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HOTEL MCALPIN
BROADWAY AND 34TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Feb. 16, 1938

Hon. Marriner S. Eccles,
Chairman of the Board of Governors,
Federal Reserve System,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Eccles,-

I have your letter of the 14th which came as a distinct surprise to me as well as a keen disappointment. I feel that you are laboring under a misapprehension as to the nature of the banquet that has been arranged in honor of Mr. Szymczak. It is intended to be a testimonial to him and your speech was expected to be in accord with that idea. The fact that Mr. Szymczak will broadcast a part of his speech which I understand will be addressed more to his friends in the Middle West should not, in my opinion, be construed as giving the affair a promotional aspect. The whole program has been prepared with the definite purpose of paying Mr. Szymczak a personal tribute and I feel confident that nothing will be said that will conflict with that purpose.

What would prove most embarrassing would be your presence at the head table without making a few friendly remarks by way a personal tribute to Mr. Szymczak, especially since we have already listed you as a speaker on the program which we cannot change at this late date without serious difficulty and embarrassment not to mention the great disappointment that such change would cause to all of the guests.

For the reasons stated, I ask you as a special favor to reconsider your decision and to advise me that you will make a brief talk which will partake of a personal testimonial. I am indeed sorry that any misunderstanding should arise regarding this affair and earnestly hope that you will find it entirely appropriate, in view of what I have said, to speak on this occasion along the lines indicated.

Appreciating your kindness and awaiting your favorable response, I beg to remain,

Sincerely yours,

Edward S. Witkowski

ESW

February 17, 1938.

Mr. Edward S. Witkowski, President,
Manhattan Society,
Hotel McAlpin,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Witkowski:

Let me say in response to your letter of February 16th that, of course, it is not my intention to cause you any embarrassment whatever, and inasmuch as you have already listed me as a speaker on your program and cannot change it at this time without difficulty, I shall acquiesce in your request that if I am called upon, I shall very briefly supplement whatever may have been said by others in paying tribute to Mr. Szymczak.

I am sure you appreciate why I felt it would be inappropriate for me to attempt to participate in an occasion which seemed to me to go beyond this purpose of being merely a testimonial to Mr. Szymczak, and I am glad to have your assurance that it was not your thought to make the dinner into something of larger and different scope. Please accept again my thanks for your courtesy.

Sincerely yours,

M. S. Eccles,
Chairman.

ET:b