

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #548,
Executive Offices of the White House,
May 23, 1939, 4.09 P.M.

Q How do you do, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how are you? Did you hear me on the air?

Q (Mr. Young) He (referring to Mr. Godwin) says, "God bless you."

THE PRESIDENT: He did. The point is, he means it. A lot of you might say it and not mean it, but he does.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news today except the news of the submarine, as to which you are being kept informed as every development goes on. We are getting all the possible equipment and personnel up there and I think that you have everything up to the minute. The radio room of operations is in touch with me all the time.

Q What is your death list -- what is the latest?

THE PRESIDENT: No death list. They are all all right on board so far. All we can say is that we are hopeful, definitely hopeful.

Q As a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, what can you give as a guide? How do you feel about it now as to the possibility of getting them out of there?

THE PRESIDENT: I say definitely hopeful.

Q Why can't they use those lungs, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Because it is safer for human life to bring the whole ship to the surface. In other words, the lungs would only be used as a last emergency.

Q Mr. President, have you concluded --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You understand that the commanding officer on board -- of course they have been in communication with him -- he tells us that the best chance for everybody is to get divers down and close the valve because, if divers can be got down and the valve can be closed, and if they can get compressed air down there and blow the water out of the ship, then the whole ship can come to the surface, which is the best thing that they can do, first.

Q We have had conflicting reports on the depth.

THE PRESIDENT: 240 feet, I understand.

Q When President Somoza was here, the Government clerks were let out to review the procession. Will it be done when the King and Queen arrive?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q I have a question which may sound facetious -- I do not intend it to be asked that way --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I know what is coming now.

Q -- has any thought been given to the wine you are going to give to the King?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I haven't got that far yet.

Q Are you thinking of returning the royal visit?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, on the fourth page of your manuscript of your speech here, there is a statement I have been asked to make a query about. "The cost of the regular departments of Government," where you spoke of the billion dollars and said that it was less, I think, than your predecessor. We do not recall the figures on that. Do

you have them in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not tell you the exact figures, but for the same functions, we are performing the same functions for less money than when I arrived on the scene. You remember, we made an immediate cut that spring of 1933, a scale cut on the regular departments.

Q What was that, ten per cent?

THE PRESIDENT: It was ten per cent of salaries but ran a great deal more on the total expenditures of the regular departments, and that cut has not yet been wiped out. We are still under, for the same functions. Of course it is not fair or quite honorable to merely take totals because, in many cases, we have added new functions. That is a different thing.

Q That evidently was the confusing element.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not honest to say that you can add new functions and bring it out as a greater expenditure. Of course we have added a great many new functions. That is a different thing. Congress has done that. But, for the same functions, we are spending less money; we are more efficient.

Q Mr. Jones, of the House Agricultural Committee, said on the floor of the House that he was opposed to taxing to raise this money for the so-called farm parity payments, unless taxes were passed to raise money for the Navy and all other large expenditures. Could you give us your views on that?

THE PRESIDENT: There is nothing new in particular, except there was an agreement by, what was it? joint resolution, or something, to make up that particular increase.

Q But their attitude now is that they are not going to tax to raise money for Agriculture unless they tax to raise money for Navy.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they are the appropriating body and they are the taxing body. I am simply calling attention to what they said formally by joint resolution.

Q There is nothing you can do if they choose not to give you the tax?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I have not got the taxing power.

Q I am happy to say that my reading public is very happy over the reappointment of George Allen.

THE PRESIDENT: Good.

Q Anything to add as to what he will do?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I hope he will be able to stay a long time.

[Adolf]

Q Adolph Berle testified today (before the Monopoly Committee) urging the establishment of Government-sponsored independent banks, comparable to the Federal Reserve Bank, for making loans for construction purposes. How far has that gone?

THE PRESIDENT: There was some talk, but the last I heard was a couple of months ago. I cannot comment on what Adolph said unless I see the whole thing.

Q Nothing immediate?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q In that same connection, Senator Mead has introduced two bills up in the Senate, with which you are undoubtedly familiar, providing for Government insurance of loans by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, through the banks, for loans to small industries. That is said, sometimes, to be Administration sponsored or endorsed, and sometimes not.

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THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing on that. I know only the facts that you have stated. I have not even discussed it with anybody.

Q How long will Allen stay in the Commissionership?

THE PRESIDENT: As long as he likes to.

Q Have you decided on the itinerary for your trip to California?

THE PRESIDENT: No, nor the date as yet.

Q Do you plan to go to Alaska?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea, Fred (Storm); I would like to see the Inside Passage.

Q With respect to your answer to a question a moment ago about returning the royal visit, do you mean, sir, that you are not thinking about it, or would not go?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it until I read it in the paper.

I am not thinking about it and do not expect to.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #549,
Executive Offices of the White House,
May 26, 1939, 10.45 A.M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Well, you are going to have plenty of time for golf this week end (referring to Hyde Park).

Q (Mr. Storm) Grand. I have a little appointment with you tomorrow morning, though, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Will it be exceptionally quiet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely; not a thing. (To several members of the Press who were looking at his schedule for the day:) That is not a bad schedule.

Q What are you going to do with Elder Michaux?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. He is your friend; I am going to ask him about your behavior. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any particular news this morning; there are no appointments in view. We are leaving tonight at midnight and coming back Tuesday afternoon.

The only thing I have been able to dig up is that I am sending a letter to the Chairmen of the Military Affairs Committees of the House and Senate in regard to the report of the New York Power Authority, which is a very interesting report because it is something -- because it is a rather new approach to the question of future power development. I will have Steve (Mr. Early) give you copies of this little summary, just to help you.

(Reading)

"The Trustees of the Power Authority have presented to the President a copy of their 8th Annual Report to the Governor and Legislature of the State of New York.

"The report suggests a new line of approach to the problem of finding a workable basis for coordination of government power enterprises with private power systems, with full protection for the interests of both consumers and investors. The plan would, of course, ensure the benefits of coordination to municipal as well as private distribution systems.

"It is possible that the Power Authority's proposals may prove --"

This is not any policy. I will emphasize this now. It is nothing that has been decided on. It simply is another step in working out the general power problem, and it is worth studying. It is something for people to be thinking about in a friendly spirit.

" -- may prove an important step toward securing the cooperation of private power interests in reducing the cost of electricity to the consuming public.

"It seems opportune that the Authority's proposal follows so closely upon the annual report of Chairman Groesbeck of Electric Bond & Share. In his report, Mr. Groesbeck suggested that:

"(a) 'the objectives of both government and the utilities must be the widest possible use of electric service at the lowest possible economic cost' ***;

"(b) 'the achievement of this end and the solution of the existing problem of competition lie in co-operation between ^{the} government and the privately owned electric utilities and the coordinated use of the existing generating and transmission facilities' ***; and

"(c) 'such a program would go far beyond the direct benefits which should accrue and would be helpful in encouraging general business expansion and increasing employment.'

"The Power Authority's Report is obviously drafted to test the willingness of the private utilities to cooperate with government agencies in a program of expansion in order to make possible the widest possible use of electricity at the lowest possible cost.

"The Power Authority's report contains a comprehensive power plan for the State which includes development of the great waterpower resources still undeveloped in the St. Lawrence and Niagara Rivers and their coordination with existing private systems by a State-wide transmission network. These resources are now being wasted.

"The early development of these resources is a matter of great interest to the nation as well as to the State of New York. Such development would be an important contribution toward eliminating possible power shortages in case of war.

"The first step in the further development of the Niagara River could be undertaken before a new treaty with Canada is made.

"The full advantage of the Authority's proposal for the coordination of the St. Lawrence and Niagara developments could not, of course, be realized before the conclusion of the Treaty. A proposed treaty was submitted a year ago by Secretary Hull to the government of the Dominion of Canada and it is hoped that the final conclusion of the treaty to the satisfaction of both peoples, may occur in the near future."

Well, it's just another step forward, that is all.

Q Mr. President, in your last trip to Canada you spoke of the possibility that the great St. Lawrence Valley may become a private monopoly, if certain things were not done. Has anything happened in that connection since?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; you will have to ask Canada.

Q Do you look for this International Cotton Conference to help solve our own domestic cotton problems?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so; help it but not solve it. Do not use superlatives.

Q In what direction? By agreement on production?

THE PRESIDENT: Again, do not go the whole hog. Towards that end.

Q Have you heard anything about the resignation of Judge Geiger of Milwaukee?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it came in yesterday.

Q Have you received from the War and Navy Board a power report on the use of power in war time?

THE PRESIDENT: Not lately. I have not had anything since the preliminary report about two months ago, but they are getting on with it very well. They know what will be needed.

Q Is that resignation (Judge Geiger) automatically accepted?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not acted on it yet. It came in late last night.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q (Mr. Brandt) No --

THE PRESIDENT: You want something, Pete? (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Brandt) Yes. On this tax program, will it be confined to a continuation of nuisance taxes and corporation taxes, or will it have anything to do with personal taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we had better not go into the details because we are getting along very well up to last night. The principal cause for delay were fool stories that were too specific and were not true and, therefore, it is much better not to go into details at the present time that are under discussion between the committees and the Treasury Department.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to see Mr. Sarabia, who has a letter from Cardenas, of Mexico -- the Mexican flier?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I am leaving tonight.

Q Have you any comments on the rescue job the Navy did on the submarine?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course we are very happy that all the preparations that have been made, all the careful training and the working on devices, seem to have worked under very, very difficult conditions because we have had no submarine in recent times that has required rescue work under, as I remember it, before this one, at a depth of much over 150 feet. This submarine went down 240 feet, which is about the extreme limit. In other words, the apparatus was put to the most severe test it could be put to and it does prove that it is worthwhile to spend a lot of money and a great deal of experimental work in preliminary precautions of this kind.

Of course, there are things that probably no human ingenuity will ever prevent, such as the unfortunate loss of life in the particular compartments that were flooded. You cannot make a machine that is foolproof but, on the whole, the Navy deserves very great credit for the rescue operations.

Q The morning papers carry a report that there might have been some sabotage aboard. Have you any advices of that kind?

THE PRESIDENT: No; none at all.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: This time it took.

MR. EARLY: It was carried unanimously.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #550,
In the Study of the Home at Hyde Park,
May 30, 1939, 10.55 A.M.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Fred (Storm), George (Durno).

(Mr. Coon, of the Poughkeepsie Star, was presented to the President.)

THE PRESIDENT: Glad to see you, how are you? I am sorry I did not know about George (Durno) yesterday. I would have given him either a birthday cake or a bottle.

Q He had both. (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Durno) I had my choice of both and I took both.

THE PRESIDENT: Then the world was all right -- I mean it was last night. (Laughter)

Q It was -- last night. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news whatsoever. What do you people know?

Q No politics in the paper.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know a thing this morning. I really haven't a blessed piece of news.

Q Vandenberg says that Barkis is willing.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I saw that. That is a large piece of news. I see two of you are writing it down -- period. That is the best you can do.

Q Is that the best you can give us? (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the forthcoming western trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am still -- it is still the same situation.

If -- oh, I suppose by the end of this week -- it looks as if Congress is going to adjourn by the fifteenth of July -- I will have to take their word for that and find out what the betting odds are in the Vice President's office and a few things like that -- and ^{if} it looks as if they will adjourn by the fifteenth of July, I will stay in Washington and go out to the Coast after that. On the other hand, if the consensus of opinion -- I think that is what they call it in certain racing sheets -- is that they will be there until the first of August or later, I think we will push off for the Coast the fifteenth of June and get it over with, and then come back. I will see what the prospects are at the end of this week.

Q What cruiser will you take, if you decide to take one, up to Alaska?

THE PRESIDENT: The HOUSTON. Of course it would not be much of a run.

It is about a 36-hour trip up there.

Q Are you taking the Inside Passage?

THE PRESIDENT: Up to Juneau. If you keep on going it is thirty-six hours and I figured we would do it in forty-eight, get more daylight, and spend a few hours in Juneau and then come right back, so that the whole trip would be only four and a half days from Seattle back to Seattle.

Then, of course, that is subject to change. I mean, if something happened in Congress, I would come back -- I would come straight back from San Francisco without going there.

Q Are you going to Fort Worth?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am going straight out to San Francisco from the

Great Smoky Mountains.

Q Will you be back in Hyde Park in August, Mr. President, for any length of time this year?

THE PRESIDENT: Off and on from then on. Just like other years. A week here and a week in Washington -- a week here and a week in Washington.

Q After you leave Alaska, that will leave the Philippines as the sole possession of the flag that you have not been in?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't forget Samoa and Guam. Those who know, like Fred (Storm), think Samoa is the best place of all.

Q (Mr. Storm) I will take Honolulu any time, Mr. President, and charge them all off. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, if you go to Alaska and come back to Seattle, will there be any possibility of your returning through the Canadian Rockies?

THE PRESIDENT: Not if it is a quick trip, because I would have to beat it back to Washington. In other words, if we went the fifteenth of June, I would have to speed it up all I possibly can.

Q That will give you an opportunity to see Grand Coulee and Fort Peck?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We would not have time. You remember that ride up to Coulee.

Q Mr. President, sometime ago you said, sir, that you thought the present Neutrality Act should be revised in some form. There have been a great number of proposals and a great deal of talk and then there was Secretary Hull's statement the other day. Do you also feel that Congress --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think his statement covers all that is necessary to cover.

Q Did he say he preferred action this session of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

Q One other question: I noticed in the paper this morning that Chairman Madden, of the National Labor Relations Board, told the House Committee that the Board was considering administering the law to give employees the right to petition for election and that certain safeguards, in certain cases --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have not seen that. Of course you know there was a legal question as to whether the Board had the right to do it under existing law and a good many people thought they had.

Q Senator Wagner was doubtful.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Did you see that story in Pennsylvania about the labor act written there, very drastically modifying or narrowing the scope of the little Wagner Act which the Legislature passed in Pennsylvania? It was on the front page of the New York Times.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not see that. Of course, as you know, there has never been any question, without legislation, that sit-down strikes, taking it by and large -- the average of them -- are illegal. But it is a matter of state jurisdiction under existing law; that is, in most states.

Q Apparently it was not there, then, if they passed a new law to make it illegal.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know enough about the Pennsylvania law. It

might have been illegal without this law.

Q Mr. President, are you planning to invite any of your Dutchess County friends to the picnic for the King and Queen?

THE PRESIDENT: Just a few neighbors. The chief problem is the problem of numbers, the number of people in the British party and the Canadian party and the American party, plus the problem of the size of the Roosevelt family. (Laughter)

Q Will it be possible for us to get a list of your neighbors?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it would not.

Q You might ask Lady Lindsay to help you, Mr. President. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; the same thing with the church.

Q There have been a number of local developments here that I imagine you have been interested in. Of course the sheriff situation is suggestive of the Hoffman case some years ago, then there is the Board of Supervisors' angle to it and also the wholesale removals and so on. I do not know whether you would want to comment at this time on any of that material

THE PRESIDENT: I do not believe so. As you probably know, I have felt for a long time that there was room for a very definite improvement in the administration of county government and town government.

Q In Dutchess particularly?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, right in this county. Heavens, I have been talking about it for twenty-five years or more. There is nothing new in it. It is just the same old thing.

Q There have been two developments that affect Poughkeepsie; that is, so far as the Legislature is concerned. One is the fact that no

action was taken on a purely local housing bill at the same time that they passed a State housing bill and I know that you have been interested in that by your communication with (Mr.) Troy and so on. I suppose you think they should keep moving on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Was there a local housing bill put in? What did it do?

Q That was purely as an enabling act to enable Poughkeepsie to set up an Authority. That was not passed.

THE PRESIDENT: Cannot they have an Authority -- set up an Authority within Poughkeepsie?

Q They claim they cannot under the law.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know that because, under the old constitution, they could do it.

Q Yes, that is surprising.

THE PRESIDENT: The only difficulty under the old constitution -- you will remember I drove around last year and it seemed perfectly clear that we could set up an Authority within the city but we could not set up an Authority that could build low-cost housing outside of the city limits and, of course, as we all know, the city limits are much too much limited.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President, Jim Farley is back now after a swing around the country. Did he tell you anything of the political situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Oh, my, yes. Lots of things.

Q Did he give you a favorable report? (Laughter)

Q Are you planning at any time a dedication of your Dutchess Hill cottage?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; there isn't any. I think there are now three

pieces of furniture in it. Probably by this time next year there should be about eight.

Q You do not intend to move in, then, until 1944? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It will probably get furnished over -- I do not know what -- ten or twelve years.

Q How is your head cold?

THE PRESIDENT: It made good progress one day but now, this morning, I have got up with the Press. (Laughter) When I left Washington, I had the same old thing up in my septum, or whatever you call the thing. All day Saturday and Sunday it was gone and all day Monday and this morning it started in again.

Q You caught a cold to help us out.

THE PRESIDENT: It makes a perfectly good space filler.

Q Any callers tomorrow we should know about?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so.

Q In connection with the visit here of the King and Queen, that church is going to be quite crowded, of course --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You are talking about the Press?

Q We want to cover that if we can.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't see how you can. There are about forty American correspondents who will be with me, because it will come up to that, people sent up especially from American papers. Then there are sixty of them accompanying the party, Canadians and British. Well, when I get all the royal party taken care of, there are only 120 seats left. If I started discriminating I would be lost. The only thing I can suggest is this: the windows will be open and I think the Press had better be assigned to a

place within about 100 feet of the church and you can hear perfectly well. They can tell you what the service is -- it will be just the regular service. It will take about an hour and ten minutes. As far as getting the Press in, well, it is out of the window.

Then, I thought about having the three Press Associations there, and there you run into trouble. We are all right from our end but, then, there are a couple of Canadian Press Associations and there are no British Press Associations.

Q (Mr. Storm) We cover them all, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: To have just the three Americans in there and not have the Canadians and the British will cause an awful lot of trouble.

Q Mr. President, will it be possible to have one man go in and tell us about it after he comes out?

THE PRESIDENT: If everybody is willing, including the Canadians and the British, it is all right with me.

Q It is have to have one or nothing?

THE PRESIDENT: Why not talk it over and see what you can work out.

You will have to talk with McDermott (Mr. McDermott of the State Department) and he will have to communicate with the Canadians and British because they are our guests.

Q May I suggest, if you were thinking of taking three people in, why not have an American, a Canadian and a British newspaperman?

THE PRESIDENT: That would be all right. We can take three.

Q Then everybody would be represented and could watch out for their own kind. It would not make any difference?

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

Q Couldn't you squeeze in a local newspaperman? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: As a matter of fact, the only reason for going in is to catch the sermon. That is about the only reason for going in.

Q We want to see how much money the King puts into the collection box.

(Laughter) We understand he does not carry money in his pocket.

THE PRESIDENT: Neither do I. I borrow it from Tommy Qualters.

Q Did you have a five-minute talk yesterday on the telephone with a boy from a little town outside of New Orleans? It sounded rather wierd to me.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Did you get anything?

(Mr. Hassett indicated that he had not received such a call.)

Q Didn't say the reason for the conversation or why he called.

THE PRESIDENT: It may have been like that old negro down in Mississippi that talked to me by telephone. Of course, I never heard of it. He told everybody he talked to me and I saved his home for him. It was all right. I was a popular hero.

Q You gave him a medal too.

Q Last summer you expressed the hope that Dutchess County would take advantage of the P. W. A. program. The Board of Supervisors put through a \$2,000,000. county road program but we never heard anything about it. Did you hear what happened to it?

THE PRESIDENT: The copy was over-quota.

Q That is with all the schools?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And also, of course, as a matter of fact, we discouraged all we possibly could the use of P. W. A. funds for road building except in those sections of the country where they have not got any money to build roads. I think that roads ought to be

built with local tax money as a general proposition.

Q Poughkeepsie will probably be compelled to go ahead with its sewage disposal system.

THE PRESIDENT: They can save that. How about water?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it still coming in half a mile from where the sewage goes out?

Q Or closer.

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, how are they getting on with the Planning Commission?

Q It is a very excellent Commission. You mean Poughkeepsie?

THE PRESIDENT: I mean the county.

Q It is coming along gradually. I do not know of any recent developments that would make --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Are you getting out of the zoning?

Q Not very well.

Q It is standing still.

Q We are trying to put that over because it seems so necessary.

THE PRESIDENT: It is, all over. It is up here in the town of Hyde Park.

There ought to be one very simple ordinance proposed -- I think it is legal and constitutional -- and that is in the country districts, outside of village centers, all over the county, nobody, no family house should occupy less than two acres of land. Now, that is pretty drastic, but think what it would mean. And no frontage should be less than one hundred feet front. The reason for the two acres is that long experience out west and in the Central West, they found that the family that had one acre of land occupied

most of that acre with a house and the clothes (close) yard and the garage and the road leading to the garage and the front lawn, whereas, if you have two acres, you can keep a cow and a litter of pigs, fruit trees and a little vegetable garden. It makes all the difference in the world when families happen to get out of work or a depression comes along, to be able to raise part of the food supply on your own acreage. And, another thing, from the point of view of dollars and cents, within easy commuting distance of the people of Poughkeepsie -- easy bus distance of ten or twelve miles -- you can buy all the land you want for a hundred dollars an acre, or less.

Q Except for road building, when they buy it for the county.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q It costs three thousand then.

THE PRESIDENT: That means that anybody ought to be able to get two acres for five hundred dollars instead of half an acre for five hundred dollars. There is a lot in that. It is the best thing that could happen to the county because we would be talked about all over the United States and over the East if we did that. That is a grand local story.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a lot in it.

Q That was the theory behind Resettlement, was it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You could grow part of the family's winter food supply right on your own ground and two acres will do an awful lot.

Q Of course here, to some extent, Mr. President, the people have been coming up from New York and taking over space and that might have

had a tendency to keep prices up. There is that angle to it, too.

THE PRESIDENT: Even now, if you drive around, you see plenty of land for sale. You put seventy or eighty dollars an acre down on the barrelhead and there will be a good many take it.

Q Anything new on the foreign situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a thing.

MR. TROHAN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #551,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 6, 1939, 4.17 P.M.

Q (Mr. Storm) Hello, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Fred, how are you?

I want my glasses; I cannot see who this is over here.

(Indicating Mr. Earl Godwin.)

Q You can tell by the dimensions. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Fred (Mr. Storm), you are turning out in your summer attire.

Q (Mr. Storm) It is a holdover from last year.

Q Mr. President, are you going to have the King in for a conference?

THE PRESIDENT: What is that?

Q Are you going to have the King in for a conference, do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: He won't be here in time for the conference.

Q He is supposed to leave at ten o'clock. Are you going to have a conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Regular conference at 10.30.

Q He will be gone, won't he?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q There is a big crowd today.

Q It is an overflow crowd.

THE PRESIDENT: We have got a lot of visiting firemen.

Q Quite a few, Mr. President.

Q (Mr. Storm) He (referring to General Watson) looks like Oomah, the White Whale. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to welcome a large number of visiting firemen to our convention today. There are a lot of them in the back of the room.

Q Will you comment on the Supreme Court decision on the Hague case yesterday and particularly as to whether you think it strengthens the protection of civil rights generally?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the decision speaks for itself and I do think it strengthens civil rights generally.

Q You could go on from there, if you wanted. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you have only one paragraph on that.

Q Oh, no; you underestimate me. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Is that good for a column?

Q Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, as you probably are aware, the wine people are quite agitated over the indication and fears that imported wine will be served to the King and Queen.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think they need have any particular worries.

Q Have you replied to the queries from the wine people?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you expect to?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not advertising any brands, valleys or any other places.

Q Without reference to brands, can you tell us what wines will be served?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q When you speak of fears, do you speak of American wines?

THE PRESIDENT: All I have said covers it perfectly.

Q Anything you can tell us about your conference with Morgenthau, Eccles and Budget Director Smith?

THE PRESIDENT: No; just going over half a dozen things. Nothing new in it.

Q Mr. President, can you throw any light on the conferences you have had with Iowa political leaders in the last few weeks?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I have had conferences with forty-eight states. Why pick on Iowa?

Q Because two of them came out and said they were for you for a third term.

THE PRESIDENT: I am not responsible for interviews given on the front steps of the Executive Offices. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there a new Public Works program in contemplation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will there be any new spending program before adjournment?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not that I know of.

Q The Mead Bill and various things are under discussion?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course the Mead Bill, the objective of it, is extremely interesting. As to details, there are about half a dozen different methods of approaching it. The objective is good. It does not mean that the Mead Bill details are approved.

Q What steps are you taking to iron out or implement these objectives?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are all talking about it on the Hill. They are concentrating on it up there.

Q Anything doing in the Executive Department on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that people are being called up for their opinions.

Q They are working on the mechanics of the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, at the request of the Committee.

Q Did you discuss the bill with Secretary Morgenthau?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Sir, did you see the article by Secretary Ickes in Look?

THE PRESIDENT: Only the headline.

Q Mr. President, what do you think of Democrats coming out openly now for the 1940 nomination?

THE PRESIDENT: What number is that? That was fifty-seven the last time, or fifty-eight. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, Grover Bergdoll's attorney, I understand, has written you a letter. Can you comment on the letter or the Bergdoll case?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think the letter has come. It has not come here, has it?

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

Q Tell us about your views?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Anything about your plans for going west?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that going off on the fifteenth or the sixteenth is all off and the reason was a very simple one: There was not any assurance that Congress was not -- there was not sufficient assurance that the Congress would adjourn on the fifteenth of July, which might have made it possible, but there are two measures that ought to be passed by midnight of the thirtieth of June. One is some relief bill, because our relief money stops on the first of July and therefore it is very essential to have a relief bill signed on the thirtieth of June. The

other is the extension of the excise taxes, which go out of existence at midnight on the thirtieth of June. I, just being a little bit Scotch and a little bit cautious, I was afraid that if I went west, out to the Coast, that one of those pieces of legislation might get into a jam and have to be taken care of at the last minute by a joint resolution or something like that, and, while they could get a bill to me inside of twenty-four hours, as you know, we have had some occasions where the legislation has passed late in the afternoon or evening of the final day and, fearing the possibility of that, I decided I ought to be here on the thirtieth of June.

Q How about the monetary powers?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is not so essential because, after all, on those monetary powers we would not lose any money for a week or two.

Q What does the date look like now, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. Frankly, I am not thinking about the actual date. We will review the situation again around the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth of June, and if it looks then as if Congress will be here until Thanksgiving, probably I will go the second or third of July.

Q You had an engagement the other day with the President-elect of Paraguay. That was delayed for some reason. Will you see him before he goes down?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope to, yes.

Q Will there be an economic announcement at that time?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so.

Q Do you expect to appoint soon a judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; I have only just begun to look at it.

Q How about the Third Circuit vacancy?

THE PRESIDENT: Which one is that?

Q Warren Davis'.

THE PRESIDENT: I have only begun to look at that.

Q How about the Southern California one that has been vacant for a year?

THE PRESIDENT: The Attorney General inherited the struggle and is still struggling.

Q When can we look for the appointment of the heads of these new agencies, the lending and the securities?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, before the first of July. I hope to get them all up there before the first of July.

Q When will those six anonymous assistants be indicated?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. They will probably come later.

By the way, there is one interesting announcement that I do not know why I should not give to you now. It is a little bit premature because I am not sending the name up to the Senate until tomorrow. It ought to be of real interest to all of you literary gentlemen. It is the Librarian of Congress. (The President was looking through his basket for the papers.)

MR. EARLY: The papers are outside.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, never mind, I think I can talk it. It has been a very difficult post to fill because you need a good many qualifications. There are a good many different parts to the profession

of running a library -- there is a good deal of technical work -- but I feel that you can always hire adequate technical people. But what I wanted, especially for Librarian of Congress, was a person who could be described as a gentleman and a scholar and who, in every nation of the world, would be known as such, a person who could go to conferences in other nations, other capitals, and everybody would say, immediately, "Why, we know all about him." This particular gentleman has a very interesting history: He graduated from the law and he has written poetry, he is probably one of the two or three leading English poets of the day, and he has also been the editor of a great magazine and is very well equipped as an administrator, as a businessman, in addition to all of that. The gentleman I have in mind is Archibald MacLeish.

I am sending his name up tomorrow and I think it is a very interesting selection as Librarian of Congress because he does stand out as a great scholar.

Q What is he now, Harvard?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

(At this point several people in the room volunteered the information, "Harvard," and others, "Yale.")

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early), you had better go out and look it up. I believe he went to the Harvard school and then Yale.

GENERAL WATSON: He went to both.

THE PRESIDENT: I think he went to West Point too. (Laughter)

Q What makes him still greater was the fact, which you did not mention, that he was at college with Ray Tucker.

THE PRESIDENT: Was he?

Q He will answer all questions in blank verse too.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is a nomination which will meet with the approval of art, literature and business.

Q Do you think General Watson will know how old he is and where he comes from?

GENERAL WATSON: Forty-seven years old and born in Farmington, Connecticut. (Laughter)

Q What is Mr. Putnam's status, emeritus?

THE PRESIDENT: Emeritus, yes.

Q Have you named your cottage at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Just "The Cottage on Dutchess Hill." It is the "Roosevelt Cottage on Dutchess Hill." That is the only name it has and of course all the boys that go up to Hyde Park with me understand very thoroughly that it never has been a "Dream Cottage" and they are living up to my request that it should not be called that because it does not happen to be true and never was, so I see no particular reason for perpetuating the forgery by calling it that. (Laughter)

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #552,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 9, 1939, 10.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning; how is everybody holding up?

Q (Mr. Godwin) That is a better uniform for the occasion than you had yesterday, Mr. President. (Referring to the fact that the President was in his shirtsleeves and that the preceding day, devoted to the visit of the King and Queen of England, had been exceedingly hot.)

THE PRESIDENT: You bet.

Q (Mr. Storm) No golf this week-end, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. Why don't you write your stories on Sunday morning, ahead of time, and then go ahead and play golf in the afternoon? There won't be any news.

Q We will have to make some, if there isn't.

THE PRESIDENT: There are all kinds of different arm bands.

Q We have blue and white and the Canadians have red, white and blue.

Q They look like a bunch of street cleaners. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have come to the wrong place for news. There is none here this morning.

We are leaving here tonight, as you know, and you have a schedule for Saturday and Sunday, and Monday morning we are going down to West Point for the graduation and at one o'clock on Monday we will return to the train and the Press and the President will probably go to sleep to make up for lost time.

Q When will you be back here?

THE PRESIDENT: Monday night. We ought to get in around, I should think, seven o'clock. (There was a pause.) Everybody is out of questions and out of thought.

Q Have you, Mr. President, any observation to make on your guests?

(Referring to the King and Queen of England.) (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think only that they are very, very delightful people.

Q How about quotes on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is all right.

Q There was a quotation in the morning paper which, I think, was copyrighted. (Laughter) The King was quoted as saying to you that it would be all right to call him "George."

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid we will have to characterize that as a newspaper story. (Laughter)

Q Thank you. It was not one of Fred's (referring to Mr. Fred Storm).

Q Did he call you Franklin? (Laughter)

Q Have you had a chance to talk international affairs with the King, or have you any intention of doing so?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose so, just the way you and I would or anybody else would in these rather strenuous days in world affairs. It does not mean very much, we are all doing it.

Q Can you tell us what you pointed out on the sightseeing trip and some idea --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, the chief thing of interest to me on the trip was that we went over a number of roads in the upper part of Rock Creek Park that I had never been on before and I told him, after we had been up there about twenty minutes, that I was lost.

Q What did he think? Did he express any views of the city or the ride or the Park or anything of that sort that you would like to tell us about?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the King had never been here before, but Sir Ronald and I explained to him the amazing change that has come over Washington in the last thirty or forty years because Sir Ronald and I go back in this town a great many years, and we told him of the gradual development and the fact that this is the only capital in the world which was built for a capital. Of course we excepted Canberra, the capital of Australia, because that is not finished yet, but it is laid out on the same theory as Washington, to be a capital.

Q What on the sightseeing trip, what impressed the King the most?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I do not know. The whole thing, of course, was to any person who comes here for the first time, very interesting.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #553,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 13, 1939, 4.10 P.M.

(The President had been discussing with the members of the Press
in the front row the radio program given by Mr. Earl Godwin.)

Q (Mr. Godwin) I was so good this morning that Harry Mitchell called
me up to call me down. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Earl (Godwin), you are just like me, you are spotty.

We public speakers are always spotty. We cannot perform all the
time. You are good about eighty per cent of the time and I am
good about seventy-five per cent of the time.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I'd say you are ninety-nine per cent.

Q Are you spotty, really?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure; all of us public speakers are spotty but not as
spotty as writers. (Laughter)

Q We are always spotty.

Q (Mr. Young) The girls out at the Old Ladies' Home don't think he
is spotty. They think he is fine any morning at all.

THE PRESIDENT: Good.

Look at that damned thing, and that. (Indicating piles of
correspondence.) That is what comes of taking three days.

Q You have got to pay for it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am being commiserated with because I have two big
stacks of mail that I have not looked at yet. That is about the
only news.

Q Anything you could tell us about your talk with Secretary Edison

this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except the fact that the Navy building program seems to be coming along very well. As you know, in the last year there has been a definite speeding up and we are feeling much happier than we did a year ago.

Q Mr. President, are you any closer to a decision about your western trip?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought I would wait until just before I go up to the country, wait until the twenty-third of June, which is about the last date I can make it, to determine whether I will leave on the second of July or wait over until after Congress adjourns.

Q Where are you going on the twenty-third?

THE PRESIDENT: That night going up to Hyde Park and the next day I have a family wedding on the twenty-fourth, and on the twenty-eighth I am giving a luncheon for the Governors' Conference, which is meeting in Albany, as guests of the State of New York. On the morning of the twenty-eighth they motor down and lunch at Hyde Park and then go to West Point after that, thirty-two Governors.

Q What wedding is that?

THE PRESIDENT: One of the Delano girls. Tell the ladies to find out about it for you.

Q Can you tell us, Mr. President, of your conference with Dick Russell this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we talked about the agricultural appropriations and nothing has been decided yet. It is in the study stage.

Q That is the bill that is in conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, you said that the Navy building program is going well and speeding up and that you are very much happier than a year ago, and that concluded your statement. Is there anything else you care to say about that, why you are happier?

THE PRESIDENT: As you know, a year ago we were all complaining about the length of time it took between a Congressional actual appropriation and the time the ship went into commission. We have got it speeded up now and have cut off perhaps twenty-five per cent of the time that it has been taking us to build a ship.

Q What delay was it that was removed?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What was the chief delay that was removed?

THE PRESIDENT: There were a great many reasons. Probably the most important reason was the changes made in the plans by the Navy Department itself after the construction of the ship had started.

Q Mr. President, tomorrow there will be introduced in the House a W. P. A. bill, an appropriation bill, in which one of the proposed changes, as I understand it, is the elimination of the prevailing wage feature of the law which was written in, I believe, over your very strenuous objection quite a lot earlier in this Administration. Do you favor the elimination of that prevailing wage feature?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not comment on it until I see the language, so much is dependent on it, and I have not seen the bill at all. All I know is what I read in the papers this morning. You will have to wait until I see it.

Q In your conference with Russell, was there any talk about taxes to

meet the appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is part of it.

Q Did they hold out any other promise to you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q From reviewing the papers this morning on the tax program, is that proposal satisfactory to you?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not read the story because I assumed it carried out what we talked about.

Q They did not mention anything about reducing surtaxes on large incomes as the Treasury suggested might be considered?

THE PRESIDENT: Only in connection with the --

Q (interposing) Only in connection with the repeal?

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that the Committee thought that might come out even later on at this session, if they stayed here, as a double-barreled bill.

Q Have you been talking Puerto Rico affairs with Governor Leahy this afternoon?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Do you plan to?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so; he is coming in about other things.

Q Are you going to have conferences on neutrality legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you intend to ask Congress to allot any additional funds for the Public Works Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I have said that right along, almost every week.

Q Is any of the money to be earmarked for public works?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not.

Q It is in the reports on that sub-committee's bill that they want to put \$125,000,000 over to public works.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the answer is very simple: that means taking care of fewer people who are now on the relief rolls.

Q In your reorganization, are you anywhere nearer now to naming your heads of the three groups?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. That is something I am getting to in the course of the next two weeks.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Have you selected a judge for the Western District of Wisconsin?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Have you signed the grasshopper appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: Have I signed the grasshopper appropriation?

MR. EARLY: You requested it.

THE PRESIDENT: I will sign it as soon as it gets in the front door of the Executive Offices.

Q There is no substitute offered for the industrial profits tax. I was just wondering if you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is a substitute in one way in the new percentage tax. The loss on the undistributed profits tax will be made up there.

Q In Section 102 -- does this mean the absence of any new safeguards in the bill? Does that mean that you and the Members of Congress feel that 102 is adequate?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. We are still discussing the question of legal prosecution.

Q I thought the absence might have indicated that a decision might have been reached?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one of those things, your guess is as good as mine. What we are trying to do is to catch any evasion that is attempted and there is a question as to whether 102 goes sufficiently far enough.

Q Pat Harrison said he would make any changes to strengthen it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The Attorney General and the General Counsel of the Treasury are still studying that to see whether there are some words we can put in to strengthen that particular paragraph.

Q Do you plan to discuss Philippine legislation with Members of the House this week?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not plan it at all.

MR. STORM: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #554,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 16, 1939, 10.35 A.M.

Q It is really getting hot out there this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We will have to be getting down the river, I think.

Q Did you ever get any fish down there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes, hardheads.

Q How about rockfish?

THE PRESIDENT: Two weeks ago we got seventeen of them.

Q I have not had any luck at all.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know what the fish is but down at the wreck of the old TEXAS -- you can get to the wreck, within about ten feet of it -- there are some fish there that are not more than about six inches long. What are they?

Q They are little black wills.

THE PRESIDENT: They are the most delicious eating in the world.

Q They are heavy and dark meat.

Q You got a lot of rock last year?

THE PRESIDENT: A lot of them last year; they are good eating.

Q Yes, those and kingfish. We got thirty hardheads.

THE PRESIDENT: Good.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. We are going to put the lid on over the week end. I am going down to Annapolis late this afternoon, then down the Bay and back Sunday afternoon.

Q Who is going with you?

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Barkley and Senator and Mrs. Schwellenbach and Ambassador Bullitt.

Q Mr. President, are you familiar with Attorney General Murphy's speech at Asbury Park yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q May I suggest -- he suggested a billion dollar cut in all public payrolls, State and Federal, and the reduction of personnel and also he urged the end of the old practice of using public payrolls to pay off political debts. It was a very sharp speech.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are gradually working towards the latter.

Q You said you were not familiar with it and it was such a strong speech that many people supposed it was an Administration speech.

THE PRESIDENT: I have not read it, only the headlines and that does not give you the speech, ever.

Q Will you sign the Relief Bill if it comes to you with the restrictions it now contains?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, oh, oh, how "iffy." The best answer is, it won't.

Q Mr. President, can anything be said as to the Government's attitude in regard to the Japanese blockade?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the State Department.

Q Tell us something about your financial conference the other day.

THE PRESIDENT: There wasn't any particular news in it. It is just part of the thing. It is a six-year-old story.

Q Tell it to us.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know we have been trying right along to find projects that would be self-sustaining, that is about all. We are continuing it right along; about every six months we

check over the field on self-sustaining projects, where the money will come back, any money spent will come back to the Government.

Q Is there a two billion dollar spending program in sight as hinted in the dispatches this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is it the idea to get it out of the regular budget?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes; those conversations relate to existing lending agencies.

Q Does that mean legislation at this session?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; if it did, it would be very minor legislation.

Q What kind of legislation, Mr. President, might be initiated?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, increase present limits.

Q On the debt?

THE PRESIDENT: On loans. No, it has nothing to do with the budget.

Q You mean the ability of the lending agencies to make advances?

THE PRESIDENT: You see, they all have top limits.

Q Is there a plan to create a separate appropriation that would finance these self-liquidating projects?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. The only illustration I could give for that would be on -- we are all familiar with the railroad equipment loans and we are studying the question of whether it should be, for new equipment, the present method of a loan to a railroad, in which case the railroad has the legal title to the equipment, or using the other method which, in the long run, amounts to very nearly the same thing, to setting up a corpora-

tion under the R. F. C. to build the equipment and lease the equipment to the railroads.

There is an advantage in the latter method because, in the latter method, the title to the equipment remains in the Government and, in case of insolvency of the railroad, the Government still owns the equipment and leases the equipment to the receiver for the railroad. That would require setting up a new corporation, but it is a detail of administration more than anything else.

Q Mr. President, has the Fiscal Advisory Committee given you any idea as to how much money could be used in self-liquidating projects for the next year?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What about toll roads?

THE PRESIDENT: We did not discuss that at all.

Q What was that question?

THE PRESIDENT: Toll roads.

Q Mr. President, are you going to discuss your defense program today with a group coming in around eleven?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; that is about this authorization for \$100,000,000. and to see -- has the thing gone through finally? I do not think it has, has it? It has not come to me.

GENERAL WATSON: No, sir; it has not.

THE PRESIDENT: This is to discuss what would happen if the bill went through and how much we could, or should, profitably spend during the coming year; in other words, how much we should ask in the way of an appropriation out of the \$100,000,000. authorization.

Q That is Army trial orders?

THE PRESIDENT: No, this is the strategic war materials that we do not produce in this country.

Q Has the apparent failure of the labor peace conference arranged by you been reported to you yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read in the papers, that is all. It is one of those things. We have such disagreements in all walks of life and apparently sometimes the negotiations are off and we always hope and generally, in the long run, the thing has always worked out. I hope that this will be worked out.

Q Are you planning any additional steps?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not done anything about it at all.

Q Will you give us your views on the Hatch Bill? I think you discussed it yesterday with Healey (Representative Arthur D. Healey, of Massachusetts) and Representative Celler (Representative Emanuel Celler, of New York).

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any particular news on it. We talked it over and everybody is agreed on the obvious objective, which is perfectly right. It is a question on the details of some of the language in the Hatch Bill as it passed the Senate.

I think it would be a pity if, for instance, people who are now not in Congress were precluded either from running for public office or campaigning, taking part in a campaign. In other words, it is a question of language. The bill was badly drawn in the Senate and they are trying to correct that.

Q There is no objection to the provision in the Relief Bill barring politics from relief?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what is the objective? It is to prevent, on

relief, to prevent anybody from going to these relief workers, about two and a half million of them, and trying to dragoon them into taking part in politics on one side or the other. Now, we are all agreed on the objective and it is a question of how to do it.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you will speak to the Brazilian Chief of Staff about when he arrives?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea at all.

Q Published reports this morning said that you had asked the Mexican Ambassador yesterday to urge his Government to try to speed up oil negotiations?

THE PRESIDENT: That is substantially correct. That is all I need say.

Q Do you have any comment on the possibility of discussions on broadening the income tax base by lowering the exemptions?

THE PRESIDENT: You know what was agreed on on that, on the upper brackets?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the other part of it, there was nothing said about it, one way or the other.

Q How do you stand on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think we have got to broaden the base a little bit. It won't bring in much revenue but it does give added responsibility of citizenship and, in the same way, I think probably what are known as some of the middle brackets ought, probably, to be raised a bit. Frankly, I doubt if Congress will take any action on that at this session. There is a great deal of awful rot written in editorials about broadening the

base -- that is to say, lowering the exemptions down to \$800. for single people or \$1200 for families -- silly editorials that estimate that this will pay off the national debt. We all know that in broadening that base the cost of collection of the tax rises almost to the point of taking up the entire additional revenue. It is just one of those -- what do I call it? -- a political editorial attitude. That is a good line.

MR. YOUNG: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That ought to hold them.