

Transcribed Excerpts from White House Insider Theodore Joslin's Account of the Depression and Herbert Hoover's 1932 Presidential Campaign, 1932

Monday, May 9, 1932

The President is about as disgusted with the Republican members of the Senate Appropriations Committee today as he can be. He had to talk, argue and fight with most of them last night to whip them into line. "They are a dusty-brained, fozzle witted lot," he said this morning. "You can't imagine what difficulty I had last night making them appreciate the necessities of this situation."

"We are having a new economy bill drafted. I have gotten Senator Jones to agree to a subcommittee to work on the proposal. Jones is the worst of the lot. He is afraid to take action that must be taken. I told him: Jones, you don't know the conditions in your State. And I am telling you that for every voter in your State who objects to the closing of a navy yard there are 7000 who will slam you if the economies are not affect[ed]. The trouble with Jones is he is scared to death because he has two opponents for renomination."

The conservative Democrats are really working with the President as well if not better than the Republicans. Today for example, it was Senator Robinson of Arkansas, who, through agreement made the motion in the Senate sending the Oddie resolution to rescind the unscientific 10 p.c [%] appropriations cut resolution back to the Appropriation committee so that a real committee of three Republican and three Democrats can be selected to handle all the economy matters ...

Friday, November 18, 1932

The President directed me late today to call a special meeting of the Cabinet for 10 o'clock tomorrow, but not to call Stimson. Coming after an hour's conference with Stimson and Mills, it gave me a start, until the President told me the purpose of the meeting was to go over the budget.

He is pretty sure now of making a saving \$500,000,000 and he wants to increase to \$700,000,000. This would necessitate a 15 p.c. cut in wages as a substitute for the furlough, something the President is hesitant to do. Earlier in the day the President said:

"I am fearful of what the next few months will bring. If I had been re-elected business would now be on the upgrade. Orders totaling several hundred millions were placed in September and Oct subject to the election. Those orders have been canceled. Business refused to go ahead. There is nothing that can be done. These four months threaten to be all that I predicted in the campaign that they would be. I am laboring under a terrific handicap. I can recommend the plans I outlined during the campaign. This I shall do. But I can't do more. I can't for example go ahead with the agricultural relief program I had intended to launch. It wouldn't get anywhere. It would merely be attacked. It would accomplish no constructive purpose. I must withhold that action. This country is in a much more serious condition than the people realize. It is in a damned mess."