

December 17, 1941

[Minutes of Industry Labor Conference]

FDR Speech File

Gentlemen, I have called this conference for a serious purpose. This country and its future is in danger. You know that and I do not need to recite the detail. I have asked you to agree upon a program for handling labor-employer disputes during the war period. I have myself selected the two moderators of the conference and they represent the President of the United States and the public interest. Leaders of industry and labor have selected those who represent employers and employees at this conference. I trust your capacity and your purpose and the country trusts you. There have been few times in the history of this country when so much was at stake for ourselves and for our children. Every American is asking today, "What is my job in this war?", and many of them are being called on for new, unusual and hazardous services and sacrifices. Your lives and your talents are related directly to the production of the material supplies of the war - the supplies which the young men who go out for hazardous undertakings in planes, in ships and tanks, must rely upon to come in steady and ample supply.

Many people are saying to themselves today "I must" with regard to matters so difficult and so hard as to require them to put a new discipline upon themselves. Free people put this discipline upon themselves, and that is what I expect you to do as you face this solemn duty. On behalf of American industry and American labor you must reach a unanimous agreement for avoiding all interruptions in war production due to labor disputes, and you must devise a completely effective procedure for handling controversies and a form of reference of exceptional cases to some tribunal whose decision labor and industry have agreed in advance to honor. ~~I have confidence~~ ^{Leave this room} ~~and I have confidence that you will~~ that you will go away saying "We must do this". There are no truly serious differences between you, and there is no time now for the luxury of private

quarrels. Each of us must give up our pet feuds for the duration and the new unity which we see coming over American life is the result of just that determination. The moral value that comes out of an agreement between two persons or two groups whose interests are not identical is in itself creative and of more value than any pattern of order put upon them from the outside.

The agreement before you is not really a hard agreement. There is plenty of evidence in the long-standing contracts and sound relationships between labor and industry in many places, and in the general good will which all Americans bear each other, that the capacity to agree between American labor and industry is greater than has been commonly recognized. As a matter of fact in the period since July 1940, when vaguely foreseeing this danger which has now overtaken us, we began to make preparation for our defense ^{for} and ^{yours} afraid to others fighting in the cause of freedom, both ^{made great contributions} groups, employers and labor, have done ~~greatly~~ well. Expansion of industry has been enormous and the employer groups in America have thrown their back into that in a most gratifying way. The extension of skill, the energetic and devoted production drive of millions of American workmen have been impressive, and in spite of ^{too many} ~~occasional~~ stoppages of work while settling a dispute, the total production has been good, but it has not been as good as it now must be. ~~That~~ That is why I am asking you, and the country is asking you, through me, and why the soldiers and sailors and aviators and exposed civilians are asking you to come to ~~a~~ constructive agreements which will ^{present these} ~~stop this one~~ ^{field} item which delays our drive to supply the sinews of war. I know, of course that there are other items which also impede production and we shall take appropriate means to stop those items, but your duty is in this field. Americans will be learning many new self-imposed disciplines. Among them

will be the discipline of cooperation and it is a true discipline, of which the first item is intellectual agreement and development of a common purpose. We all have to train ourselves in this. You have your opportunity this week to set an example which will inspire the whole country and encourage all other Americans who must also make new and difficult adjustments in their lives.

I am often reminded these days of something told me by a friend of mine who was a missionary to China. He said that the common daily prayer of the Chinese Christian was this "Lord, reform Thy world, beginning with me". Perhaps that is where we have to begin.

Please think of your task as a part of the ~~work~~ ^{plan} for the common defense of this beloved Nation and accept my good wishes and thanks.

FDR

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO MEMBERS OF
THE INDUSTRY LABOR CONFERENCE
11.15 A.M. -- December 17, 1941

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be twenty minutes late, but I have the kind of a schedule these days that sometimes it is impossible to be strictly on time, because news just keeps coming in, in regard to actual physical action in some part of the world in which we are concerned.

I think, in asking you to come here to this conference, that we should all -- everyone of us -- realize the -- not merely the serious purpose before us, but also the serious problem before us.

Two weeks ago, I suppose the average American felt either that we wouldn't get into the war, or that if we did, that we would mop up, if it were a war in the Pacific, in very short order. There were rather derogatory remarks that were leveled all through this country against any danger from Japan. Of course, we have begun to realize it now, and we will realize it more deeply as time goes on.

There is very real danger to the whole world, because the -- there is a new philosophy in the world which would end for all time -- if it is swept into this country, and even if it is swept all over the rest of the world -- it would mean an end of private industry, and it would mean the end of trade unionism equally. It is a real danger. We haven't won the war by a long shot. It is going to go on for a long time.

And so I have asked you here to help win this war, just as much as if you were in uniform.

I am going to use a word which none of us like, and I don't either. The word "must." I am applying the word "must" to you as an individual, and

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to myself.

A boy, the other day, was out in a plane. The Government did not tell him he had to dive on a battleship and lose his life. That was his "must"; his own personal word. There was nothing in his orders that told him he had to dive his plane onto a Japanese battleship. That was young Kelly's own personal "must."

And each one of you, and I, we have got our personal "must."

So, when I use the word "must," I want you to appropriate it to yourselves, individually -- as Americans.

We are here as a group -- industry and labor, with a chairman from an Executive branch of the Government, and a vice chairman from the Legislative branch of the Government -- to act. I dug it up -- I dug up the name sometime ago, because I have used it once or twice before, from one of the churches -- the word "moderator." It's a darn good word. These two gentlemen are Moderators. I don't think they will have to wield any "big stick." I think that they can truly act as exceedingly peaceful Moderators in presiding at your meetings.

I know that if I were a Moderator I would want a result. Of course, complete agreement. I would want something else, and as Moderator I might help get it. I want speed.

Now speed is of the essence, just as much in turning out things in plants as it is among fighting forces. It is just as necessary to turn out equipment as it is to drill an Army, or build up a Navy, after the equipment is turned out. Speed is very, very much of the essence.

With speed goes something we all know that we have got to have in the next -- well, beginning very, very soon -- next few weeks. We have got greatly to increase our production program. We are still in a sense --

whether you like it or not -- the arsenal of the free world. For various reasons. Geographically we can turn out materials without anything like the same physical danger to the workers, and to the plants, as there is in Britain, or China, or Russia. We have got to do perfectly unheard of things.

I always like a little story that one of my people who came back from Russia told me the other day. When they started -- I got thinking what would we say -- what would management, and what would labor say if we did that here? I think we would be all right.

When the Germans were approaching not one city but many cities, with industrial plants that were turning out fighting munitions, the Russians, realizing that they probably would lose the city, began to move factories. And how did they move them? They ran a freight train -- backed it into the factory, and they would load the tools into the freight cars. And with every tool -- into the same freight car -- went the man who was operating that tool. With, of course, the simple objective -- when they got six hundred or a thousand miles -- to re-establish the factory, and they would have the people with the tools, without having to put new people -- untrained people -- onto those tools.

And I wonder just a little bit what the average American would do if the Government backed a freight train in and said to every worker: "Five minutes notice. You can't say good-bye to your family. Get into that freight car with the tool that you are working on. There is a suit-case -- a hamper with food in it. There are a couple of bottles of water. We will let you out when you get a thousand miles back inland." And lock him in.

Now that is what war means. I pray that we won't have anything

actually happening like that over here. But speed, and more speed is essential. And that is why any kind of a stoppage of work, anywhere, even if it seems to be something the average manager of the plant, or the average worker in the plant does not deem to be particularly important to winning this war, it may be far more important.

And so I think we have to feel that we are all of us subject to a self-imposed discipline. In other words, I think you have -- again as individuals you must -- I am not telling you that in the sense of an Executive Order, or as President, I am telling you as an American citizen -- you individually must reach an agreement.

Now, to go back for a minute, if I were Moderator, I think I would impose a time limit on speeches. I think you know just what I mean. Well, for example, we have one branch of the Government -- the Senate. It is only in a very great emergency that the Senate imposes on itself, without any rule, a limitation on speeches. They do it voluntarily. You might say by common consent. And in time of great emergency, oratory in the Senate is at a minimum. On the other side of the Capitol is the House. It is a very large body -- four hundred and something people in it. Pretty hard to limit that kind of a debate without a rule. So they have a rule. And when a bill comes out from a Committee, and they adopt the rule, they allot so much time to each side. The result is that on tremendously serious measures -- laws -- the debate is limited to two days, or three days, in that very, very large body.

Now, of course, this meeting -- you are a lot smaller than the Senate, and I believe that you can make even better time than the Senate of the United States under emergency conditions. And I hope very much, and I'll tell you why -- it isn't just me -- Hall, no -- it's the country. The

country is expecting something out of you in a hurry.

I don't want to say by tomorrow night, but it will be a thrilling thing if we could get something out in the way of a unanimous agreement tomorrow night, Thursday night, or by Friday night. Incidentally you would have a chance to go home and do your regular work a lot quicker than if you wait around and talk. I see no reason why in this instance you shouldn't adopt the Congressional custom and ask "leave to print," and in five minutes you could say what you want to say. Ask of your fellow members for "leave to print." (laughter)

Now actually, as we know, we are all after the same thing. I think that even if there hadn't been a war with three very large nations -- Germany, Japan, Italy -- I am inclined to think that the differences on both sides were, in this world of ours, relatively small. We have been making very definite progress on the whole subject of labor and management. We are going to continue to make progress, of course. I think every sensible person on both sides -- labor and management, and in Government -- realizes that, let us say, eight or nine years ago we were rather far behind in this country, that we needed -- everybody admitted it -- a greater spread in the earnings of the country, that we needed better working conditions, that England was ahead of us, and the Scandinavian countries were ahead of us.

Well, we have made a lot of progress, and at the end of this very great world war -- because it truly is that -- well, we are not going to stop. All our kind of nations are going to make more progress, and I don't want to lift something up and make it a fetish -- some one thing. Let us agree not to go backwards -- that is deadweight -- but let us agree that during this war we won't get things held up.

Now that is the primary thing, to keep the work going.

I don't believe you are going to have great difficulties, because I don't think it is a hard agreement to make. You are going to be faced with one fact, and that is an enormous number of additional people are going to be at work on this war program. I can't tell you the details, because I won't have them until the third of January, in my Message to Congress. But we can look for the employment during the coming year 1942 of a very -- of millions -- a great many million new workers in defense. We have got to protect them. But we have got to keep the thing going. We can't have stoppages of work.

And so I was just thinking about this -- going back to the old idea of self-discipline is an old -- somebody called my attention to it -- an old Chinese proverb of a Chinese Christian, who prayed every day -- he had been told to pray to our kind of a God -- and his prayer was: "Lord, reform Thy world, beginning with me." And it is rather a nice line to keep in the back of our heads.

There isn't much difference between labor and management actually. I suppose a very large proportion of management has come, in this country, from the ranks of labor. We know very much -- it's like the old Kipling saying about "Judy O'Grady and the captain's lady." They are both the same under the skin. Well now, that is true in this country, especially in this country, and we want to keep it so. And keeping it so, and improving it -- this is the -- this is the problem at this time.

Don't believe everything you read in the papers. They have to print things, they have to keep an interest going. I was reading a paper this morning which was talking about how inevitable -- just plain inevitable -- because we are a bigger nation and we have got more resources and probably better abilities, that just because of our size -- why -- victory

would be inevitable.

Well, the President of the United States doesn't say victory is inevitable. I want to see what we can do. We have only been in this thing for a week and a half. I do think it is serious at the present time. As you know, we are not sitting on "Easy Street." Out there in the Pacific we have got a long, long distance to go to hit the other fellow back. We are taking it on the chin, and we can't -- we can't fight unless we can get within range of the other fellow. We can't -- we can't fight without causing a great deal of destruction to him. Otherwise he will cause destruction to us. That is war.

And I hope very much, in fact I am very confident that you will realize the -- I might call it the spiritual side of this. We want our type of civilization to go on. And very definitely it is threatened. We want certain freedoms. We want freedom to express our own opinions. We want freedom of religion. Those are threatened. And I think very much the country is looking to you gentlemen to give us, just as fast as you possibly can -- tomorrow -- the next day -- some kind of an agreement with which we will all shake hands with each other. And then after this war is won, let's go back, if we want to, if we have to -- back to the old Kilkenny. And you know what a Kilkenny fight was. That is something that we can put aside until that date comes. We may all be dead. I hope not.

And so I think that the country is looking at you. I am looking at you. The Congress is looking at you. And all I can say is God speed your efforts to shake hands all around the table and tell the country you have done it.

Thanks.

MADAM SECRETARY PERKINS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be sitting right here. (laughter) It's all right.

Extra Copy for Manuscript File
STATEMENTS FILE

Statement of the President to Members of the
War Labor Conference, December 17, 1941.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be 20 minutes late, but I have the kind of a schedule these days that sometimes it is impossible to be strictly on time, because news just keeps coming in, in regard to actual physical action in some part of the world in which we are concerned.

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Two weeks ago, I suppose the average American felt either that we wouldn't get into the war, or that if we did, that we would mop up, if it were a war in the Pacific, in very short order. There were rather derogatory remarks that were leveled all through this country against any danger from Japan. Of course, as we have begun to realize now, we realize it more deeply as time goes on. There is very real danger to the whole world, because the -- there is a new philosophy in the world which would end for all time -- if it is swept into this country, and even if it is swept all over the rest of the world -- it would mean an end of private industry, and it would mean the end of trade unionism equally. It is a real danger. We haven't won the war by a long shot. It is going to go on for a long time.

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/S/ And I hope very much, in fact I am very confident that you will realize the -- I might call it the spiritual side of this. We want our type of civilization to go on. And very definitely it is threatened. We want certain freedoms. We want freedom to express our own opinions. We want freedom of religion. Those are threatened. And I think very much the country is looking ^{to} ~~for~~ you gentlemen to give us, just as fast as you possibly can -- tomorrow -- the next day -- some kind of an agreement with which we will all shake hands with each other. And then after this war is won, let's go back, if we want to, if we have to -- back to the old Kilkenny. And you know what a Kilkenny fight was. That is something that we can put aside until that date comes. We may all be dead. I hope not.

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Thanks.

MADAM SECRETARY PERKINS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be sitting right here. (laughter) It's all right.

Informal remarks of the President delivered extemporaneously to members of the Industry Labor Conference received by him this forenoon.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be 20 minutes late, but I have the kind of a schedule these days that makes it sometimes impossible for me to be strictly on time.

In asking you to come here to this conference, I think we should all -- everyone of us -- realize not only the serious purpose before us, but the serious problem as well.

Two weeks ago, I suppose the average American felt either that we wouldn't get into the war, or that if we did, we would mop up, if it came to war in the Pacific, in very short order. Rather derogatory remarks were leveled all through this country against any danger from Japan. Of course, as we have begun to realize now and realize more deeply as time goes on, there is very real danger to the whole world, because there is a new philosophy in the world which would end for all time -- if it is swept into this country, even if it is swept over the rest of the world -- it would mean an end of private industry, and it would mean the end of trade unionism equally. It is a real danger. We haven't won the war by a long shot. It is going to go on for a long time.

And so I have asked you here to help win this war, just as much as if you were in uniform. I am going to use a word which none of us like -- and I don't either. The word is "must". I am applying the word "must" to you as individuals, and to myself.

A boy, the other day, was out in a plane. The Government did not tell him he had to dive on a battleship and lose his life. That was his "must"; his own personal "must". There was nothing in his orders that told him he had to dive his plane into a Japanese battleship. That was young Kelly's own personal "must".

And each one of you, and I too, we have our personal "musts".

So, when I use the word "must", I want you to appropriate it to yourselves, individually -- as Americans.

We are here as a group -- industry and labor -- with a chairman chosen from the Executive branch of the Government, and a vice chairman from the Legislative branch of the Government, to act. I dug up the word "moderator". It's a good word. These two gentlemen are moderators. I don't think they will have to wield any big stick. I think rather they can truly act as exceedingly peaceful Moderators in presiding at your meetings.

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This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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And I wonder just a little bit what the average American would do if our Government backed a freight train in and said to every worker: "Five minutes notice. You can't say good-byes to your family. Get into that freight car with the tools you are working with. There is your suit-case — a hamper of food, a couple bottles of water. We will let you out when you get a thousand miles or so inland".

That is what war means. I pray that we won't have anything actually happening like that over here. But speed, and more speed, is essential. And that is why any kind of a stoppage of work, anywhere — even if it seems to be something the average manager of the plant, or the average worker in the plant does not deem to be particularly important to winning this war — may be most important.

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You are a lot smaller in numbers than the Senate and, I believe, you can make even better time than the Senate of the United States under emergency conditions. The country is expecting something out of you in a hurry — I don't say by tomorrow night — but it will be a thrilling thing if we could get something out in the way of a unanimous agreement by tomorrow night, Thursday, or at the latest Friday night. I see no reason why, in this instance, you shouldn't adopt the Congressional custom and ask "leave to print". In five minutes you could say all you want to say. Ask your fellow members for "leave to print".

Actually, as we know, we are all after the same thing. I think that even if there hadn't been a war with three very large nations -- Germany, Japan, Italy -- the differences on both sides, in this country of ours, are relatively small. We have been making very definite progress on the whole subject of labor and management. We are going to continue to make progress. I believe every sensible person on both sides -- labor and management, and in Government -- realizes that, eight or nine years ago we were rather far behind in this country; that we needed a greater spread in the earnings of the country, that we needed better working conditions. England was ahead of us. The Scandinavian countries were ahead of us. We have made a lot of progress, and at the end of this very great world war, because it truly is that, we are not going to stop progress. Our kind of nation is going to make more progress. Let us agree not to go backwards. But let us agree that, during this war, we won't hold things up.

That is the primary thing -- to keep the work going. I don't believe you are going to have great difficulties, because I don't think it is a hard agreement for you to make. You are going to be faced with one fact -- an enormous number of additional people are going to be at work on this war program. I can't tell you the details, but we can look for the employment during the coming year of 1942 of millions of new workers in defense. We have got to protect them. We have got to keep things going. We can't have stoppages.

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STATEMENTS FILE

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There isn't much difference between labor and management actually. I suppose a very large proportion of management has come, in this country, from the ranks of labor. It's like the old Kipling saying about "Judy O'Grady an' the Colonel's Lady." They are both the same under the skin. That is true in this country, especially in this country, and we want to keep it so. And keeping it so, and improving it, is the problem at this time.

Don't believe everything you read in the papers. They have to print things, they have to keep an interest going. I was reading a paper this morning which was telling how inevitable -- because we are a bigger nation and have more resources and probably better abilities -- victory would be.

I want to see what we can do. We have only been in this war for a week and a half. It is serious, at the present time. We are not sitting on "Easy Street."

I hope very much, in fact I am very confident, you will realize the spiritual side of this war emergency. We want our type of civilization to go on. It is threatened. We want our freedoms. We want freedom to express our own opinions. We want freedom of religion and the others as well. They are threatened.

I think very much the country is looking to you gentlemen to give us, just as fast as you possibly can -- by tomorrow or the next day -- some kind of an agreement so that we all can shake hands. After this war is won, let's go back if we want to, if we have to, to old Kilkenny. And you know what a Kilkenny fight is. But that is something that we can put aside until that date comes.

The country is looking to you. I am looking at you. The Congress is looking at you. All I can say is God speed your efforts.

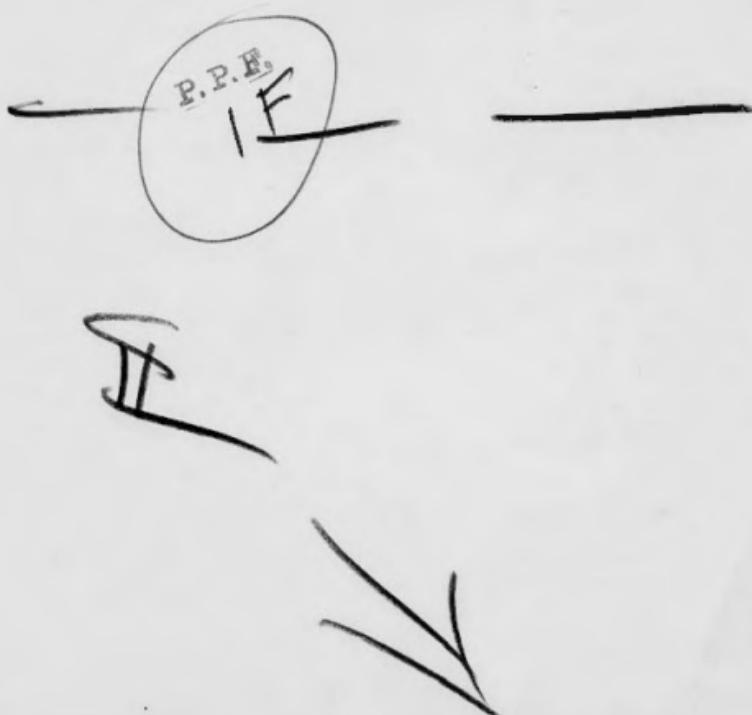
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FOR THE PRESS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECEMBER 17, 1941

Informal remarks of the President delivered
extemporaneously to members of the Industry
Labor Conference received by him this forenoon.



~~Statement of the President to Members of the
War Labor Conference, December 17, 1941.~~

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be 20 minutes late, but I have the kind of a schedule these days that sometimes makes it impossible to be strictly on time, because news just keeps coming in regard to actual military action in some parts of the world in which we are concerned.

I [redacted] in asking you to come here to this conference, think [redacted] we should all -- everyone of us -- realize the [redacted] not only serious purpose before us, but [redacted] the serious problem [redacted] as well.

Two weeks ago, I suppose the average American felt either that we wouldn't get into the war, or that if we did, that we would mop up, if it [redacted] war in the Pacific, in very short order. There were rather derogatory remarks that were leveled all through this country against any danger from Japan. Of course, as we have begun to realize now [redacted] and realize more deeply as time goes on, there is very real danger to the whole world, because there is a new philosophy in the world which would end for all time -- if it is swept into this country, even if it is swept over the rest of the world -- it would mean an end of private industry, and it would mean the end of trade unionism equally. It is a real danger. We haven't won the war by a long shot. It is going to go on for a long time.

And so I have asked you here to help win this war, just as [redacted] as if you were in uniform. I am going to use a word which much

none of us like ~~me~~ I don't either. The word "must". I am applying the word "must" to you as ~~we~~ individuals, and to myself.

A boy, the other day, was out in a plane. The Government did not tell him he had to dive on a battleship and lose his life. That was his "must"; his own personal ^{"must"}. There was nothing in his orders that told him he had to dive his plane ~~onto~~ a Japanese battleship. That was young Kelly's own personal "must".

And each one of you, and ^{too,} we have ~~we~~ our personal "musts!"

So, when I use the word "must", I want you to appropriate it to yourselves, individually -- as Americans.

We are here as ~~the~~ group industry and labor with a chairman from the executive branch of the Government, and a vice chairman from the Legislative branch of the Government, to act. I dug up ~~I dug up the name sometime ago, because I have used it enough before, but now I can't remember~~ the word "moderator". It's a ~~a~~ good word. These two gentlemen are ~~moderators~~. I ~~think~~ don't think they will have to wield any big stick. I think ~~they~~ ^{nature} they can truly act as exceedingly peaceful Moderators in presiding at your meetings.

I know, ~~if~~ if I were a ~~Moderator~~, I would want ~~a~~ results -- ~~of~~ complete agreement. I would want something else, and as ~~Moderator~~ I might help get it. I want speed. ~~Now~~ Speed is of the essence, just as much in turning out things in plants as it is among ~~the~~ fighting forces. It is just as necessary to turn out equipment as it is to drill an army, or build up a Navy, after the equipment is turned out. Speed is very, very much of the

essence.

With speed goes something we all know that we have got to have in the next - well, beginning very, very soon next few weeks. We have got greatly to increase our production program. We are still in a sense -- whether you like it or not -- the arsenal of the free world. ~~So~~ Geographically we can turn out materials without anything like the same physical danger to the workers and to the plants as ~~now~~ in Britain, or China, or Russia. We have got to do perfectly unheard of things.

I always like a little story that one of my people who came back from Russia told me the other day, ~~When they started -- I got thinking what would we say -- what would management, and what would labor say if we did that here. I think we would be all right.~~ //

When the Germans were approaching not one city, but many cities ~~where~~, industrial plants ~~were~~ were turning out fighting munitions, the Russians realizing that they probably would lose the city ^{or cities} ~~then~~ began to move factories. And how did they move them? They ran a freight ~~train~~ backed it into the factory, and they ~~would~~ load the tools into the freight cars. And with every tool ~~would~~ into the same freight car went the man who was operating that tool. ~~With~~, or ~~so~~ [^] the simple objective, when they ~~were~~ 600 or a thousand miles to re-establish the factory [^] ~~they~~ ^{moved} they would have the people with the tools. ~~with~~ ^{the workers,} ~~they~~ ^{they did not} have to put new people -- untrained people onto those tools.

And I wonder just a little bit what the average American

would do if ~~the~~ Government backed a freight train in and said to every worker: "Five minutes notice. You can't say good-bye to your family. Get into that freight car with the tools ~~that~~ you are working ~~with~~. There is ~~your~~ suit-case -- a hamper ~~of~~ food, ~~there~~ a couple ~~of~~ bottles of water. We will let you out when you get a thousand miles ~~or so~~ inland." ~~and looking~~

~~That~~ is what war means. I pray that we won't have anything actually happening like that over here. But speed, and more speed, is essential. And that is why any kind of a stoppage of work, anywhere, even if it seems to be something ~~to~~ the average manager of the plant, or the average worker in the plant does not seem to be particularly important to winning this war ~~it~~ may be ~~most~~ important.

~~and~~ I think ~~we~~ have to feel that we, ~~all of us~~ subject to a self-imposed discipline. In other words, I think you have ~~and I am not telling you~~ ~~individuals you must~~ ~~I am not telling~~, ~~in the sense of an Executive Order, or as President~~ ~~but~~ ~~you as an American citizen~~ ~~that you must~~ ~~reach~~ an agreement.

~~To~~ go back for a minute, if I were ~~Moderator~~, I think I would impose a time limit on speeches. I think you know just what I mean. ~~For example,~~ ~~there is~~ one branch of the Government -- the Senate. It is only in a very great emergency that the Senate ~~imposes on itself~~, without any rule, a limitation on speeches. They do it voluntarily, ~~You might say~~ by common

consent. And in times of great emergency, oratory in the Senate is at a minimum. On the other side of the Capitol is the House. It is a very large body and it is

~~It's~~ pretty hard to limit ~~the~~ debate without a rule. So they ~~have~~ a rule. And when a bill comes out from a Committee they ~~haven't~~ the rule ~~which~~ allots so much time to each side. The result is that on tremendously serious measures -- laws -- the debate is limited to two days, or three days in that very, very large body.

~~numbers~~ Now, of course, this meeting -- you are a lot smaller ~~in~~ than the Senate and I believe ~~that~~ you can make even better time than the Senate of the United States under emergency conditions. And I hope very much and I'll tell ~~you~~ why -- it isn't just me. Hell, no. ~~it's~~ ~~the~~ ~~country~~. The country is expecting something out of you in a hurry. I don't ~~think~~ say by tomorrow night ~~but~~ it will be a thrilling thing if we could get something out in the way of a unanimous ~~decision~~ agreement tomorrow night ~~or~~ Thursday ~~or~~ ^{A/T/F} Friday night. ~~Incidentally~~ ~~you~~ have chances to go home and do your regular work a lot quicker. I see no reason why, in this instance, you shouldn't adopt the Congressional custom and ask "leave to print". In five minutes you could say ~~what~~ ~~you~~ want to say. Ask ~~your~~ your fellow members for "leave to print".

~~Actually~~, as we know, we are all after the same thing. I think that even if there hadn't been a war with three very large nations -- Germany, Japan, Italy -- ~~we~~ ~~are~~ ~~in~~ ~~it~~

~~this~~ the differences on both sides were, in this ~~point~~ of ours, relatively small. We have been making very definite progress on the whole subject of labor and management. We are going to continue to make progress. ~~I believe~~ I believe every sensible person on both sides -- labor and management, and in Government -- realizes that, ~~let~~ eight or nine years ago we were rather far behind in this country, that we needed ~~everybody~~ ~~had~~ a greater spread in the earnings of the country, that we needed better working conditions. ~~England~~ was ahead of us, ~~and~~ the Scandinavian countries were ahead of us. ~~We~~ We have made a lot of progress, and at the end of this very great world war, because it truly is that, ~~we~~ we are not going to stop ~~we~~. Our kind of nations are going to make more progress, and I don't want to let anything ~~make it a fashion~~ ~~stop~~ ~~us~~. Let us agree not to go backwards. ~~This is deadweight~~, But let us agree that, during this war, we won't ~~hold~~ things ~~up~~. That is the primary thing to keep the work going. I don't believe you are going to have great difficulties, because I don't think it is a hard agreement to make. You are going to be faced with one fact, ~~an~~ an enormous number of additional people are going to be at work on this war program. I can't tell you the details, ~~because I will have them until the end of January, in my message to Congress.~~ But we can look for the employment during the coming year 1942 of ~~every~~ millions ~~new workers~~ new workers in defense. We have got to protect them. ~~We have got to keep the things going.~~ We can't have stoppages ~~of~~.

And so I was just thinking ~~of~~ ~~about~~ ~~an~~
old idea of self-discipline ~~and~~ ~~somebody called me~~
attention to it ~~an old Chinese proverb of a Chinese Christian.~~
He ~~prayed every day -- he had been told to pray to our kind of~~
a God -- and his prayer was: "Lord, reform ^{my} world, beginning
with me." ~~it~~ ~~is rather a nice line to keep in the back of~~
our heads.

There isn't much difference between labor and management actually. I suppose a very large proportion of management has come, in this country, from the ranks of labor. ~~We know very~~
~~much~~ ~~it's like the old Kipling saying about "Judy O'grady and~~
~~the Captain's Lady."~~ They are both the same under the skin.
~~Well~~ ~~T~~hat is true in this country, especially in this country, and we want to keep it so. And keeping it so, and improving it, ~~this~~ is the problem at this time.

Don't believe everything you read in the papers. They have to print things, they have to keep ~~up~~ an interest going. I was reading a paper this morning which was ~~talking~~ ~~telling~~ how inevitable -- ~~just plain inevitable~~ because we are a bigger nation and ~~we have~~ ~~got~~ more resources and probably better abilities ~~that~~ ~~we~~ ~~have~~ ~~got~~ ~~why~~ victory would be ~~in~~ ~~it~~ ~~able~~.

Well, the President of the United States doesn't say ~~victory is inevitable~~ ~~I~~ I want to see what we can do. We have only been in this ~~war~~ for a week and a half. ~~It~~ ~~is~~ ~~serious~~ at the present time. ~~But~~ ~~we~~ ~~are~~ not sitting on "Easy Street". ~~Out there in the Pacific we have got a long, long~~

~~distance to go to hit the other fellow back. We are taking it on the chin, and we can't -- we can't fight unless we can get within range of the other fellow. We can't -- we can't fight without causing a great deal of destruction to him. Otherwise he will cause destruction to us. That is war.~~

~~And I hope very much, in fact, I am very confident, that you will realize the -- the spiritual side of this. We want our type of civilization to go on. And very definitely it is threatened. We want ~~our~~ freedoms. We want freedom to express our own opinions. We want freedom of religion. They are threatened. I think very much the country is looking ~~at~~ you gentlemen to give us, just as fast as you possibly can ^{to} tomorrow or the next day -- some kind of an agreement with ~~which~~ we will all shake hands.~~

~~After this war is won, let's go back, if we want to, if we have to, to old Kilkenny. And you know what a Kilkenny fight was. That is something that we can put aside until that date comes. We may all be dead. I have not~~

~~and ^{so} I think that~~ The country is looking ~~at~~ you. I am looking at you. The Congress is looking at you. All I can say is God speed your efforts to shake hands all around the table and tell the country you have done it.

Thanks,

~~MADAM SECRETARY PERKINS: Thank you, Mr. President.~~

~~THE PRESIDENT: I will be sitting right here. (laughter) It's all right.~~

Informal remarks of the President delivered extemporaneously to members of the Industry Labor Conference received by him this forenoon.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be 20 minutes late, but I have the kind of a schedule these days that makes it sometimes impossible for me to be strictly on time.

In asking you to come here to this conference, I think we should all -- everyone of us -- realize not only the serious purpose before us, but the serious problem as well.

Two weeks ago, I suppose the average American felt either that we wouldn't get into the war, or that if we did, we would mop up, if it came to war in the Pacific, in very short order. Rather derogatory remarks were leveled all through this country against any danger from Japan. Of course, as we have begun to realize now and realize more deeply as time goes on, there is very real danger to the whole world, because there is a new philosophy in the world which would end for all time -- if it is swept into this country, even if it is swept over the rest of the world -- it would mean an end of private industry, and it would mean the end of trade unionism equally. It is a real danger. We haven't won the war by a long shot. It is going to go on for a long time.

And so I have asked you here to help win this war, just as much as if you were in uniform. I am going to use a word which none of us like -- and I don't either. The word is "must". I am applying the word "must" to you as individuals, and to myself.

A boy, the other day, was out in a plane. The Government did not tell him he had to dive on a battleship and lose his life. That was his "must"; his own personal "must". There was nothing in his orders that told him he had to dive his plane into a Japanese battleship. That was young Kelly's own personal "must".

And each one of you, and I too, we have our personal "musters".

So, when I use the word "must", I want you to appropriate it to yourselves, individually -- as Americans.

We are here as a group -- industry and labor -- with a chairman chosen from the Executive branch of the Government, and a vice chairman from the Legislative branch of the Government, to act. I dug up the word "moderator". It's a good word. These two gentlemen are moderators. I don't think they will have to wield any big stick. I think rather they can truly act as exceedingly peaceful Moderators in presiding at your meetings.

I know, if I were a moderator, I would want results -- a complete agreement. I would want something else and as moderator, I might help get it. I want speed. Speed now is of the essence, just as much in turning out things in plants as it is among the fighting forces. It is just as necessary to turn out equipment as it is to drill an army, or build up a Navy, after the equipment is turned out. Speed is very, very much of the essence.

With speed goes something we all know that we have got to have in the next few weeks. We have got greatly to increase our production program. We are still in a sense -- whether you like it or not -- the arsenal of the free world. Geographically we can turn out materials without anything like the same physical danger to the workers and to the plants as prevail in Britain, or in China, or Russia. We have got to do perfectly unheard of things.

I always like a little story that one of my people who came back from Russia told me the other day. When the Germans were approaching not one city, but many cities where industrial plants were turning out fighting munitions, the Russians realizing that they probably would lose the city or cities, began to move their factories. And how did they move them? They ran a

freight train — backed it into the factory, and they loaded the tools into the freight cars. And with every tool—into the same freight car—went the man who was operating that tool. Their simple objective, when they moved 600 or a thousand miles away was to re-establish the factory. They would have the people, the workers with their tools. They did not have to put new people — untrained people — onto these tools.

And I wonder just a little bit what the average American would do if our Government backed a freight train in and said to every worker: "Five minutes notice. You can't say good-bye to your family. Get into that freight car with the tools you are working with. There is your suit-case — a hamper of food, a couple bottles of water. We will let you out when you get a thousand miles or so inland".

That is what war means. I pray that we won't have anything actually happening like that over here. But speed, and more speed, is essential. And that is why any kind of a stoppage of work, anymore — even if it seems to be something the average manager of the plant, or the average worker in the plant does not deem to be particularly important to winning this war — may be most important.

We have to feel that we, all of us, are subject to a self-imposed discipline. In other words, I think you have — and I am not telling you in the sense of an Executive Order, or as President — but as an American citizen — that you must reach an agreement.

To go back for a minute, if I were moderator, I think I would impose a time limit on speeches. I think you know just what I mean. For example, there is one branch of the Government — the Senate. It is only in a very great emergency that the Senate imposes on itself, without any rule, a limitation on speeches. The Senators do it voluntarily, by common consent. And, in times of great emergency, oratory in the Senate is at a minimum. On the other side of the Capitol is the House of Representatives. It is a very large body and it is pretty hard to limit debate without a rule. So there is a rule. And when a bill comes out from a Committee the rule adopted allot's so much time to each side. The result is that on tremendously serious measures — laws — the debate is limited to two days, or three days or less in that very, very large body.

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The country is looking to you. I am looking at you. The Congress is looking at you. All I can say is God speed your efforts.