

DIARY

BOOK 124

MAY 9 - 15, 1938

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GROUP MEETING

May 13, 1938.
9:30 a.m.

Present: Mr. Magill
Mr. Bell
Mr. Gaston
Mr. Gibbons
Mr. Haas
Mr. White
Mr. McReynolds
Mr. Upham
Mr. Lochhead
Miss Chauncey
Miss Lonigan
Mr. Foley

H.M.Jr: George, this thing of the United States Steel gives me an idea on inventories. Why don't we ask the 28 companies that are giving us figures to give us their inventory position, say, as of - once a month from now on, going back - if they'll go back a year. See?

Haas: Some of them may not be able to do it, because they don't keep a perpetual inventory. But some of the big ones do.

H.M.Jr: I think that will be very helpful.

Haas: Very good.

H.M.Jr: Steve, I sent over these appointments for the court, and it comes back - said I never took it up with the President.

Now, what's the financial picture on this

Oh, before that we'll take care of you (Magill), because you want to go.

Magill: I haven't anything particular. Still holding up the tax bill in Congress for the benefit of the American Smelting and Refining Company. I imagine the American Smelting and Refining is going to get away with it, but I don't know.

(Lonigan comes in)

H.M.Jr: I'll talk to you about that.

I've just got this thing - I wanted you to just sit in on this part, Miss Lonigan. Here are some figures from Mr. Gill in which he says the number of cases on relief in Cleveland are 27,000; Toledo,

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Here's the confidential information: "...and a minimum of \$70,000 a week is needed." He's got the whole thing.

Gaston: Yes, yes.

Lonigan: Mr. Secretary, may I suggest to you the possible advantage of having a representative of Social Security at your conference?

H.M.Jr: I don't think the President would stand for it. I don't think that he'd stand for it, Miss Lonigan. I don't want to get excited, but Social Security and the Hopkins organization sit here and do nothing.

Lonigan: Social Security can't, but they have the facts.

H.M.Jr: But they don't talk. They should be vocal.

Lonigan: Well, I agree with that.

H.M.Jr: I mean how can a person have anything to do with an organization called "social" and sit here and see people - and see people starve?

Lonigan: They couldn't spend a dollar.

H.M.Jr: But they could be vocal. I mean there's such a thing as bringing it to somebody's attention, and it just - it just turns my stomach to hear Henry Wallace want a hundred million dollars to have the people grow less wheat and then - and with people not getting enough to eat. Now, there's just something cock-eyed, crackpot, about this administration. I mean it just goes against all decency and human understanding that they should be trying to find ways and means to grow less.

Gibbons: Yes.

H.M.Jr: And there's people going hungry in America, all over America. Now, there's just something - the combination of Wallace and Hopkins refusing to do any direct relief - just something ungodly about it.

Haas: And draw the money from a mass consumers' tax, which is

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H.M.Jr:

And I'm not going to keep quiet.

(On White House phone) Oh, hello. - Oh, thanks. Hello, Tommy (Malvina Scheider). How are you? This letter that Mrs. Roosevelt wrote me about trying to get the report on Amelia Earhart. Now, I've been given a verbal report. If we're going to release this, it's just going to smear the whole reputation of Amelia Earhart, and my - Yes, but I mean if we give it to this one man we've got to make it public; we can't let one man see it. And if we ever release the report of the Itasca on Amelia Earhart, any reputation she's got is gone, because - and I'd like to - I'd really like to return this to you.

(Continuing) Now, I know what Navy did, I know what the Itasca did, and I know how Amelia Earhart absolutely disregarded all orders, and if we ever release this thing, goodbye Amelia Earhart's reputation. Now, really - because if we give the access to one, we have to give it to all. And my advice is that - and if the President ever heard that somebody questioned that the Navy hadn't made the proper search, after what those boys went through - I think they searched, as I remember it, 50,000 square miles, and every one of those planes was out, and the boys just burnt themselves out physically and every other way searching for her. And if - I mean I think he'd get terribly angry if somebody - because they just went the limit, and so did the Coast Guard. And we have the report of all those wireless messages and everything else, what that woman - happened to her the last few minutes. I hope I've just got to never make it public, I mean. - O.K. - Well, still if she wants it, I'll tell her - I mean what happened. It isn't a very nice story. - Well, yes. There isn't anything additional to something like that. You think up a good one. - Thank you. (Conversation ends)

(To Chauncey) Just send it back.

Chauncey:

Sure.

H.M.Jr:

I mean we tried - people want us to search again

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those islands, after what we have gone through.
You (Gibbons) know the story, don't you?

Gibbons: We have evidence that the thing is all over, sure.
Terrible. It would be awful to make it public.

H.M.Jr: Well, the only thing that out of this - I want you
(Lonigan) to check up with Social Security. Archie,
give this (photostat of WPA figures) to her and let
her check, and Ed, you check the legislation, will
you please?

Foley: Yes. Here's an unsigned memorandum.

H.M.Jr: Excuse me?

Foley: There is what Dan said about the law.

H.M.Jr: And you two can be excused, please - Miss Lonigan
and Mr. Foley.

Lonigan: Mr. Secretary, there is one factor you might wish.
Yesterday Mr. Gill called it to you - the average
weekly payment for direct relief was \$21 a week,
and I checked on what F.E.R.A. was paying in 1935,
and they had full control of general relief and they
paid \$7.12 a week. That's the discrepancy.

H.M.Jr: Is that a family or person?

Lonigan: Everything is the family.

Haas: That's a United States average.

Lonigan: No, I think it's the city of Cleveland.

H.M.Jr: Well, it's four and a half now.

Lonigan: They mean the maximum you'd need for full programs.

H.M.Jr: I know. I mean - well, as I recall, it was around
\$28 a month.

Lonigan: A dollar a day.

H.M.Jr: Those figures are all drilled in my brain. I never
forget them. I don't know what his object was.

(Lonigan and Foley leave)

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Now, where are we on this? What are you leaving me?

Bell: I'll leave you all this material if you want to.

H.M.Jr: Would you?

Bell: That's the relief money available. That's the letter that if he wants to make an allocation - that's the one that I've recommended. See, that has the schedule and the regulation. This one is wide open. Harry can use it any place for direct relief and draw his own regulations, and so forth.

That's the Section 32 money - the explanation that I gave you on the side.

H.M.Jr: Herbert, anything?

Gaston: You asked me about this man Hook who was shot down there in the Virginia mountains. He's in the hospital at Lynchburg. He was wounded in the neck and the leg, and his condition is not critical. They believe that it was genuinely a case of mistaken identity on the part of the sheriff's office. But it is one of those counties where they don't make a practice of letting the sheriff's office know when they make raids; so the mistake happened.

Tom Stokes sent me a copy of that - Scripps-Howard story. It doesn't add anything much to what we already have on the situation.

H.M.Jr: Thanks.

Bell: I told Mr. Mac that he ought to give out a statement that this man was killed because he didn't have enough money.

Gaston: I still have that transcript on that hearing, if you have any chance to look at it.

H.M.Jr: Right after this.

Bell: They're very much concerned about that. Sort of threatened last night to have it printed without correction.