

January 26, 1943

[Remarks to Crew of USS Memphis]

FDR Speech File

1448a

THE COTTON PICKER

BAFFERT, GAMBIA, AFRICA

THURSDAY

28 JANUARY, 1943



Text of President Roosevelt's speech to the officers and men on the evening of January 26, 1943, at 7:05 p.m.:

Captain McGinn: As Commander-in-Chief, President Roosevelt has very kindly consented to come back and say a few words to you.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose that this is the greatest surprise - this trip of mine, to you and to me both, because nothing like that has happened in the world for a great many years. I said last night when I came aboard that there was just one thing I would like to have - I would like to fly my flag on the MENHIS in a harbor off the coast of Africa. I think it is something we will always remember. No President has ever done it before. No ship has ever made a President's flag in such record time, and it is a darn good flag. I can't tell you much about home - you have only been out three months - but I can tell you that in the past 30 days, with the Chiefs of Staff, British and ourselves, we have worked on plans and have agreed unanimously on plans to keep the war going at full speed during the rest of 1943. We hope it will be over by then, but you never can tell. If it is not over, we will be even more ready in 1944 for the final victory.

It has been good to see you all here and I will always remember this occasion. Thank you very much.