

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #585,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 3, 1939, 4.12 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how is the gang today?

Q Very good.

THE PRESIDENT: Judge!

Q (Mr. Godwin) How do you do -- Judge? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What has happened to Russell (Mr. Young)? Is he sick?

Q He is not well.

THE PRESIDENT: Flu?

Q Flu and grippe.

THE PRESIDENT: Quite a long treatment.

I am at a terrible disadvantage; I cannot see all the people.

I think I will have a mirror put up there (indicating the ceiling).

Q Periscope. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what is the news?

Q Mr. President, we have a report from Rome that Mr. Mussolini favors a seven-power peace conference in which the United States might be a participant. Have you had any reports or any intimations to that effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had anything until an hour ago -- up to an hour ago and nothing came in on that.

Q In your talk with Mr. ^[Pierson] Pearson of the Export-Import Bank, did you discuss the extension of Latin American trade?

THE PRESIDENT: Very little; just the general idea that we are in favor of it.

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Q In the little, did you include the possibility of extending the lending authority of his bank?

THE PRESIDENT: Only in the same way that we recommended it -- what was it? -- last July, a limited amount. What did they get down -- they got down to an agreement, substantially, in the Senate -- was it a hundred million?

Q Yes.

Q Is that hundred million exhausted?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they are sort of scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Q Will the present authorization, plus any small addition you may ask, be enough to handle its augmented program of Pan-American economic cooperation?

THE PRESIDENT: Where do I come in? I cannot authorize anything.

Q I misstated my question. Will the money that the Export-Import Bank has available be enough?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any plans?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what I said before, that I think we were substantially agreed on last spring. I do not think there was much kick on that hundred million dollars to which it had been pared down from the original recommendation -- what was it?

Q Five hundred million dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it had been pared down to a hundred million. I think we were all satisfied that that would do and I suppose when the next session begins probably I will put in a recommendation for that amount, if conditions warrant at that time.

Q There are reports that American vessels have been aiding certain

belligerent warships by supplying them with fuel off the Atlantic Coast. Would you care to issue any word to the wise which might be sufficient in that connection? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think if any of them have been doing it they had better stop.

Q Mr. President, the Comptroller General has been here, I think twice, in the last few days. Any news on that at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I can give you some news on that. It is one of those things about which I was talking to the two Justices of the Supreme Court who were down the river with me on Sunday and we agreed that it fell under the purview of a course that is given in every law school, a course called "Conflict of Laws," and it is a very interesting question.

Under the perfectly clear, direct laws, there is a top peacetime footing set, as you know, for the Army and Navy personnel, with an authorization to the President to increase the existing number of people in the Army and Navy, under an emergency, up to that total. Well, that means that we have the right to enlist additional men -- that is perfectly clear. Also, we have the right to expect what we talked about before in the last few weeks -- to expect the spending of money for their pay, for their food and for their clothing. Well, that is easy because there is no prohibition against incurring a deficiency in those items. However, then you come to other questions. You have got these new men coming in, a good many thousand of them, about a hundred thousand, the three services. We can feed them, we can clothe them and we can pay them but we cannot house them because the appropriation for hous-

ing -- that is specific items in last year's appropriation bill for a new barracks here, there or the other place, that type of appropriation -- says you cannot create a deficit in it. So we are up against that particular item. We can take care of them, feed, pay and clothe them, but we cannot build temporary barracks to put them in, so they are out of luck. In the same way, if you bring in a lot of additional men of that kind, you have got to have more hospital beds for them. It is a mathematical matter and it is very simple to put up temporary construction, just one-story wooden construction for additional beds in the nearest Federal hospital grounds. The best example is the Naval Hospital. I think about the only appropriation in this year's appropriation bill is to go ahead with the construction of this big Naval Hospital out here at Bethesda. We have plenty of money in that appropriation to dip in and put up some temporary beds, hospital beds, in the Newport Training Station or the Chicago Training Station, but we cannot do that because the same appropriation says that we cannot create a deficiency in that item. There is the illustration.

There are a great many similar cases where there is a conflict of laws. For instance, we are undoubtedly authorized to put reserve destroyers into commission. Well, theoretically, a reserve destroyer has everything on board that is needed. Practically, they do not. Various things are out of date, various things have been broken and perhaps there is a new type of this, that or the other thing that should go on in place of the old type. We have not got enough money to put all of these new destroyers in commis-

sion, yet the law intends that we should have them. Can we create a deficit in that?

Well, the Comptroller General has taken it up -- we have taken it up with him and, in effect, he has said, without any ruling, "Don't ask me for a ruling at this time because there is no question but that the Congress of the United States in January will straighten out this accounting matter," which is really what it amounts to, and after all the main, broad intent of the Congress was to allow us, in time of emergency, to take more people into the service and to put various out-of-commission units back into commission. That is the broad national purpose. The prohibitions are intended for a different purpose, to prevent us, in time of peace, from going ahead and starting a lot of building and things like that without the prior consent of the Congress.

And so we are going ahead to do those absolutely essential things, which is providing housing for the people we are taking in and hospital beds and putting it up to the Congress to straighten the thing out in January.

Q Mr. President, on that trip did you talk with Frankfurter (Associate Justice of the Supreme Court) about his Civil Service report?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, this is not an "if" question but it may be rather abstract. (Laughter) Have you anything to say about men who occupy confidential relationships and keep notes on those relationships and then write books and/or magazine articles about them?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, keeping it purely in the abstract -- (laughter) -- I should almost say that the question, in the abstract, answers

itself.

Q Mr. President, did you hear Bishop ^[Shiel] Shiel's speech last night?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think it was a very, very wonderful speech.

Q Has your attention been called to an order issued last week by the Treasury prohibiting the Collectors of Customs from giving out information on cargoes of incoming ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I had not seen it until I saw it in the paper this morning and I did not speak to the Secretary of the Treasury about it -- I meant to. It seems to me to be a perfectly normal carrying out of our neutrality.

Q The ships are already in and the cargo is delivered.

THE PRESIDENT: It seems absolutely necessary for the carrying out of our neutrality because, you know, the ship might go back.

Q It will go back and they will sink it, too, if it is an enemy ship.

THE PRESIDENT: It might go back.

Q Can you tell us whether the term, "purchases for cash," in your opening Message to Congress included --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Purchases of what?

Q "Purchases for cash," in your Message -- I think it was the fifth point -- do you consider that that includes the ninety-day credit provision?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to go to the Senate on that.

Q Did you say whether the housing will be set up for the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: We have to put roofs over those fellows.

Q Where will they be located?

THE PRESIDENT: In the case of the Navy, at four training stations, Newport, Norfolk, Chicago and Santiago. In the case of the Army,

smaller units scattered pretty generally through the country.

Q Mr. President, why do you have to wait until January?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not; I am doing it now.

Q I mean to get the money?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not; I am doing it now. I am building them now and I am going to ask Congress to reimburse us in January.

Q Why don't you ask them now?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I am not asking them anything until the neutrality bill goes through.

Q Are you still of the opinion that you will not need to ask them anything else in this session?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I will.

Q Mayor La Guardia said yesterday that you might have some comment on your meeting with him?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about the Fair, continuing it in 1940.

Q Anything else, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No; that is all.

Q Regarding this Rome report, which you said had been brought to your attention about an hour ago, can you tell us whether that communication was brought to your attention or not?

THE PRESIDENT: The Rome report? I had not heard a word about it.

Q Mr. President, in view of this safety zone declaration in Panama, can you tell us whether you plan an increase in the Neutrality Patrol at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have not got any final report from the Navy as to the total number of vessels that they will need and, as I told you before, we are putting, I think it is forty of the Priority I

destroyers back into commission. Whether we will have to put a few more or not, I do not know yet, but I am getting a report from the Navy.

Q Is the Panama declaration now in effect as of today?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard anything. I have only seen a preliminary draft of it. Has it passed?

Q It was nominally accepted by the delegates last night. Is it your understanding that that will place it in effect immediately?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q What will be the cost of this housing program?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; it is a very small sum, very small.

Q Can you tell us whether or not you are going to appoint soon a new Minister to Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the truth, I have not thought about it for a week. I will have to do it. Thanks for reminding me.

Q Can you tell us about your conference this afternoon with Mr. Voorhis and those Congressmen? I understand they wanted an excess profits tax on profiteering?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will tell you exactly what I told them. I told them that I was just as heartily in favor as they were of preventing the making of abnormal and very high profits just out of the war in Europe but that there was no need, in my judgment, for doing anything at the present time except studying it a little further. There were about three or four different methods that I had read in the paper that had been talked about. I thought it was more important to keep on studying it at the present time for, as far as I can see, nobody at the present moment has made any abnormal

or excess profits during the past month out of it. I told them I thought that we could review the subject perhaps a little bit later on, after the neutrality bill has gone through, and that I would be glad to have them come down again and, in the meantime, I recommended a great deal more study than has been given it.

Q As I recall it correctly, one of the gentlemen, I think Mr. Voorhis, said you had referred them to two or three individuals. Is there anything of interest in that?

THE PRESIDENT: Treasury, Commerce, S.E.C. and the Department of Justice.

Q Justice, did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, all of those agencies have been studying the subject and nothing has come out of it yet.

Q You told them to speak of it later on after the neutrality bill has gone through. Can you tell us some of the reasons why you said after the neutrality bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Just what I said to the Congress. I had in my manuscript, "when and if" and, when I got on the floor I deleted the "if."

Q What could be done about it in case of hostile acts, which did occur within the neutrality bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Let us cross that bridge when we come to it. I do not think it means getting us into war.

Q Have the House leaders talked to you about these after plans? I understand they have a gentlemen's agreement after October ninth, anything can happen after that, and they have three-day recesses up to October ninth. They have several preferential bills they can take up.

THE PRESIDENT: I understood that after October ninth they just started making speeches.

Q No legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I think not.

Q They have the antilynching bill?

THE PRESIDENT: No; I think it is just speechmaking.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #586,

Held while the President was seated in his automobile alongside the Presidential Special Train, following its arrival at Highland~~s~~, New York, October 6, 1939, 8.35 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I know anything more than I did yesterday afternoon at 5.30.

Q Have you had any reports on the train at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except not enough sleep. It is going to be a lovely day up here.

Q One thing: I suppose you will get some reports?

THE PRESIDENT: If I do I will let you know.

Q We would like to know about that.

THE PRESIDENT: I will let you know as soon as anything happens.

Q How about Herr Hitler?

THE PRESIDENT: I believe he speaks today some time, I do not know when.

MISS LeHAND: He spoke this morning.

Q He already has spoken.

THE PRESIDENT: I will probably read it tomorrow, only do not put that down.

Q Mr. President, does the fact that these Naval vessels have been sent out to accompany the IROQUOIS establish any sort of a precedent?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at all. It shows a very good illustration of why the Patrol. In other words, they are out there already and it makes the whole procedure very much simpler.

Q Mr. President, the Havas Agency, I believe, had a report that this

Government or you, either one, had invited Raczkiewicz (President of Poland) to come to this country to live.

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

MISS LeHAND: I read that in the paper too.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, off the record, you know the Havas Agency. You remember our experience with them in the past. Who was that fellow we had down there; he was an awfully nice fellow -- he was a Frenchman?

Q Yes, I know who you mean.

THE PRESIDENT: He was an awfully nice fellow but, my God, he dreamt things at night. He was terrible. That is all off the record.

Q My office is worrying about a report of the successor to Elmer Andrews?

THE PRESIDENT: - Not yet; no.

Q Would we be wrong in speculating that the delay is due to the fact that Mr. Early said you are not going to send nominations until the neutrality issue is disposed of?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is one reason.

Q Mr. President, getting back to the IROQUOIS a moment, is the fact that these ships have been sent out, might it be interpreted as indicating that this Government believes the reports from Germany are true, that it is going to be sunk?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more to be said than that statement yesterday, just the simple, pure fact and nothing else.

Q Are you going to plant some more trees up here this trip?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I am not putting in any this fall. Of course, sometimes I do -- you can plant but, of course the best time is

the spring. I am going to make a final checkup in the next couple of days as to what the total acreage is that is going to be replanted and then where the new planting is to take place. You see, practically, I have to do two years' planting next spring. I do that myself. I think Steve (Mr. Early) misunderstood; Nelson Brown is not coming up here; I am doing that myself and then that gets sent up to Syracuse and then they send a man to check up later on. And then when I get through, in about two weeks, I do the same thing on the hardwood stand, not on the planting but on what I am going to cut during the winter. That is what they call "selective cutting."

Q This trip you are concerned with pines?

THE PRESIDENT: No, spruce.

Q Spruce?

THE PRESIDENT: Norway Spruce. Somebody wrote fir but it is all right; they are all fir.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't really a single bit of news but I will let you know if anything turns up.

Q Anything on the IROQUOIS? Can you give us a lead?

THE PRESIDENT: Again off the record, just for your information, Steve (Mr. Early) suggested that we tell them to send a radio report for the benefit of the family back here today. Well, that is the one thing she (the boat) could not do but the assumption for the family is that if you do not hear anything, everything is all right because, obviously, any piece of bad news would be the first thing that would come through the air. That is perfectly

clear. I doubt very much if we will get any news today or even tomorrow. She is a fairly slow boat. She can only do about fifteen to seventeen knots.

Q Any idea when the Naval ships are supposed to reach her?

THE PRESIDENT: When they will meet?

Q Yes, when they are supposed to contact?

THE PRESIDENT: If I did I could not tell you because there is a time element in there.

Well, have a good game of golf.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #587,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 10, 1939, 4.10 P.M.

Q How are you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I am fine but slightly sleepy. It is a sleepy day.

Are you feeling sleepy?

Q Yes, everybody.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, how are you? (Speaking to Mr. Earl Godwin, president of the White House Correspondents' Association)

Q (Mr. Godwin) How do you do, Mr. President. Summer again.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, of course. I have got spring fever. I am awfully sleepy.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Say, Russ (Mr. Young) is right sick. Do you know it?

THE PRESIDENT: Still?

Q (Mr. Godwin) It hangs on to him when he gets a cold or pulmonary attack. It just hangs on and he has had a touch of pneumonia. It has been right severe.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know that.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Neither did I until I talked to his wife. His doctor had warned him quite seriously not to go out too soon.

THE PRESIDENT: He ought to get away for a change of air entirely. It would be the best thing in the world for him.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

Q Mr. President, as you are undoubtedly aware, there is going to be a special election in California on the Ham and Egg Pension plan this year. Last year you referred to that plan as being somewhat fantastic and a short cut to Utopia. Can you tell us how you

feel this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. You might say that is a statement that covered all kinds of plans.

Q Still feeling the same way?

THE PRESIDENT: Covers all kinds of plans. That is rather a general statement but I think you can use it for this particular election.

Q It can be exhumed and used again, can it?

THE PRESIDENT: It is just repetition. I have got a whole lot of stuff that Steve (Mr. Early) took out of the files. He can show you the words. There is a Message to Congress and a letter to George Creel. Steve can show it to you.

MR. EARLY: Not a Message to Congress, radio.

THE PRESIDENT: Radio.

Q Why did you dig it out at this particular time?

THE PRESIDENT: Because somebody said he was going to ask a question, so it is all right. (Laughter)

Q Hot dog! (Laughter)

Q It was fixed.

Q Mr. President, I was going to ask about a plan for fifty dollars for every person over sixty. Would that take it in, or not?

THE PRESIDENT: These excerpts that Steve has cover the whole bag of tricks.

Q The Union of Maritime and Shipbuilding Workers in Philadelphia has sent you a letter requesting that you call a conference of all factors concerned to correct conditions in the shipbuilding industry. Have you done anything or planned to do anything on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. I think I sent that to the Maritime Commission or the Maritime Labor Board for preparation of a reply. It is still there.

Q Mr. President, unless I am mistaken, Dr. Abbot called on you twice. He saw you once, I think, but I did not see him when he left. Any news on his visit?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about the problem -- the chief thing -- the problem of the Smithsonian in exhibiting its very wonderful collections and he pointed out that the Smithsonian is probably the greatest sight-seeing tourist center of the United States and that the Government owns this very wonderful collection but hasn't room enough to show it to the visiting public. We talked about that principally, and then certain research work which the Smithsonian is doing, the question of an appropriation of the large sum of \$25,000. to carry it on for another year.

Q Any news in your conference with Ambassador Daniels?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you tell us about your conversations with Lord Beaverbrook?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not think so. He is an old friend of mine.

Q (interposing) What would be done --

THE PRESIDENT: I told him a newspaper story --

Q (interposing) What was it?

THE PRESIDENT: -- and some other things. (Laughter) We got reminiscing about a phrase that is used over here a good deal by certain people, a phrase beginning, "It is learned on the highest authority," or, "Sources close to the President allege," and so forth. So I -- we got talking about this Berlin story and I told him a

story, which I think he liked, about an old farmer who lived near me in the country --

Q (interposing) Talk a little louder.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the old farmer didn't talk loud, he just talked this way. (Laughter)

I saw him one morning and I wanted to call his attention and get his opinion on something. I said, "Pete, did you see by the papers --" He said, "Wait a minute, son. Did I see by the papers? Did you know an old friend of mine named Adam? Well," he said, "Adam got into trouble one afternoon and his wife told him that if he would eat one of those nice McIntosh apples he would get wise. Adam ate the apple and he and his wife both got thrown out of the Garden of Eden that same evening and they spent an exceedingly unprofitable night in the fog, without a blanket, and the next morning Eve was sort of trying to make up to Adam for this thing she had brought on to them both, and she sort of snuggled up to him and said, 'Adam, I see by the paper --' He said, 'Wait a minute, honey, wait a minute. Do I see by the paper? Oh, yes, don't forget, since yesterday afternoon I am wise.'"

I think it was a rather nice parable in regard to a good deal of this peace talk we have been seeing lately.

Q Mr. President, is there any more word regarding these tankers and submarines in the Caribbean?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have they been identified yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not for the Press. (Laughter)

Q (interposing) Do you think --

THE PRESIDENT: They are not American. That is as far as we can go.

Q Do you think they are handling oil for Mexico?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not got any news on that.

Q Mr. President, the London Times stated editorially last week that the problem of enforcing the safety zone provision of the Pan-American Declaration might constitute an act or acts of war. Can you tell us what the United States' position is?

THE PRESIDENT: You see, the trouble with all those questions, asked publicly and privately in a great many forms, is that they are all essentially "if" questions. You cannot get away from that fact. They are all "if" questions, so I cannot answer them.

Q I believe the moral of your Adam and Eve story is that you do not think much of the mediation story as inspired?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not think much of the press story.

Q Which press story is it? Seriously, there was one from Berlin. Is that the one which you refer to?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q What did you think of the story this morning that no offer to make you a peacemaker had really appeared on the horizon?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not see that. Who was guilty of that?

(There was no answer.)

Q I have a new question, Mr. President, I think. I have often heard you speak, not always complimentarily, of columnists. There is a growing interest in Mrs. Roosevelt's column and I wondered if you would express an opinion on that? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It was not longer ago than this morning that she

(referring to Mrs. Roosevelt) told me not to.

Q I was afraid of that.

Q Are you giving any attention to the international meanderings of William R. Davis, an oil broker of New York?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know anything about it except what I have seen in the papers, all kinds of stories. I believe he is back in the country.

Q Does your story about peace exhaust your readiness to discuss peace negotiations today?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Fred (Mr. Frederic William Wile).

Q Have you received any offers or overtures?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are any plans being made on this Smithsonian exhibit as a result of your talk with Dr. Abbot?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but if the Washington papers want to discuss it --

Q (interposing) Do I understand that he wants a continuation of the \$25,000., or was there more?

THE PRESIDENT: No, just the \$25,000. for this research that is going on, research into some form of gas.

Q That had nothing to do with your story about the lack of room?

THE PRESIDENT: No, he came in to talk about \$25,000. and before we got through we were talking in terms of millions. (Laughter)

Q Was that on the matter of exhibiting?

THE PRESIDENT: Exhibits, yes. This is really only Washington interest. As you know, the National Capital Park and Planning Commission for a great many years, oh, eight or ten years, has been advocating the development of East Capitol Street for comparatively

small, specialized groups of exhibits, like the Shakespeare collection and the wonderful collection of medical books that belongs to the Army, all kinds of memorabilia and manuscripts and things of that kind, probably the finest in the world. Following that out, the Smithsonian owns a great many specialized collections that ought to be shown as separate collections instead of being crowded in in a general, big museum. I was talking to Dr. Abbot about what kinds of collections these were. For instance, they have a very wonderful American Indian exhibit, which is all crowded; there is no space to show it at the present time and it is displayed in the 1870 manner, which is not a very -- it is not up to date at all. We talked of the possibility of working out near the Capitol a series of small buildings, from the Library of Congress and the Shakespeare Library down East Capitol Street so that people could go to an individual exhibit hall and see a specialized collection.

Well, that is as far as it has got but it is a nice idea to play with.

Q To recall to your mind -- do you remember you had spoken on one occasion, about a year or so ago, with respect to the Army Medical Museum, which was the best thing on earth. Well, nothing ever happened in the Budget on that.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't it authorized in a bill but not appropriated for?

Q There was an authorization, or a start for authorization.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, we are going to put it in the Budget just as soon as we feel we can and on that, of course, some of the

Army people wanted to go out and lobby and we did not feel it was modern books and that there ought to be a special collection on East Capitol Street.

Q Assistant Secretary Johnson made a speech in which he said this country should have an Army of at least 600,000 men. Is that an Administration view?

THE PRESIDENT: It is not very far off. Of course you have to remember that that would include the National Guard and the organized Reserves and that it is not a very large figure over the present Army. If you add up the existing Army and the National Guard and the organized Reserves, you come to nearly that figure.

Q What part of that would be the regular Army?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that I do not know.

Q Mr. President, could you clarify this Government's attitude toward the Pan-American neutrality matter? There seems to be a lot of confusion about it.

THE PRESIDENT: If you will quit making guesses you will see that it will work out all right. That is the easiest way I can put it. In other words, there were twenty-one republics that all agreed unanimously and without dissent to a statement of certain principles. I would recommend stopping there. They are all agreed on this Declaration. The minute you go beyond that, you start asking yourself an "if" question. It makes it hard to write a story but you have to stick to the principles that were enunciated at that conference.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #588,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 13, 1939, 10.53 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: How are you?

Q (Mr. Russell Young) Not so good.

THE PRESIDENT: Go away for a week.

Q (Mr. Belair) He just came back from a vacation.

THE PRESIDENT: Go down to Asheville and see Mac (Mr. McIntyre). Spend
a week down there.

Q How's Mac getting along?

THE PRESIDENT: Fine.

Q That is pretty country this time of the year.

THE PRESIDENT: Perfect. No, really, you ought to do that. Nothing
should stop you. Earl (Mr. Godwin), I will appoint you a committee
of one to take him down to Asheville for a week.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I wish I could.

THE PRESIDENT: He needs it. That will hang on (tapping chest).

Q (Mr. Godwin) Did you say you heard from Mac favorably?

THE PRESIDENT: He is getting on very well. The spots are really fill-
ing out and healing over.

Q Would you like us to bring that out in this Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not believe I have got anything in particular.

Q Mr. President, there was a gentleman from Illinois, I think he was
a Republican National Committeeman, presumably to see you. Is
there any news in that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, just a friend; that is all. Not talking politics.

Q According to dispatches from Berlin, Hitler expects you to settle the European hash. Anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Are you going to make any move?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing to say on it, Constantine (Mr. Brown).

Q Any news from Russia in reply to the representations?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. That is why, at this particular time, I am not giving out the actual text. I can tell you -- what will I say? -- the chronology of it, that on Monday of this week we all began to worry about the situation in the Baltic because it looked as if it might be heading towards an extension of wars. On Tuesday several (representatives of) Scandinavian nations, as you know, saw the Secretary (of State) and some of them came in to tell me that they also were very much concerned. There was, at no time, any suggestion of joint action on our part with them. That was Tuesday. Wednesday -- I drafted Wednesday morning a personal message to President Kalinin and waited until the Secretary of State got back Wednesday afternoon, around 2.00 o'clock, and we edited it a little and it still remained a purely personal message from me to President Kalinin, a message which, as the State Department said yesterday, expressed the hope that nothing would be done which would disturb the peaceful relations in the Baltic or the independence of Finland. That was sent off on Wednesday afternoon and, of course, obviously, it being intended merely as an expression of our interest and hope, it was not given to the Press -- I know you, all of you, ninety-nine per cent of you, will

understand why -- because the action had not been completed. It was not until Thursday, yesterday, that the message was actually delivered and I am not making the text of it public at this time because I do not want to do anything that would let it be assumed or construed as being, in any way, a pressure move on our part. That is the easiest way of putting it. Now you have the gist of the message and pretty soon you will probably have the text of the message.

Q Mr. President, this message does entail an answer, sir, does it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, there will undoubtedly be an acknowledgment, at least.

Q Mr. President, are you to receive the delegates or the officers of the [Intergovernmental] International Governmental Committee on Refugees next week?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are coming in on the seventeenth, Tuesday.

Q That is a change of date?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, because one of them does not get in until Monday, Monday afternoon. I am having them to lunch at the White House on Tuesday. That might be called the opening meeting -- the lunch will be -- and then, at the end of the lunch, I will probably read them a little something, a message of some kind that you will have copies of, and then, after the lunch, they will go over to the State Department and go into session.

Q Getting back to this message, Ambassador Steinhardt was with Molotoff (foreign Commissar V. M. Molotoff of Moscow) for over an hour. Anything additional to add?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Just presentation of the message?

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THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you think -- I am quoting from a speech made yesterday -- that the Monroe Doctrine can be interpreted to include "the prohibition of penetration of foreign nations through propaganda or otherwise in this Hemisphere"?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I do not think there is any answer to that.

Q Do you have anything on reports that Italian tankers are fueling German submarines off the coast?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no news on that and I suppose that is a very good example of our real, honest efforts to tell the Press everything that we can, properly. Necessarily, and again I know that ninety-nine per cent of you will understand it, it means that we are not giving to the Press unverified rumors. Now, there are all kinds of rumors that come in off our coasts and from the West Indies and Central and South America every day and we do not give them out unless we believe that they have been fully verified. Now, there was a rumor on this Italian tanker thing, the story I read this morning, and it is not in verifiable form and therefore I have said nothing about it and I cannot say anything about it. It is a very good illustration. The stories that we have given out about the non-American submarines and other ships are stories that we believe to have been fully verified. A great many of them come up. A fisherman comes in and says, "I saw a submarine." Well, we do not give that out as a fact. I am trying to confine our statements to things we really, honestly know about. The same thing, Earl (Mr. Godwin) had one this morning.

Q We have a story from two sources which I would like to ask if it has

come to your attention. Two Members of Congress, Joe Starnes and somebody else said this morning that six submarines were operating in the Caribbean. Now, have you heard that one? Has it come to you in any shape or form?

THE PRESIDENT: Not in any shape, manner or form.

Q When we saw you last on Tuesday you had no word in direct manner or form from Berlin. Is that still true?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is true.

Q Governor Troy of Alaska resigned, effective October fifteenth. Alaska would like to know if he will continue to serve until Dr. Gruening is confirmed.

THE PRESIDENT: I sent Governor Troy a telegram yesterday, asking him if he would be willing to have me withhold acceptance of his resignation and to continue on as Governor until his successor gets there.

Q Mr. President, do you have a successor for Dr. Gruening in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, yesterday Senator La Follette suggested that we use part of our supply of idle gold, not only to make direct investments in Latin America but also to provide local credit facilities through stabilization of their banking systems. Can you comment on that suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it is a matter which has been under study for three years and is definitely under, not only continued study but I can say, in the case of one or two countries, that it has almost reached a negotiation stage. I cannot say anything more because it has not actually reached a negotiation stage.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #589,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 17, 1939, 4.10 P.M.

(Captain Patterson of the New York Daily News was present at this Conference as a guest of the President.)

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody? How are you feeling, Russ (Mr. Young)?

Q (Mr. Young) A little better.

THE PRESIDENT: You are disobeying orders.

Q (Mr. Young) Earl (Mr. Godwin) is responsible.

THE PRESIDENT: Why didn't you take care of him the way I told you to?

Q (Mr. Godwin) We could not get a White House car.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you hear that, Steve (Mr. Early)? He couldn't get that White House car to take Russ Young down to Asheville.

MR. EARLY: Not unless a certain man, now in New York, approves.

THE PRESIDENT: Who approves? (Laughter)

Got any news for me from the Middle West?

Q (Mr. Ulric Bell) I just saw Happy (Governor Chandler), if that is what you mean.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, any questions?

Q Mr. President, have you received any reply from the President of Russia yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it is being put on the mimeograph and Steve (Mr. Early) will give it to you on the way out.

Q Anything in it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it speaks for itself. It is all right.

Q Mr. President, your remarks at the luncheon today have in them, "Not

one million but ten million or twenty million men, women and children," which would be, if we take the maximum, pretty nearly the largest migration in history. Is it your opinion that the results of this war will affect that many refugees?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no; not necessarily an opinion that it will but there is always the possibility after every major war, as I said there, of so many individuals and families having their roots torn up that they want to seek life in some new place and, therefore, it is time to begin studying what new places there are that are not filled up already -- as we all know, it is a matter that has been given a good deal of study already -- in other words, areas that are inhabitable by white races on several different continents, that have not got many inhabitants in them at the present time. But the essential thing to consider is that we cannot just take some given area on the map and say, "This looks all right," until we put engineering study into the locality. By engineering I do not mean engineering in the narrow sense, I mean economic engineering, social engineering, transportation, crops, soil surveys, health surveys, et cetera and so on. And, incidentally, financial surveys to see how much it will cost per capita to get people there and, if people go there, as emigrants from other countries, how long it will take them to be self-sustaining, and how much of the money that is invested could come back to the people that put up the capital.

Those are all things that take time and that is why I suggested that this Intergovernmental Committee should begin work on those studies now.

Q What was the reaction to this suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they were very much interested in it. There has been some preliminary work done but, of course, the outbreak of the war itself a month and a half ago turned the thoughts of a great many people to war loans instead of reconstruction loans and because any war calls for reconstruction after it is over, I thought we might just as well begin doing our homework first.

Q Can you tell us anything about Government participation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Government financial participation?

THE PRESIDENT: It has not got to that stage. I think probably, without much question, that in the neutral nations alone we ought to be able to raise enough money privately to pay for the cost of the engineering studies.

Q How about the relocation of those in Europe now? The refugees that are now scattered --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course, as I said in the address today, that is a relatively minor subject that ought to be taken care of by private funds within the next year or two.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the probable effect of a rise in steel prices, either in our national economy or war policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on that.

Q Mr. President, in the last week you have seen Senator McAdoo a couple of times. Can you tell us anything about your discussions with him?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about steamship lines.

Q About the neutrality bill and the shipping provisions?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course he was very anxious to make it possible for those lines to continue around the world.

Q Has anything been asked or have you given any endorsement to any modification?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you tell us anything about copper prices? You said some weeks back you were watching those and I think copper prices have gone up since then.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think they have, have they? What is copper selling at?

Q I am not sure.

Q About twelve and a half cents.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it was about twelve and a half cents when we talked about it before, therefore there is no further news at this time.

Q Mr. President, in 1937 you had a supplemental Budget estimate. I think last year you said the defense program would knock that out. Will there be any supplemental estimate this year?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is bound to be a deficiency estimate, of course, in January to take care of the enlargement of the Army and Navy by nearly one hundred thousand men and the commissioning of ships. That is not part of the 1941 Budget.

Q The 1940 Budget.

Q Mr. President, do you think we need a two-ocean Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: It is a beautiful slogan. Just like I am awfully glad that Captain Patterson, who is sitting here behind me, about once

every Monday morning ends up his editorial saying, "Two ships for one." It is all right, it is a perfectly pious idea but, when you come down to a definition of a two-ocean Navy, it is too simple. It is too simple because the Lord only knows if we had a two-ocean Navy whether we would keep one Navy in each ocean or whether we would put the whole Navy in one ocean. It is a thing that the greatest of the strategists in the world could not possibly prophesy on. So, really what we need is a completely adequate Navy for all probable defense needs. I suppose that is the easiest way to define it.

Q Do you consider, sir, that the large naval expansion program will result in a completely adequate Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there again, the words, "completely adequate," change from time to time. I do not know. Each year we have to make new plans.

Q Mr. President, a question I want to ask you which is very dear to your heart: How did you get along with the plans for the post office at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Very well; coming along all right.

Q Have you got a site?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think we have six possible sites and looking for more.

Q Any ideas on the building? Are you going to sketch it for them, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. (Laughter)

Q Have you any comment on the current hearing on the Argentine trade agreement?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not followed them at all.

Q Mr. President, have you approved the recommendation of the Planning Committee that the White House conference on "Children in a Democracy" be moved up to January?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is to be held.

MR. EARLY: It is in the letter to Miss Perkins and she will release it.

THE PRESIDENT: It is in the letter to Miss Perkins and she will release it.

Q Can you tell us whether that was done on account of the war, whether the advancement of the date was because of the war situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. I think Miss Perkins suggested to me that if it was held in January it would give them a chance to get out a preliminary report, which is better than waiting until April. I do not think the war had anything to do with it.

Q Your contemplated trip to Hyde Park this week end, is it definite now, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Only definite in the sense that I will decide about five hours beforehand. In other words, I am on call and if everything is quiet I will go up over the week end.

Q Going up on Friday?

THE PRESIDENT: Friday.

Q Mr. President, is there any news of interest in the visit of Mr. Delano's National Resources ^{Planning} Board, or whatever they call it? The Capital Planning Commission, or whatever it is?

THE PRESIDENT: It is the National Resources Board and we were going over their current work.

Just to give you a simple illustration: This is tied up gen-

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erally with the reorganization plans that have already been accepted by the Congress and any other future reorganization plans. It is a matter of policy. A very good example of it is, just the other day I consolidated two boards, interdepartmental boards, on the question of power policy. We had had a study made for defense power policy. That has been completed. Now we have amalgamated those two committees, which will remain as interdepartmental committees on power policy. They will do all the spade work. They will not have any member of the National Resources Board on that committee. There will be merely an observer from the National Resources Committee. Then when a report with a recommendation of national power policy comes in to me, I will transmit it to the National Resources Committee or Board, which is under me -- it is in the White House -- for them to study it and report on whether the recommendations conform to the long range national power policy. In other words, we are thinking not only of the immediate needs of the coming year or two years but whether they tie in, the recommendations, with the ten-year or twenty-year power needs of the Nation.

Q You did not say what the second committee was?

THE PRESIDENT: The Defense Power Committee, which was under Louis Johnson, and then the regular interdepartmental Power Policy Committee, which is a peacetime organization.

Q Has the War Resources Board made its report yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Louis Johnson is coming in tomorrow.

Q Will he have a report then?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he will have a preliminary outline but not the

final report.

Q Has the foreign purchase of strategic materials stopped as a result of your advice?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q I mean in the United States, I mean the purchases in the United States.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you mean -- yes, I think so, as far as I know. In other words, I have not had any complaints in the last couple of weeks.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #590,

While the President was seated in his automobile,
directly upon leaving the Presidential Special
Train, at Hyde Park Station, New York,
October 20, 1939, 8.40 A.M.

Q Mr. President, there has been a question from all parts about the
Submarine Proclamation, upon what basis the differentiation is
made between submarines and merchant vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, is that all? It is under the language of the
Act, that is, the Neutrality Act. It says, "Submarines or mer-
chant ships." There are two different categories. That is the
Act.

Q Well, is there any possibility of similar restrictions being put on
surface ships?

THE PRESIDENT: They should come up to the surface and show the peri-
scope?

Q I mean surface ships.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think the two are analogous. You are trying
to add apples and pears. You see what I mean? They are differ-
ent things.

Q Have you had any indication that other of the twenty-one American
republics might follow suit in connection with the Panama Declara-
tion?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q I came a little late. Does the Act give you the right to differen-
tiate between commercial and war submarines?

THE PRESIDENT: It just uses the word, "submarines," that is all. It
refers to submarines and then it refers to merchant vessels. I

have forgotten whether it says armed merchant vessels or just plain merchant vessels.

Q Is that in different sections?

THE PRESIDENT: No, right in the same section. You have got it in your pocket.

Q I have one too, but I had forgotten.

THE PRESIDENT: I was saying before you came up (to the car), it is two different things, like you cannot apply the same rule to apples that you can to pears.

Q Are you going to St. James Church this week end for this Bible dedication?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, in fact we have it (the Bible) on the train with us.

Q Have you any other special plans over the week end?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have a blessed thing.

Q Any callers, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we have a single thing. I am dining out tomorrow night but that is only family.

Q Can you tell us where?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think -- I am afraid we are going to have a very, very difficult week end to write up and I do not know what to do about it. But, honestly, I haven't got a thing. If anything turns up, I will telephone Bill (Mr. Hassett) and you can come out.

Q You turned up a submarine the last time we were up here.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Have you any more submarines?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am telling you of all the submarines that are

substantiated. I am not telling you the rumors.

Q On the submarines, would that (the Proclamation) apply to the three-mile limit or would that extend?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that applies to the old three-mile limit.

Q The rule that our territorial waters extend as far as our interests does not apply?

THE PRESIDENT: Not in this case. In the case of rum running, it ran out about 150 miles because that was the distance. In other words, it is perfectly silly to try to get a definite three-mile or twenty-mile limit or thousand-mile limit. It depends on the circumstances under which the limit is created. In this case it is under the definite old international law of three-mile limit. In the case of rum running, six years ago, we fixed it at (beyond) such distance off the coast as rum runners could lie to and send their liquor ashore in small boats or small boats could take liquor to the shore from the ships that were lying to. There has never been any fixed rule. When it comes to a question of patrol, we will go out as far as necessary for the patrol. I think you can all write good stories on that. We ought not to be bound by the rule of three miles for everything. Territorial limits are as far as necessary for national safety, according to the specific case involving national safety and neutrality. In this case it is three miles. In the case of rum running, as I say, it was 150 miles and in the case of patrolling it is further than that and, roughly, within the limits laid down by the Panama Conference.

Now, you have the whole story. It is a good story for you.

Q In connection with this section about enjoining all officers of the

United States to enforce this Proclamation, have any special orders been issued to the Navy or Coast Guard, telling them what they should do about enforcement, telling them how far they should go?

THE PRESIDENT: I would not -- no. I imagine the Navy and the Coast Guard, probably the Army too because there are Army planes, you know, I imagine they get copies.

Q Copies of the Proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is a standing rule. All Proclamations which may concern any department in any way.

Q This is very "iffy": What happens if the submarine comes in very much submerged?

THE PRESIDENT: Very much submerged? You mean half seas over? (Laughter)

Q That is the point I was bringing out, but what orders have been issued to enforce it?

THE PRESIDENT: Just the Proclamation. It will be just the Proclamation that will be sent out.

I see what you are driving at. I do not know. Of course that would be the discretion of the Commanding Officer.

Q We were thinking out loud on the subject last night, Mr. President, and we figured that under certain circumstances accidents might happen -- off the record, I mean.

THE PRESIDENT: No; practically not.

Q We were thinking about the Canal. That is one of those things.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course in the Canal (Panama Canal) you run up against an entirely different sort of rule.

Q Or at the mouth of the Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We were speaking of possibilities of getting in the mouth of the Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: It would not do any particular harm and, as soon as she came in the three-mile jurisdiction of the Canal, she would have people come on board to take her through. I do not think there is any possibility of any danger on that.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: If anything turns up this morning I will let you know.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #591,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 25, 1939, 4.10 P.M.

Q (Mr. Godwin) How do you do.

THE PRESIDENT: How is he (meaning Mr. Russell Young) behaving?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Well, we were talking about drinking out there.

THE PRESIDENT: He ought to know he cannot do that. (Turning to Mr. Young) You can't do it yet; not yet. You have got to stay on the wagon for quite a while.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I was on the right side.

THE PRESIDENT: You represented the W.C.T.U. and he represented Hennessy 5-Star? Right?

No, you have got to stay on the wagon until Thanksgiving. I put it a week early for that reason. I put it a week early on account of Russ.

Q (Mr. Young) Which Thanksgiving?

THE PRESIDENT: Your Thanksgiving, the twenty-fifth.

Q (Mr. Young) That is fair; that is all right.

THE PRESIDENT: That is the most engaging little gadget. (Referring to a very small watt hour meter on his desk)

MR. EARLY: See what the war has done to John O'Donnell. (Showing the President some pictures).

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I have got any news at all. I suppose you will ask about the (steamship) CITY OF FLINT. There is nothing I can tell you except that we heard from Ambassador Steinhardt and the gist of what he reported was that they don't know all of the

facts yet in Moscow and the Russian Government is ascertaining, and so are we, what the facts are, so we cannot say much about it until we get the facts.

Q Do you know where the first report came from?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not.

Q Have you any clues as to the crew of the ship, the American crew?

THE PRESIDENT: No; have not heard a thing.

Q The Maritime Commission does not divulge the source and I wondered whether you had something on that that was of interest?

THE PRESIDENT: I heard it around lunch time yesterday and I could not tell you where I heard about it. It may have been the Maritime Commission.

Q Do you have the authority under existing laws to order American ships away from European war zones?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is a ship owned by the Government in the same status as when privately owned?

THE PRESIDENT: Practically, because it is a leased ship. It is -- practically nearly all of those ships are Government financed ships.

Q Mr. President, there have been some reports from Canada that Premier Hepburn, of Ontario, has changed his attitude to one of friendliness to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence, and that seems to revive hope that something will be done on that treaty. Is there anything you can tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: I have nothing at all. I had not heard that. All I can say is, I hope so.

Q Under any circumstances, do you hope they will get the CITY OF FLINT back?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q I hate to ask another California question, but I am compelled to. Various people in California are quoting you as being in favor of an oil control bill known as the Atkinson Bill, which will be voted on this coming election. Is there anything you can tell us about it? Did you say you were in favor of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I did.

Q Does that go to the whole bill or the general idea?

THE PRESIDENT: The principle I think the bill will establish. In other words, it is an implementation, a further implementation of the effort to take care of our oil production problem through the state compact method because you will remember back in 1935, along there, obviously somebody had to do something about oil control and I made it perfectly clear then that I hoped it could be done successfully through the state compact method and therefore it should be given the widest opportunity to prove itself a success because, obviously, if it did not prove itself a success, the cooperation between the states, somebody would have to do it and that would mean the Federal Government and I did not want to have the Federal Government doing it.

Q Mr. President, there are more rumors around town than a dog has fleas about changes in the Cabinet. Can you tell us anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except I suppose it is just one of those annual performances.

Q There are no changes contemplated?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q The Department of Commerce and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics have predicted a slight recession in 1940, a business recession. Has anything like that come to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, no; only what I read in the columnists.

Q Harry Hopkins gave out a statement and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics gave out a statement.

THE PRESIDENT: Did they both say the same thing?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Did they? That is pretty good.

Q Mr. President, will you take any action on Mayor La Guardia's request of yesterday for that Brooklyn-Battery Bridge?

THE PRESIDENT: I have referred it to the Secretary of War for comment and recommendation.

Q What was the recommendation?

THE PRESIDENT: I referred it for comment and recommendation.

Q Mr. President, there are more stories out that there is another \$5,000,000,000. lend-and-spend program in the making. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: That? No.

I know what you are talking about. I had five members of the Senate and five members from the House in this morning on the question of helping the farm population in the two areas where there was a somewhat difficult situation which ought not to be exaggerated, floods in the South and droughts in certain portions of the West. What we have been trying to do is to avoid getting

any special legislation to take care of it and we think we have found a way of doing it. Under the old Disaster Loan Corporation there is still a substantial balance in that appropriation which goes back to what? -- the time of the Ohio flood, I think, and then there was some more money appropriated to it at the time of the New England hurricane. The Disaster Loan Corporation had quite a good balance left which we think can be used for lending purposes in these two areas. Then, in addition to that, we think we have, although I have not talked to the Director of the Budget, \$5,000,000. which has been put aside as a "kitty." I could not actually tell you the fund; I think it is the Commodity Credit Corporation or the Surplus Commodity Credit Corporation.

Q It is the Farm Security that has \$5,000,000. and one of the others has \$4,000,000.

THE PRESIDENT: It is one of those, I could not tell you which, and, with that, we will be able to provide further loans. Then, in regard to -- those loans will go mostly for the repairing of damages and the buying of cattle feed, livestock feed, for over the winter. In the southern area, for instance, they need principally corn for livestock feed and up in Western New York and some other places they need hay. Well, that will take care of damage and the food for the livestock and we think that the Surplus Commodity Corporation can take care of the human beings' food problem out of their regular funds, out of the regular surplus commodities which they have on hand.

Q How many people are affected by this, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not tell you; I do not know.

Q Are these funds to be administered and the loans made under existing setup?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You do not need new legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Without any more legislation or new appropriation.

It will probably leak out anyway so I will tell you, off the record, a story. I do not think it can be used because it refers to two members of other branches of the Government. About a week ago a certain member of the House of Congress came in and said, "Mr. President, it is a terrible situation down there in Alabama. People are starving. The livestock, they cannot feed it; they will have to kill it; they won't have anything to feed on over the winter and it means during the spring they will starve. It is very widespread."

I said, "How widespread?" And he said, "Twenty-five counties in Alabama affected and nine in Mississippi."

He went out and an hour later a legislator from Mississippi came in and he said, "This is a terrible situation because people won't have enough feed for the winter and they won't be able to keep the livestock alive." I said, "How widespread is it?" And he said, "It is bad; twenty-five counties in Mississippi and nine in Alabama." (Laughter)

So when the boys came in this morning, I told them not to get their stories crossed. It is all right as long as they stick to the same line of talk.

Q May I return to the oil? Is your remark to be interpreted as an indorsement of this particular (Atkinson) Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q You think the compact method has proved a success?

THE PRESIDENT: Not wholly a success, no, but they all feel that it can still be made a complete success.

Q Mr. President, we understand that after the Senate gets through with neutrality you will probably send up some nominations. Is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it.

Q No nominations? That knocks out the other question, whether you will send up something else.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute before you go. You did not ask me a question about it. I have got a gadget in my hand that is an interesting illustration of cooperation between all the power producing and power distributing agencies of the United States, that is, Government and private. This happens to be a thing called a -- some of us who rode bicycles will remember the cyclometer on the front wheel. It is just a development of the cyclometer. That (holding up the watt hour meter) is an electricity meter. That is all there is of it. We got the idea through the R.E.A. from the Ontario Hydroelectric people.

The present meters that go into the small homes and farm houses are about three times the size and cost to install about \$10. whereas this costs \$5. That is all it is. It is complete and it is the simplest thing you ever saw. I think it costs \$4. and another dollar to install it.

Then, we are working on another thing. This will save \$5.

on the overhead and we are working on another thing and that is to let the honest farmer read his own meter, (laughter) thereby reducing the inspection -- instead of once a month, making it once every six months.

Q Who inspects the farmer?

THE PRESIDENT: I say, only once every six months. The result will be that the cost of meter-reading, sending out bills, will be reduced from -- wait a minute, I have got it right here -- from fifteen cents a month to three cents a month.

Q The cost of reading?

THE PRESIDENT: The cost of reading will be reduced from fifteen cents to three cents. That is a straight saving out of the consumer's pocket.

Q Is there any check on the farmer?

THE PRESIDENT: We will check him once every six months.

Q He does not stay honest?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He has to be honest for six months.

Q Won't this increase technological unemployment? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It is a rather nice thing, interesting. It looks just like a speedometer.