

March 18, 1942, 12 o'clock noon

Dearest:

Much important stuff is happening today. First, we received three hot wires this morning on the labor situation, one signed by the directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Austin, the other two signed by San Marcos citizens, one by about a dozen citizens, the other by fully fifty. They are demanding action by Congress to abolish the 40 Hour week--but this is not adequate--I shall just make a copy for us and send the wires on to you. I called Malcolm and on his advice wrote the enclosed letter, which I consider too weak and will not satisfy those people. Of course, we may just have to admit that we cannot satisfy those people. I think this important enough to see Sam about and called him. He said come over at 1:30. I'll write you later the gist of his advice and our visit. Is it at all possible that you would want to pair on this? The other day the question came up of whether you could pair or not--Malcolm asked me--and just for my own information I called Lew Deschler and asked him. He told me about youall's agreement not to pair (the agreement entered into by all the Congressmen going on active service), but said of course you could when and if you wanted to.

The people are surely in an ugly mood. I believe there really is a clever campaign going on to take away all the gains of the New Deal and turn the country back to the folks who ran it in the Twenties--and unfortunately they seem to have enough right on their side because of the War that they may be able to sell the whole thing, wrong along with right, to the country.

Mayor Will Rogers of Bastrop is in town and I will be seeing him if he does not come during the half hour I am with Sam. In any case he will be back later. I talked to him on the phone and told him how hard we had been working both with Crane on making Bastrop a defense housing area and with Defense Public Works, a branch of Federal Works Agency, on getting his projects for sewer and water approved. I did have some information on what had happened to his project in the last few days that he did not know about and was glad to hear.



## REPORT ON INTERVIEW WITH SAM

Sam had so much to say that seems of vital importance to me--forgive me if I report it in fragmentary fashion. I showed him the wires we had received; I showed him the letter we wrote in reply. He said it was a fine letter and to go on and send it. He said I could not commit you any further than that. I am sending a copy to each signer of the wire. It is weak and inconclusive--I am sorry. Sam said he had never seen such a tidal wave of feeling as is sweeping the country now. He was worried and perturbed and in a fighting mood. He gave me a copy of his press statement this morning, which I am enclosing; also copies of what Know and Stimpson told him, not ever published, about Congressmen entering the service.

*Thanks!*

I told him I wanted to take back what I said about you staying quietly in the service--that I saw on every side so many jobs that needed doing, so much red tape that needed slashing, so much that I thought you were the man who could do it. I wished you were here in the middle of this maelstrom, fighting like Hell, and at least giving this rising wave of distrust and dissension a run for their money. He said "I wish to God I thought that was the way Lyndon felt about it; I'd go to the President and get him to order the whole bunch back here Monday morning!"

*the instigator*  
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He said, "I told the President we were likely to lose the House in November--he might have a whole new Congress, even if they were Democrats, many of them, but new people. That would not be so good." He said he had had a letter from you and he read part of it to me. He said, "Tell Lyndon I am going to get started on doing what he said"--I presume about the fifty speakers going out to explain to the people. He said, "Now see, if Lyndon were here he could do that for me. You know, I figure he has the heart and the head of a legislator and a man with one-third the ability he has could be doing what he is doing in the Navy." His last words were, "Tell Lyndon I need him and need him like Hell."

But to go back a minute: he said there was going to be plenty of money this Fall. Flynn had already promised a large sum by May. He said "Gene Worley is likely to be beaten. Lyndon won't--there's no chance of that--but I'm afraid Gene isn't going to be able to stand it."

Darling, if you let me know in any way that I can convey to Sam, not as your words, of course, oh, I can't say what I mean ~~##~~ in any correct phrases, but I want to go to Sam and tell him that if he thinks the best thing for the country is to call you and the others back to go on and do it and do it quick. He wants to. He may do it anyway, any day. Have I the go signal to do what I think it right in this?



Saw Mayor Rogers and he is fine. He says the petition is going the rounds in their county. He said, "What does Lyndon want us to do?? Just tell us and we'll do it." I told him I personally thought that petition was a mighty fine demonstration of our friends in the district and I felt proud of it and hoped it was as efficiently handled all the way along as it seemed to be and suggested he drop in to see Senator Wirtz. O. J. made four appointments for him, with all the people he will need to see on their sewer and water projects. I believe Crane is going to announce Bastrop a defense area for housing in the next few days.

On top of everything else, here comes a few minutes ago a wire from Senator saying he can meet me in Alabama either Thursday or Friday afternoon!!! I hate like everything to go now but if I can get a reasonable number of the heirs together I must go. I am wiring Tony, Tommy, Edwina, If I go, I will leave here Thursday night, arrive there Friday noon, and stay as short a time as possible. Senator's time is so valuable and I feel I need him so, that I almost must go on. Besides, I want to lay hands, both for myself and for Aunt Effie, on such of that money as is rightfully mine, because that is what I am going to buy ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> sweet little white house on the farm where we can make our eating at least, so you can be free to work as hard as you can and use all your splendid talents without having to worry about not having a crumb or a roof when you lose out at the polls. That would constitute a kind of freedom, provided we weren't tied to a really high-priced scale of living--in which case I guess we would never be free.

I am going out to the Milo Perkins to tea now, so good-bye, my love. Tharon asked me to stay for dinner and spend the night, and I think I shall at least stay for dinner in order to have a good talk with Milo. But then about eleven o'clock I shall leave and come back down to the office to sign the mail. We had the Tex Easleys out to dinner last night and they seemed to have a good time and enjoyed the campaign movies very much. The Max Jacobs asked me to dinner tonight--too bad I can't go both place! This is a mad whirl!

Tomorrow morning Willard arrives to see about commission!!

Love —

Bird



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