Remarks by the President to the Newspapermen.

We had a very short Cabinet meeting this morning. Secretary Wallace told us about the International Conference of Dairy Producers he is holding, or something of that kind, but nothing of any particular importance. The Secretary of Labor gave us the important item of news that the Lehigh Valley R.R. have made a settlement with their men in the shopcrafts, that have been on strike. It affects 5300 men. That is the old strike that began last year. It is very gratifying to know that those things are being closed up.

Have several inquiries here. One about Muscle Shoals. I have been over that with the representatives of the press once or twice and there hasn't been any change, since I last described it, in its status. Nor have there been any developments in connection with Mr. Ford's offer. We did everything we could to protect the interests of Mr. Ford, to exercise the good faith of the Government towards him and leave the matter in such a way that he would be at liberty to proceed with his negotiations. The matter, as you know, is before Congress for their action. There isn't any authority to make any sale of the Muscle Shoals property unless by special act of Congress. This matter is there before them, and Mr. Ford would be at liberty to go before the Committee up there, or take it up in any other way he might desire.

An inquiry about Governor Hart of Washington. He came in the office yesterday at a time when I was very busily engaged and wasn't able to see him, as I understand it, merely to pay an official call. I met him last year, I believe, when I was in the West visiting in his State. It is my recollection that he was with me a considerable time when I was in Seattle and Tacoma, so I told Mr. Clark I would be very much pleased if he would lunch with me today. I don't understand that he has any business with me other than that of a social nature.

An inquiry about policy in state elections in New York and Kentucky. I do not contemplate any action in relation to those. Different representatives from those states have called on me from time to time. I don't recall that the matter of pending recollections there has been the subject of consultation in any way except, perhaps, in a most offhand way of the general inquiry which you would expect when someone came to see me or I was in the presence of someone who inquired
about how the election was going. It was of such a desultory character that I
don't recall what decision was arrived at.

An inquiry also about the proposal of Representative John Jacob Rogers
for an embargo on anthracite coal exports. I have never considered that. I
imagine it would be a matter of considerable delicacy and would require quite
careful consideration, both as to the advantages that we should expect to secure
from it and as to the reaction that might result from our doing anything of that
kind.

An inquiry about a reported proposal of Mr. Meyer, the Director of the
War Finance Corporation, to recommend the formation of a corporation to handle
export wheat, and that the President has approved this plan. It is contemplated
that Mr. Meyer and, perhaps, Mr. Mondell, and someone who is particularly
familiar with the West should go out there and study it on the grounds. Mr.
Meyer has been in the West a good deal in relation to the relief of agriculture
in the past two years, has placed a great deal of the money of the United States
out there through the banks in order to relieve the agricultural situation. He
is very familiar with it and is known as a business man, sound and experienced.
I should place a good deal of reliance on his recommendations.

Mr. President, would — any proposition to organize a corporation of
that sort would require legislation by Congress, would it not?

I don't think so. That would be a voluntary corporation or organiza-
tion which might be set up in any of the states, either a legal corporation or
a voluntary organization of the farmers themselves.

But it would not employ Government capital, Mr. President?

Well, it might employ money that was furnished by the Government in
the same way that money is now being furnished by the Government, which is through
the banks.

An inquiry as to whether there have been any conferences in the shipping
problem. Not to my knowledge — not that have been brought to my attention. Mr.
Barley is considering what can be done.

As to whether there has been any suggestion from the National Education
Association that a Department of Education with a Secretary be set up in the
capital. Nothing has been received of which I know. I don't think anything of
that kind has come in. I think that is provided for in a general way in the pro-
posed reorganization which, I think, is at the present time before the Congress.
3.

It may require recognition on the part of the Executive, but that is in the general reorganization plan of the establishment of a Welfare Department with a Secretary over it, but I think the Department of Education comes in under that.

An inquiry here as to whether there have been any communications from the so-called shipping board cabinet. I don't know why that is so called. That was never established. Of course it is natural, when we are considering a matter of that kind, to group together all those that would come in contact with it.

Shipping, of course, in its natural aspect is an attempt to serve commerce. Very naturally you would consider it in that relation and confer with the Secretary of Commerce about it. Our Shipping Board at the present time is spending considerable Government money and very naturally one might like to take it up and consider it with the Treasury - the Secretary of the Treasury, who, in the present instance, happens to be in addition to the Secretary of the Treasury one of the great business minds of the nation; and also if it is proposed to have legislation, why you naturally like to find out what the House Committee and the Senate Committee think about it; to work out something in that direction, I thought I perhaps might like to sit down with representatives of that kind to see what could be done. But when the Attorney General said that the proposed plan wouldn't come within the contemplation of the law, I didn't have anything to submit to advisers at the present time, and so I didn't call any advisers in.

An inquiry as to whether I favor any transfer of the Federal Prohibition Unit from the Treasury Department to the Department of Justice. I have never made any decision about that, and never considered it seriously. What I mean is that I have never given it any particular consideration. Never thought of it very much.

An inquiry about the visit of Howard Elliott, Chairman of the Northern Pacific. I knew Mr. Elliott when he was in Massachusetts and when he came in to take charge of the N.H. Railroad. I don't know whether he had anything to do with the B. & M. other than that he was a large stock owner in the B. & M. by the New Haven. As a result of my experience with him there, I have a high estimation of him. He came in this morning more to pay his respects than anything else and I took occasion to inquire of him as to the business situation in the Northwest. He tells me that they have plenty of cars up there to move products. There is, though, a possible shortage of cars west of the Rocky Mountains, which he said was an indication of a general prosperity in agriculture west of the Rockies. He
recognizes we have a difficulty in the wheat region and inquired of him about the possibility of helping it by some reduction in the cost of the freight rate of export grain. He thought that that might be helpful, though I don’t know that he expressed a mature judgment about it, nor do I think he expressed any judgment as to whether that would be fair to railroads.

One of the representatives of the Farm Bureau Federation, Mr. Silver, was in this morning. Brought me a box of very fine apples. I would advise all of you to ask him to visit you, if you can secure the kind of reaction that I secured. He came in especially to invite me to go out sometime to an orchard that is conducted on the edge of West Virginia on a cooperative plan. I should be very much interested to go out there, if I could, but I don’t know whether I can or not. He mentioned today the matter of Muscle Shoals, as I have already related to you.

I had, a day or two ago, some of the executive committee of the National Orange. Some of them are located – one of them in Massachusetts, one from New York, one from Illinois, and I don’t know where the other did come from. We went over the various farm problems. They are not in favor of an extra session of Congress and not in favor of any attempt on the part of the Government to fix prices. I understand that the position of the American Farm Bureau Federation is similar, though I have not had an opportunity to confer with their Executive Committee. I am going to do it in a day or two. They have been invited to come in and give me the benefit of their advice.

An inquiry as to whether I plan to confer with the Secretary of the House Ways and Means Committee on matters of tax revision. Of course, I shall confer with the Secretary of the Treasury and undoubtedly with some representatives of the House, Ways and Means Committee on the question of whether there should be any tax revision at the present time. I haven’t any idea as to what advice they will offer. I know there is considerable both in the Treasury Department and, no doubt, by the direct influences in the Ways and Means department of the House. Whether they will determine that there should be any changes or not, I wouldn’t be able to report at the present time, because I don’t know.

An inquiry as to whether I can confirm or deny published reports that Judge Walter Evans of Kentucky has resigned. I haven’t had any information that he has resigned, and this is the first report that has come to me of that nature.
Another inquiry about Oklahoma. I haven't any further information about the situation out there. I did have a telegram from the Governor, which I gave out the next morning. He had some report, I think, that some federal judge was undertaking to permit the use of some federal property out there, and the next morning's report indicated that the judge said he hadn't undertaken to do anything of that kind. That was all in the papers, that interchange of telegrams.

And whether there would be any interference out there without an appeal from either the Governor or the Legislature to me. The only reason for any interference that I know of would be for the purpose of keeping order, and appeals of that kind come almost always through the Governor. I am not certain whether the legislature has any constitutional authority to make representations to the President or not. Where there is a direct interference with the actions of the Federal Government, as the movement of mail, the holding of federal courts, or some federal action of that kind, then it wouldn't be necessary for the Governor or anybody else to ask for federal interference on the part of the authorities in Washington. It would be naturally and inevitably their business to see that federal actions go on. But anything that I should do with the domestic affairs of any State, of course, would not be interfered in by the national Government, if it was a matter of keeping order there, that would come through some responsible representative of the State.