understand in politics, but it is accepted as the quite natural thing. Were I as bitter and as hostile, and felt that a candidate had done such egregious wrong to my country as Glass has asserted Roosevelt has done, I would feel rather small in resting upon the dogmatic utterance "I am a Democrat", and voting for everything I had held up to public scorn and obliquy.

I observe the beautiful mix-up in California. I don't know now whether in opposition to the unpledged delegation of Chandler-Cameron-Knowland-Rowell, and the rest of the unsavory crew, Landon will have a ticket, or Borah will have a ticket. The natural nominee against Roosevelt from the Republican standpoint is Hoover. In personality, he is the direct opposite of Roosevelt, and in political philosophy, they are as far separated as I am from Harry Chandler and Joe Knowland. They'd make a clean-cut issue with clean-cut different personalities, and I wish



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they could be the opponents in the coming contest.

I wonder if the boys take a real interest in what is transpiring abroad. The world drama being played in Europe now is the most absorbing thing that can happen on earth, and that drama is as sordid as any history has known. The nations there play it solely in their own interest, and the leading countries are one thing today, and another tomorrow, and they have neither hesitancy nor shame in changing over night. They came very close to having our country lead last December, and in the matter of sanctions with Italy, and if they had succeeded, what a terrible mess we would have found ourselves in. I think I had a large part in preventing this, and no greater service did I ever render. It was rendered, of course, solely from the standpoint of our country, for I have no less than every right-thinking individual the utmost detestation of Mussolini and his mad and cruel adventure.

My colleague introduced a bill for the appointment of another commission on foreign debts that would take up here and in the capitals abroad the question of settlement, etc. For some reason, in the vagrant fashion we have, the matter of the debts broke on the floor last Monday in a very brief discussion, and I was unable to restrain myself when the bill for the new commission was re-



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ferred to. I spoke for two or three minutes, and I think I put the quietus upon the McAdoo measure. I was dumb-founded to find in James T. Williams column last night in the Washington Times the enclosed statement. I send it to you because I think probably you have not seen it, and it might interest you and the boys.

We hope to get out of here by the first of May, at the latest. The Lord knows whether this will be so.

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

Affectionately,

*Dad*



AY, MARCH 14, 1936

# Cannot Afford To Lose Our Self-Respect

*By James T. Williams, Jr.*

Of the many definitions of eloquence handed down from the long past none better describes "the language of nature" than this one from the writings of our own Ralph Waldo Emerson. Said Emerson on this subject:

"Eloquence is the power to translate a truth into language perfectly intelligible to the person to whom you speak."

This is precisely the power with which Senator Johnson of California spoke a few days ago when he brought to an impressive conclusion a rambling discussion of what ought to be done about the unpaid war debts of a group of European nations now soliciting American sympathy by lofty pronunciamentos concerning the "sacredness" of the treaties they make and the "sanctity" of sanctions they would impose and look to the conscripted youth of America to enforce with their own blood and treasure.

Said the statesman unafraid who represents at all times in the Senate of the United States not merely the sovereignty of the State of California but the people of the United States as a whole:

## THEIR OWN TERMS

"I cannot sit idly by and listen to the appointment of a new commission on the part of my country to dicker again with debtors with whom we have already settled on their own terms.

"I cannot, for one instant, consent that we shall go, cap in hand, across the water, with the obligations solemnly agreed upon, and beg our debtors to give us a penny in the dollar or a shilling in the pound.

"The debts exist. They exist by virtue of agreements which have been made by commissions appointed by various countries. They exist upon the terms of the debtors themselves.

"Our country has been a generous creditor; these defaulting nations have been dishonest debtors.

"It is not consonant, in my opinion, with the self-respect of this nation to go begging these recalcitrant debtors, those countries which have welched upon their honest obligations, to give us a moiety of that which we agreed to take upon their prayers and upon their solicitation. We settled once by solemn treaties. Treaty breakers have the repudiation nations been.

"There is something more valuable to me than money in a nation such as ours.

"A nation which loses its self respect, or becomes a mere barterer of that which is its just due, will be held not only in contempt by its own people but in contempt by its own debtors.

## THE DEBTS EXIST

"While I quite agree with the Senator from Illinois that the appropriate authorities ought to dun these debtors, I shall not for one moment tolerate, so far as I am concerned, that we shall again appoint a commission to go across the water and to beg that these debtors, upon their own terms, may settle the debts which are justly due, and which they themselves have admitted to be due.

"Mr. President, we can afford to lose the money. We cannot afford to lose our own self respect."

Young Americans in high school who would learn the eloquence which "is vehement in simplicity," who would by the honesty of eloquence "persuade others by being in earnest" themselves, will do well to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" this memorable address of Senator Johnson on the floor of the Senate.

An examination of the Congressional Record for a year past will convince thoughtful Americans that this address is probably the most eloquent utterance to which the Senate has listened since Senator Bulow of South Dakota broke his longtime silence last year and held the Senate spellbound, while it listened to a voice so seldom heard in these latter days in either House of Congress—the voice of conscience speaking with that quiet courage which distinguishes true statesmanship.

## DEFENDER UNAFRAID

American Honor, American Liberty and Justice, "the breath of Liberty's being," will never lack on the floor of the Senate of the United States a defender unafraid while the American people in their corporate capacity as a nation and the sovereignty of the State of California are fortunate enough to be represented in the Senate by such a man as Hiram Johnson.

And as long as Senator Johnson is a member of the Senate that body will still be, to the extent that his illustrious membership can make it, all that Daniel Webster declared the Founders of the American Union intended the Senate to be:

"A Senate, a Senate of equals, of men of individual honor and personal character, and of absolute independence." A Senate whose members "know no masters" and "acknowledge no dictators."



122 MARYLAND AVENUE, N. E.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

[Mar. 16, 1936]

Normy boy:

This gave me a laugh this morning - so decided to send it along so you could see you were not alone in your exercising. - Of course I've had one grand time entertaining someone called bronchitis - it's the most annoying thing so glad you are not troubled that way. - You wind up by being filled with the fear of another attack - maybe that is what brings it on - but the minute you think you are over it & you do one little thing out of the ordinary - whoa! it's at you again. Dr. Hogan is going to try out some new remedies on me as a preventative. Don't



Go much on it but it Cant  
be much more than it has  
been. - The only thing that  
has saved the day has been  
that Almost Every one I know  
has been doing the same.  
We have had some winter.  
All very beautiful - I so  
wanted the boys to see the  
river - Cakes of ice almost as  
big as houses - piled up from  
side to side - no boating nothing  
but ice - ice - ice. -

Your Dad made a wonderful  
little speech the other day there  
D - Papers ~~didn't~~ Carried  
only a line about it - until  
Saturday when Mr Williams



122 MARYLAND AVENUE, N. E.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Wrote his nice <sup>2</sup>piece about it  
Miss Connor says your Dad sent  
it to you. - so you can see it  
yourself. - I don't know whether  
they carry Mr William's Column  
out there or not - but it was  
nice of him. - If it were not  
for your Dad - your Dad Alow-  
we would be in the World Court  
& tied up with that awful  
mess in Europe. - There is a  
wonderful book out called "Inside  
Europe" by a Mr Gunther - its  
splendid. It gives a most  
intimate account of the situation  
& the men concerned. - Either buy  
it or wait & I'll bring it out -  
you all should read it. -  
Cousins sent over & I've  
acquired it. - I often wonder



if the people appreciate what Dad  
has done to save the Country -  
Unless Mr. R. promises he  
will not take us into Europe  
if vote for someone else. - He  
has done everything he could  
to drag us in. - & his  
awful "keep-onate" is filling  
every gap she can. - I get  
beside myself with Anger  
when I think how internationally  
they feel and act.

This is an awful stupid letter  
but I can't help it. - Don't worry  
you had trouble with your  
back there is nothing as painful.  
Take Care of yourself. Honey. -  
lots of love to you, the boys &  
Miss School. -

Lovingly  
Mother.



ROYAL S. COPELAND, N. Y., CHAIRMAN  
DUNCAN U. FLETCHER, FLA.  
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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Sunday, March 22, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

This morning I have your letter of March 20th, which is postmarked "San Francisco March 20th 5:30PM". Like you, I look at these airmail letters, and I think it is marvelous that they reach us in the time that they do. During the past week when we found we might have difficulties with our airmail, it seemed like a tremendous loss. Mother received your letter the other day, and I can't tell you how glad I was that you wrote her. We both enjoyed it immensely. We were both very greatly interested in your Mendocino trip, and the place there in which you were interested. I think its acquisition would be a fine thing. How I would have liked to have an accessible place like that ten or fifteen years ago!

During the past week the interest in this town has been absorbed with floods. All about us these floods have been distressing and disastrous, and what brought the realization of their horror to Washingtonians was not alone their proximity, but the threat of inundation of this very capital. The Potomac did go on a rampage. The Chain Bridge, which you



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

will remember goes over to Virginia just beyond Georgetown was literally overflowed. The Mall here was inundated, and the low sections of Georgetown and Washington suffered very greatly. The danger here is over now, but in Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and way up into New England, there are thousands and thousands homeless, and the deaths mounted into the hundreds.

I observed with great interest the political situation in California, but it is rather difficult with papers coming four or five days after an event to keep tab as one would like. This morning, for the first time, I have seen the list of delegates pledged to Honorable Earl Warren selected by Chandler-Knowland-Cameron,-Rowell-Requa and Hoover. Strangely enough they were sent to me in the first and second pages of the Los Angeles Times of March 18th by someone whom I don't know. He penciled just above the delegation "From Joe Scott, Mrs. Burdette and Mr. Hearst may God deliver us. Hooray for Roosevelt. " I have not seen the Borah list. I did see the Landon-Merriam list. If Borah had gone into the State a month or two ago, struck out with both fists, and called the roll of the old political crooks whom we made infamous in California, in my opinion he would have carried the State; I am not clear but what



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he has waited too long, and dilly-dallied too much to do the job now. I read his opening speech in Ohio at Youngstown, and last night I listened to him from Chicago. His speech last night that I listened to was lame and halt, and I observe from looking at the newspapers this morning, did not cover his advance as given out in any real fashion. He struck me last night, and I really felt a great pity for him, as a man who is tired, and exhausted and striving to collect his scattered thoughts, and because of fatigue and physical ills unable to do so adequately. I never have heard him so lame and halt and unsequential as he was over the radio last night. Of course, the situation is made to order for him in both Ohio and Illinois. In Ohio, he has nobody against him but Taft's son, who, admittedly, is just a dummy, like the Honorable Earl Warren in California, and in Illinois his opposition is even worse, because the only one pitted against him there is Frank Knox, who thinks he is a candidate for President, but who is about as unfit a candidate for anything as could be suggested. I really think in both states Borah has a fifty-fifty chance, provided he is able to



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fight. No doubt, the stuff he gave out in advance last night would indicate a militant and aggressive candidate. What he said over the radio indicated a broken-down old man. I am not very clear that there will be many, who, like myself, will analyze both the publicity and the expression, so I don't know what the ultimate effect will be upon the populace.

Roosevelt goes merrily on his way perfectly certain now of his success, although very much worried about it up to the last few weeks. I have said repeatedly here to his people, the only man who can beat him is Roosevelt. I don't like some things he does, and I bitterly resent some others. The General Hagood incident rather nauseated me, and the activities of the Black Committee are irritating me, and I fear may irritate me to such an extent that I will burst all bounds. What the Black Committee did to Hearst in stealing one of his telegrams, and then while the matter was pending in court deliver it to Congressman McSwain of the House, was indecent and outrageous. Had this sort of thing been done, for instance, to McClatchy, I would have stood on the floor until I dropped in denunciation of it.

Hearst can fight his own battles. He needs no assistance from an individual like me, and in addition to that, he is so variable and uncertain, and has abused the members of the



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 5

House and the Senate so much that it is a very difficult thing to take up the cudgels for him. Of course, I realize that upon an abstraction, the academic question involved, one ought to be alert and active, but sometimes it is very difficult under circumstances such as these to carry on a lone contest. The answer given by the defenders of the Black Committee in appropriating one's private papers, his telegrams, etc., - that if there is nothing wrong in them, the writer or recipient of communications ought not to object to their perusal, demonstrates the utter misconception of individual liberty, and the right of freedom from search and seizures. On the other hand, the Committee demonstrated in the beginning of its investigations that telegrams were forged, that names were taken at random from directories and signed, without warrant, to wires, that wires were paid for, and expenditures that stagger the imagination indulged in in the endeavor to defeat the Utility Bill, and generally, activities indulged by the representatives of the utility companies that beggar description, and are worse than any ever before disclosed. No living soul can justify what the great corporations and utilities companies did in their endeavor to defeat just legislation. And it is very difficult to say anything about the excesses of the Black Committee, because, apparently it is done in defense of shameful wrongdoers, who were guilty of the most vicious and evil practices



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here. The Hearst incident, however, is in another category, but it is equally difficult to undertake to defend one who is bound by no rules.

I was very much interested in what you said about Hitler's march into the Rhineland. I am not unsympathetic with the German people in their desire to occupy their own soil. (I have always been against the Versailles Treaty, and the glorious fight we made in 1918-19 prevented the ratification by our country of that penal peace. We asserted then, and have ever since, that it was a breeder of wars, and that the portion of it devoted to the League of Nations was designed merely through that hypocritical institution to maintain the status quo. Of course, I have no use for Hitler, nor for any of the dictatorships which have been the aftermath of war. I am quite cynical, however, about the holy horror expressed by France and Britain at the violation of treaties by Germany. And it is quite amusing to find Italy joining in denunciation of repudiation of solemn agreements. The whole show is hollow and hypocritical, but what the League is is demonstrated by the meeting ~~xx~~ ~~xx~~ held in London at the present time where Britain orders and directs, controls and commands, and the League as scrivener writes down what it is told to do. According to what we have learned here, beginning next month a drive will be made in the United States ostensibly



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for peace, but in reality for making us a part of "collectivity". This is a new designation and characterization for becoming a part of Europe's controversies, and a member of either the League of Nations or some other body, and it embraces the infamous doctrine of this country using its "moral weight" and performing its "solemn duty" in a controversy which arises of picking an "aggressor", and then having determined the "aggressor" fight for peace. It is a damnable bit of duplicity adopted by the Carnegie Foundation, the Peace Societies, and League of Nations' organizations in our country to make us lead with our might, and our treasure, and our manpower, in behalf of Europe in every war that may occur there in the future.)

I may have spoken without due deliberation in saying that I hoped to get out of here by the first of May. There is much more fussing under the surface about the tax bill than I imagined would exist, and we may be delayed here a longer time than I contemplated. I hope not.

I am glad to say to you your Mother is very much better. If she can keep free from her bronchitis for a brief period now I think it will leave her altogether. While we have had some rain during the past week, the thermometer has been nothing like it was all winter, and I feel that spring is at hand.



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 8

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

Affectionately,

*Dad*



ROYAL S. COPELAND, N. Y., CHAIRMAN  
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M. C. PARSONS, JR., ASST. CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Sunday, March 29, 1936

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

My dear Jack:

I have this morning your letter of March 27th. I am very glad that you write regularly, even though you have nothing to say except that all of you are well. Mother and I look forward to the receipt of your letters, and although I know it is difficult sometimes to keep regularly to schedule, just two lines will be ample when you are crowded for time.

Of course, things are becoming more and more political here. It has been interesting to see how the opposition within the Democratic Party to Roosevelt has crumbled. A Southern Democrat belongs to a strange species. He may rave and curse, denounce and abuse, and when the time comes, notwithstanding all that he may say against the Democratic Party and even its standard-bearer, he will be found in the front regular ranks. Just exactly as Borah has been found for the past thirty years growling each four years, and yet before the end of the campaign, being a most enthusiastic supporter of those at whom he growled. I think he made a blunder in not going into our state, but I believe he shrinks from the exertion, and is ready to seize any excuse to avoid fatigue and exhaustion, or



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr., 2

what is necessary in a campaign such as he is making. By his peculiar antics, however, he is leaving himself so little fertile soil in which to plant his ambitions, that they will never see fruition. He is now sore at Landon, and in private conversation with deep and dark threats tells about what he is going to do to Landon. If you could believe his statements made "off the record", but made so frequently that they become public property, if he is defeated at the Cleveland Convention, he is going to bolt and be for Roosevelt. I don't believe anything of the sort, but he has succeeded in fooling, as usual, a great many people, and those who would like to "gang up" on Landon now are whispering how necessary it is to beat Landon in order to prevent Borah from bolting. It is about as specious a political argument as we have heard. Borah had his opportunity this year because there was nobody in the field. He has not grasped it, in my opinion, because of his vacillation, and apparent streak of laziness. He still has a good chance of success in Ohio and Illinois, but the hard-boiled fellows here argue what difference does it make even if he carries them, he yet will have but a handful of delegates. The most interesting thing that has transpired on the Republican side is Hoover, who with fluency and fervor and a perfection of profanity we little



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thought him capable of, on his arrival in New York recently denounced Landon to those with whom he talked. The last time he was moving about in the East he was for Landon, but now the line-up in California by which he has been prevented from having forty-four delegates in his pocket, without a contest in the primary, has angered him, and while he takes out a good part of his wrath on Hearst, his animus is most vehement against Landon. I have been reading the Chronicle lately, and Rowell's stuff about the perfectly free ticket in California, and the necessity for Republicans to get together in harmony upon it in order that all of our present ills may be cured, would make me sick, if it did not make me laugh, and ~~to~~ think of it coming from a fellow like Rowell, who once was decent. On the Democratic side, it is admitted by all parties here that Roosevelt has gained in the last month or two. It was a strange re-action from the celebrated meeting of the Liberty League and the speech of Al Smith. That speech was ballyhooed and the meeting participated in by all of the anti- and both were given the most glorious publicity, Roosevelt people, but gradually, the viewpoint began to change, and the people began to look a little askance at Smith, and then came the real revulsion from a Dupont dinner attended by all the millionaires in Washington, and Al Smith, the hero of the occasion. I really believe that the dinner and Smith's speech did incalculable harm to those who have been striving so hard



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 4

to beat Roosevelt, and I am not alone in this opinion.

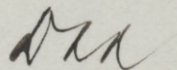
(The situation abroad is still delicate, but we are not thinking in terms of war now. Britain does not want war, and the nations concerned daren't go to war without Britain. It is amusing to read the expressions of horror of the English of a treaty breaker. The violation of a treaty is the wickedest thing according to young Mr. Eden that any nation could be guilty of, and in the very session of a Parliament, where he shed his tears over such reprehensible conduct on the part of any country as to forget its treaty obligations, it is bluntly stated that the most solemn treaty England ever made, that wherein she begged for settlement at half price of the debt that she owed to us, and which was signed, sealed and delivered, in both countries with the utmost circumstance and pomp, would not be carried out by Great Britain but by unalateral action would be repudiated. Diplomacy is a hypocritical game, but I presume it is played by nearly all countries in the same fashion. It seems to me, however, when they lay such stress upon the Germans going into their own territory as a most heinous crime, and in the very same breath repudiate their own signatures, somebody, at least, ought to have sufficient sense of humor to laugh at them.)



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Our weather is decent now, indeed quite warm.  
We'll have one or two little spells, perhaps, but the nasty  
winter is gone. Mother continues in pretty good shape, for  
which I am very, very thankful. She joins me in love to  
Miss Schow, the boys, and yourself.

Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'H.W.J.' or similar, written in a cursive style.



ROYAL S. COPELAND, N. Y., CHAIRMAN  
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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

Sunday, April 5, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

The week has passed with little that was of moment to us personally, but with astonishing momentous events. The amazing interest that was taken in the Hauptman case was more than surprising to me, although with a fair conception of the mentality of the moron, perhaps we should have paid only passing attention to the remarkable morbid interest in the case. I think that during the week we have had three shocking examples of the inability of our people properly to administer the law. The first instance was, of course, the Hauptman case, where the authorities clashed, but about what they clashed was never entirely plain. The clash, however, destroyed the certainty of the law's decrees, and the situation was such that one could feel only contempt for the wobbly individuals and the system which permitted what we witnessed. If the Governor of New Jersey believed there was any doubt of the guilt of Hauptman, he should have seen it through, and it was just as bad for him to quit after once he had started, as it would be if he



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 2

started for personal or corrupt reasons. It was a horrid exhibition all around. The second one that we had was "the brave little woman" named Stretzy in New York City, who in "defending her honor" which she had been tarnishing for a year or more, and had had some difficulty retaining during an unhappy married life, shot the villain in the back, and so impressed a New York jury that she was triumphantly acquitted. The third example, nearer home, was the Lamson case. Thirty jurors out of thirty six, presumably men and women, who gave the best that was in them to a determination of the fact, after a full and fair trial, held Lamson guilty, and yet because he had had three trials, the authorities at San Jose dismissed him. There is no such thing as enforcement of the law, when, no matter what the cost in time or money, it stops short of a definite determination, particularly in this case, where an overwhelming majority of jurors decided his guilt. ~~and~~ The authorities should have continued the trial until the issue was absolutely and with certainty determined. It would be far better that a determination, which was erroneous, should be reached, than that there should be none at all.

The political event of the week was the overwhelming defeat of Borah in New York. I have thought, sometimes,



Mr. Hiram W. Johnson, Jr. - 3

I was the world's worst politician, but looking back upon the Borah campaign here thus far conducted, I think readily I could resign the post I have awarded myself to him. He has made a wretched showing, thus far, in his discussions of so-called issues. This reflected itself, in my opinion, in some of the districts in New York. He and those about him were perfectly certain of carrying some districts, so that even in benighted New York there would have been a proportion, though a minority, of delegates pledged to him at the Cleveland Convention. He did not get within shot-gun distance of obtaining a single delegate. His supporters here say since last Tuesday's primary that he will win in Wisconsin Tuesday next, and with certainty win Illinois a week thereafter. He will win Wisconsin because the Old Guard there has adopted him. The Progressives have their own party, and the only people against him are a small fraction of the standpatters, who represent neither organization nor any one else. I look to see him have a full slate in Wisconsin, and this is the general view here. My own opinion is that he has a fair chance in Illinois, but I believe that he has done himself almost incalculable harm by his lack of energy, and vitality, and real fighting strength. He claims next week he is going at it with both fists. We'll wait and see.



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I am very curious about your situation in California, and am wondering whether the Landon ticket can possibly beat that of the organization, Republican press, and all the elements with which we have become familiar in California, and seem to be banded together in the Chandler-Knowland-Rowell-Requa-Hoover ticket. It will be a real achievement for Hearst if, under the circumstances, in a Republican primary, he can put Landon over.

I am beginning to get worried about when we are going to adjourn. I was hoping it would be at the end of this month. I am now convinced we'll fortunate if at the end of next month we get out of here.

Mother joins in love to the boys, Miss Schow, and yourself,

Affectionately,

*Dad*



ROYAL S. COPELAND, N. Y., CHAIRMAN  
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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE

April 11, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

Tomorrow will be Easter. I am going to take the day off and insist that Miss Connor shall do likewise; and so, I am writing this note merely to send you Easter greetings, first, with the love of your Mother and myself, and so that you will know, too, why you do not receive my usual Sunday letter.

Mother and I are in fairly good shape. I have been listening intently to an impeachment trial during the week. I don't like to sit in judgment on any human being. The trial, therefore, disturbs me, and yet I laugh at myself, because my fellows treat it in the most casual fashion. I would really rather be killed than be found guilty in any proceeding such as this. The defendant, it is expected, will be on the stand this afternoon. I will reach my determination, doubtless, in great degree, from his demeanor, his testimony, and the view I conceive of him from listening to him.

Mother joins in love to the boys, Miss Schow, and yourself,

Affectionately,

*Dad*



PARK TRAMMELL, FLA., CHAIRMAN

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HIRAM JOHNSON, CALIF.

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ED AHEARN, CLERK

Sunday, April 19, 1936.

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

My dear Jack:

After two weeks of continuous sitting in the impeachment case of Judge Ritter of Florida, I am today just getting at my correspondence and pending matters. I have had no time at all to answer your letter of April 10th, which arrived on Monday last. On Saturday I sent you a very brief note, and on the following Monday your letter came. I am wondering if there was not some mistake in the enclosure, that you sent me. You relate in your letter of April 10th that you had received a call from George Bowles, and immediately after his departure had dictated a letter to Hiram, copy of which you enclosed. What I received was the enclosure, which I return herein, a letter dated February 27th to Hiram upon the legal aspect of the annuity, and the possibilities of an action concerning it. You told me in your letter of April 10th that you had a long conversation with Farragher, and you asked my view concerning the distribution of stock of the corporation as tentatively suggested by George. I am up in the air, of course, and as you look at your papers, you will find that the letter you enclosed was probably not the letter you intended to send me at all, and you



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can understand why I can not answer your query, because what George Bowles communicated to you does not appear. I will be glad, of course, to express my view as soon as you send the communication you, undoubtedly intended to send. As I say to you above, I am enclosing you herein the letter that you wrote to Hiram of date of February 27th, so that you may have before you the only enclosure that came to me in your letter of April 10th.

It was very good of you to mention the State Income Tax matter. The expert here, that is furnished by the Treasury Department, worked mine out for me, and I sent it to the office. It was wrong, as usual, and young Ted, together with the rest of the office, did the job over again, and I sent back last week the corrected returns.

I was greatly interested to note from your letter of the 17th that the resolution desired by the Exposition really came from your office. I have introduced it, of course, and have no doubt it will pass. I am delighted that you are doing some work in connection with them. I am very glad to rush to do anything I can in their behalf.

The Ritter case became a most interesting study in human psychology to me from the standpoint of the defendant, but more particularly from the reactions of my colleagues. The defendant, just after his appointment in 1929, did some things he ought not to have done, that looked none too well. It may be that



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I have grown soft with the passage of years, but to me it is a tremendous thing to sit in judgment upon a human being now, and lightly send him forth with the brand of infamy and break him forever. There were various elements which contributed to the final result. There are always a number of "holier-than-thou" men, who can be relied upon to preach in cant phrases; there are always a number of breast-thumping self-righteous, who, in profound horror, hold up their hands deprecating any act which might be criticized; there are still a larger number always in a body like ours of very fragile virtue, who, to demonstrate their honesty and integrity, when they neither have nor understand either, will rend and tear any human being accused of offending in the very traits they lack; and then still remaining there are those who are wholly politically-minded, who see in the conviction of one man, the opportunity to appoint another; and you'll realize why, although the case was not proven, Ritter was finally convicted. The mode of procedure is archaic. Fixed when the Constitution was first adopted, it is rather interesting and solemn, but it is wholly unfitted for this modern day. The Senate can not adequately try an impeachment, and certainly is utterly unable to do so when the problems presented are fairly intricate. After the testimony is all heard we go into executive session. Not only are the galleries cleared, but the usual attaches, including the reporters are forced



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to leave, and in this executive session there is full freedom of discussion of the case. I listened to man after man for two days telling of the awfulness of the offense, and each emphasizing the other's viewpoint, and most of those strongest in expression were the men in the senate who are tattooed with every possible, conceivable offense. On the second day, toward the end of the afternoon, I grew so restless and indignant, that I burst into an hour's extemporaneous speech, which, strangely enough, was thought by some of my fellows to be as good a thing as ever I had done. I did bring some men over, but the combination was too strong, and on the following day on the seventh count Ritter was convicted. The seventh count was a mere repetition of the previous six, on each of which Ritter had been acquitted. I have no right to get so intensely interested, as I finally was, in this matter. Ritter was wretchedly defended. Frank Walsh was one of his attorneys, and no school boy in any office would have been so lax, and so incompetent, and inefficient. The irony of the whole thing was that he was convicted by just the requisite number of votes, and by that narrow thread, he is destroyed. I hasten to add, so that you will not misunderstand me, Ritter's personality did not appeal to me, although he made a good witness for himself; but I can not, at this period in my



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life kill any human being without the demonstration to me is clear that it ought to be done. In one of the books that we sent you this week, you will find a little about a Scotch verdict of not proven. This was the verdict which might have been rendered in the Ritter case, but no stronger verdict was justified.

I read with interest what you said in your letter today about the political situation. I agree with you, Roosevelt will be re-elected. I do not wholly agree, however, that the recent primaries are such a clear demonstration of his strength. He will win because there will be nobody really against him, first, and secondly because of the class war which has been engendered; and the have-nots in the voting are in the vast majority. I have an indistinct recollection that in 1932 the Hoover people beat the toms-toms to get a large vote out at the primary, although Hoover was un-opposed. They were able to do this, and the Republican Party in California then had a preponderance in registration of about half a million. Roosevelt carried the State in the election by a majority practically the same as constituted the preponderance of the Republican registration. Borah as a candidate has been a "dud". I think he is a complete "flop", so far as the convention is concerned, although having the friendship of the press, the stories here are numerous about the magnificent showing he has made, and the possibilities of what he may do at the Cleveland convention. I may have written



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Sunday, April 19, 1936

you what I said to some of my fellows a couple of weeks ago, that I was the world's worst politician, but that I yielded the palm, and placed the laurel wreath upon the brow of the distinguished Senator from Idaho. He labored under the delusion that there would be a popular uprising, which would overwhelm the electorate and carry him upon a tumultuous popular wave to success. He has not amounted to a last year's bird's nest, and his utterances have been really pitiful.

Mother joins in love to our dear grandsons, Miss Schow, and lots to yourself.

Affectionately,

*Dad*