

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #650,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 7, 1940, 10.45 A.M.

Q Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

Q How about Charlottesville -- will you be able to get down to the
Commencement?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Did you see this in the New Yorker? (Handing to the
President a slip of paper on which was written, "Hell hath no
fury like Hugh Johnson scorned.")

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughing) I love that. It rather implies that he
is a superannuated female. (Laughter)

My, a lot of people coming in today.

Q Biggest one in months. They are all the way up to the front door.

Q You have got to deliver this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got quite a lot of things.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I have a number of things. I will start with
the least important first. I am not going to Hyde Park over the
week end and I have no other plans. I am on an hour-to-hour basis.
I am going to try to get down to Charlottesville on Monday but
that is still indefinite.

No. 2, on the meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Coun-
cil of National Defense yesterday, I had -- I was given a prelim-
inary report by Mr. Stettinius on the entire strategic materiel
matter. Necessary plans are progressing rapidly and on some of

the things there has been a lot of hysteria on, like rubber and tin and -- what was the other thing? -- manganese, the situation is well in hand.

Then No. 2 (No. 3), I asked the War and Navy Departments to consult the Production Division, in charge of Mr. Knudsen, in regard to the placement of all important contracts, in order that such contracts may be placed to the best advantage from the production standpoint and be properly expedited.

And No. 3 (No. 4), I appointed Mr. Stettinius to a committee, chairman of a committee, to study and make recommendations to me concerning the general problem of purchases to be made by the Federal Government, looking to the desirability of further consolidating responsibility and authority for such purchases through the Procurement Division of the Treasury Department. I have asked the Secretary of War to designate General Harris, C. T. Harris, to serve on that committee, the Secretary of the Navy to designate Admiral Spear, and the Postmaster General and the Secretary of the Treasury to designate Mr. Nelson, Mr. Donald Nelson, to serve with Mr. Stettinius. And I am asking for a report and recommendations on this consolidation of purchases and, as far as possible, to make that report as soon as they can.

Well, I think that is about all on that topic of the Council. They are getting on extremely well.

Then comes the question you all asked about, the disposition of certain Army and Navy materiel. Now, I have an opinion from the Attorney General that Steve (Mr. Early) will have -- it has not been copied yet -- and he will give it to you. I will read

it to you because it explains itself.

This is an opinion, not from the Attorney General but the Solicitor General -- well, I don't know. Francis Biddle is signing it "Acting Attorney General," so I do not know whether he is doing it as Attorney General or Solicitor General. Probably both capacities.

MR. EARLY: The department calls it the Solicitor General's opinion.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

This is to the Secretary of War and the opinion is concurred in by the Judge Advocate General of the War Department: (Reading)

"You have requested my opinion whether and under what conditions the War Department may without advertisement sell or dispose of by exchange to private corporations or individuals the materiel set out in two lists submitted by you.

"The materiel listed consists of supplies for the use of the War Department. All of such supplies which were owned by the Government on July 11, 1919, --"

In other words, this is the old World War stock. (Reading)

"-- and which have been or may be declared to be surplus, may be sold by the Secretary of War under the provisions of the act of July 11, 1919 (41 Stat. 104,105), which reads in part as follows:

"That *** the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized to sell any surplus supplies including motor trucks and automobiles now owned by and in the possession of the Government for the use of the War Department to ** any corporation or individual upon such terms as may be deemed best."

"The provision that such surplus supplies may be sold upon 'such terms as may be deemed best' undoubtedly gives the Secretary of War power to sell without advertisement."

And then there are various decisions quoted in here. (Reading)

"The act of July 9, 1918, as amended by the act of February 25, 1919, limits the sales of guns and ammunition to other departments of the Government, to certain foreign states or governments, and to certain specified associations; but the act of July 11, 1919, supra, supersedes these provisions as to supplies on hand on July 11, 1919, including guns and ammunition, if they are at any time declared to be surplus. Once such supplies are determined to be surplus, they may be sold under the act of July 11, 1919.

"As to exchange of ammunition, the act of June 1, 1926, provides:

"That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, authorized to exchange deteriorated and unserviceable ammunition and components thereof for ammunition or components thereof in condition for immediate use."

"Under this statute the Secretary of War may exchange any deteriorated and unserviceable ammunition for other useful ammunition or components thereof without advertisement. All that is necessary to protect the Government's interest is the ascertainment of the fair value for the exchange. This ascertainment of fair value may be arrived at through an appraisal and the obtaining of an exchange value of not less than the appraised value. A determination thus made would not be subject to review."

Now, that is the opinion of the Legal Department.

Then we come to what has happened, first on the Navy end, the statement, I think it was, given out either last night or early this morning: (Reading)—

"In accordance with an agreement with the Curtiss Aeroplane Company of Buffalo, fifty airplanes from various naval aviation reserve squadrons are being returned to that Company for replacement with planes of a superior type, equipped with leakproof tanks and armor. These airplanes are temporarily in excess of requirements due to the fact that many of the reserve aviators, normally attached to the reserve squadrons, have been transferred to Pensacola as instructors because of the large expansion of training at that place.

It is expected that the remainder of these planes at reserve bases will be similarly turned in as replacements are received."

Now, in regard to the general situation, ever since 1919 the Army and Navy have had on hand very large supplies of ordnance materiel -- this is ordnance -- which is now old-fashioned and which has been gradually deteriorating. Having in mind the sale of this materiel, Congress in that Act of July 11, 1919, gave the Secretary of War the power to sell these supplies as surplus. Ever since that time -- in other words, for nearly twenty-one years -- the Secretary of War has been declaring portions of these supplies to be surplus and has been selling them. I can add to that, in addition to selling them they have been turning them over to other departments. For instance, when the C.C.C. was set up in 1933, the War Department turned over shoes and clothing and slickers and things of that kind from the old World War stock. They were still serviceable, but would not have remained serviceable very much longer.

The same statute authorizes exchanges of supplies and equipment between the Army and Navy and a ⁴good many such exchanges have taken place.

The world situation has developed a demand for this deteriorated materiel, the sale of which would not have been possible a short time ago but it now has an immediate value.

In other words, during these twenty years it has been very often difficult to find a buyer and whenever a buyer has come along for some of this materiel, we have taken advantage of the existence of a buyer and have gone ahead and sold. Well, today

we have more buyers -- in other words, it is a buyer's market --
Q (interposing) Seller's market.

THE PRESIDENT: -- and today a lot of materiel that could not have
been sold a short time ago, today has an immediate value.

On June 1, 1926, an Act of Congress provides the Secretary
of War could turn in the deteriorated, unserviceable ammunition
for new ammunition, and that has been done whenever there was a
buyer to absorb the older ammunition. There is a demand for this
deteriorated ammunition at the present time and it is to the ad-
vantage of this Government to turn in this ammunition which can,
for only a brief period of time, be continued in stock with safety.

In other words, this ammunition is of a type that is still
serviceable but, in a very short time, would either not be serv-
iceable or would have to be reworked.

Under the statute of July, 1918, the Secretary of War may
trade in airplanes just in the same way that an individual may
trade in his automobile for a new model.

Now, we are asking the Senate to put into the present author-
ization bill -- as a matter of fact, I think it is now out on the
floor of the Senate -- a clause which would permit the same pro-
cedure to be followed in the case -- let us say the procedure in
regard to ammunition -- to be followed in the case of other ma-
teriel which has come pretty close to the end of its useful life --
guns and other equipment of that character. The same thing that
is now authorized by law for ammunition.

The purpose of this amendment is a very simple one -- we can
do it now. We could sell guns and things of that kind, but the

money goes into the general fund of the Treasury instead of putting it, like ammunition, on an exchange basis.

So this amendment would merely be for the older type of guns, like the old mount 75's of the World War, just the same thing as we could put it on an exchange basis, instead of putting it on a sales basis and thereby, instead of the money going into the Treasury and the buying of replacement guns out of new appropriations, we could use the sales value without going into the Treasury toward the purchase of the new guns and other materiel.

Q Would that authorization, Mr. President, apply also to airplanes?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing.

Q Is it contemplated that these replacement guns shall be by private manufacture or in the Government arsenal?

THE PRESIDENT: Private manufacture.

Q Mr. President, did you say there is now authority to exchange airplanes, or does that require legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Do I gather that when you have this final clause or authorization, that you then have a uniform ability to exchange planes, guns and ammunition, plus any other equipment?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, plus any other equipment, so that instead of selling it direct, we could exchange and get the new thing. We can do that, of course, with airplanes today.

Q My thought was that you could do it with everything?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, instead of the money going into the Treasury.

Q That means, theoretically, the old guns would have to go back to the manufacturers. You could not sell them directly to a foreign

government?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is right.

Q Would that, sir, apply to destroyers?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have not taken that up at all.

Q Mr. President, then you couldn't do this with new armament?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You could not turn back new armament and sell it abroad?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not if it is brand new armament, unless it is out of date - - - and, as you know, a plane can get out of date darned fast. (Laughter) So actually, you know, it sounds funny but it is actually true, you take these new Navy bombers, they haven't got the new bullet-proof tanks that close up of their own accord. They have not got armor on them. They have just been delivered to us a short time ago but they are out of date.

Q Do you know about how many planes are in this outmoded condition that can be turned back?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think there are fifty on this list.

Q Will there be some more?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; I am no prophet.

Q The papers this morning said there are about a thousand or 1500 of them.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q None of our planes as yet have armored or leakproof tanks?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, some of them have.

Q Very few. Isn't it very few? As of the last hearing before the Senate, I think General Arnold testified that there were none. The only ones that have are of comparatively recent delivery, are

they not?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, will these planes be stripped of their confidential equipment before they are sent back to the manufacturers and swapped in?

THE PRESIDENT: What is the confidential equipment that is on them?

Q Bomb ^[sights] sites on bombers and other devices we have heard rumors about?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think you need worry about that. Anything that is confidential will be kept confidential.

Q On this consolidation of purchases thing, will that mean that all future military purchasing will go through Procurement, or will it be retained in Army and Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is what they are doing this studying on.

Of course, one thing we are trying to do now which we didn't get around to in the World War, until the thing had been going on for about a whole year, is a greater consolidation of purchasing and a greater uniformity of contracts. That was one of our troubles during the whole first year of the World War. We didn't have uniformity of contracts between the different departments of the Government.

Q Mr. President, I do not believe we are quite clear. I believe you said you are asking the Senate to put into the present authorization bill authority to transfer equipment. Is that Message going up today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am just telephoning up to the people in charge of the bill.

Q As we trade back our planes -- as we ^{may} need to replace them, are we

likely to get them more uniformly built?

THE PRESIDENT: That is an entirely different subject. That is a question of type and, of course, Mr. Knudsen, with the committee that he took over from the Secretary of the Treasury, is working on that question at the present time very hard. We are trying to simplify and get a much smaller number of types than we have been getting in the past. I think I said the other day, at the Conference, one reason we have a good many -- what was it? fourteen different types of training planes in the Army? That was deliberately done to encourage a diversity of manufacturing; in other words, to build up a lot of little plants so that they could train men and be in a position to go ahead with the manufacture of standard types when the time came. That is the reason for this multiplicity of types in both the Army and Navy. It has been done deliberately and it has worked out very well because it has built up, I suppose, eight or ten small airplane plants that otherwise would not have been built up in the past few years. Now the time has come to standardize, using those same plants.

Q In this coordination of purchases, have they got to the question of priorities? As I recall the old War Industries Board, that was their first job, to decide on priorities of deliveries.

THE PRESIDENT: Pete (Mr. Brandt), I do not believe we have quite got to that point. I do not believe that -- I suppose they are beginning to study it but I do not think there is any jam.

Q Reports from several towns across the country seem to indicate that a great many army planes are heading toward the East Coast, which seems to suggest that there might be some Army planes going to be

turned over?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard of it at all. It is a brand new one.

Q Have any arrangements been completed for the sale of World War munitions to manufacturers?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so; quite a lot of it.

Q Will the receipts be held in the form of credits to the Government on books of the corporations?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not tell you.

Q Could you clarify that for us a little further? I don't believe there are manufacturers in this country that make guns -- the 75 mechanism is supposed to be a secret between our Government and the French Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly -- I do not know about the breech mechanism -- but certainly the gun itself, and the mount, that isn't anybody's secret. Well, that is the major part of the operation. When it comes down to any secret thing in the gun, I suppose that might be made in one of the arsenals.

Q Pennsylvania thinks it is important for national defense that the Federal Government should extend the superhighway now building up there further eastward to connect Pittsburgh and the Navy Yard. Will you comment on that? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will tell you what I would do. If I were you, I would go and ask Ralph Budd, because he is in charge of clearing bottlenecks, and if there is any bottleneck up there -- (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have any restrictions been imposed on the export of machine tools?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No action has been taken on that yet because -- is

the bill through?

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not through yet?

Q No.

Q Mr. President, has any action been taken on tin and manganese in scrap steel?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean?

Q Has any action been taken of the fact that there is tin and manganese in scrap steel and scrap steel can be used to build up reserves of tin and manganese?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. Frankly, that is a little too technical. I do know this, that we have been, we are studying at the present time the capture, the purchase of a whole lot of scrap rubber and scrap steel that is lying all over the country and has not been picked up yet. I know a certain barn -- I won't say where -- that has two old plows and a broken-down tractor and about six old automobile tires that are hanging on a peg. (Laughter) There is a lot of it that can be picked up.

Q Why don't you put them in the Library? (Laughter)

Q Stories are becoming active again about prospective changes in your Cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been too busy on tin and manganese and rubber.

Q Do you agree with what Governor Lehman told you yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think there is any story on that.

Q How many of the old guns of the Army are you going to be able to turn in?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot give you the figures because I do not know.

Q Mr. President, have you done anything on the First Circuit Judgeship?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is there anything new to be said on the civilian training program?

THE PRESIDENT: There has nothing much been done. I am waiting for Sidney Hillman to get down here next Monday before we start to coordinate all this various civilian training of all kinds.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Have you any comment on the New York Times' editorial for compulsory military training?

THE PRESIDENT: I only read the first paragraph and I liked it.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

(The first paragraph of the New York Times' editorial, referred to above, reads as follows:

"TO DEFEND AMERICA

"The time has come when, in the interest of self-protection, the American people should at once adopt a national system of universal compulsory military training. We say this as a newspaper which has never before believed in the wisdom of such a policy in time of peace. We say it because the logic of events drives us remorselessly to this conclusion.")

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #651,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 11, 1940, 4.08 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Plenty of news today all right.

Q Not very big. You knew about that submarine, I suppose?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q A lot of news from Charlottesville yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I scooped you.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have only two or three things. I have just signed the Naval Appropriations Bill. That is done. I have sent up quite a number of judicial appointments, judges and district attorneys and marshals this afternoon, and I have also sent up a letter to the Senate, addressed to the Vice President, in regard to a special appropriation for relief. Steve (Mr. Early) can give you a copy but it is perfectly simple. I have not had it copied yet. (Reading)

"June 11, 1940

"My dear Mr. Vice President:

"World events have made it clear to the American people that in the interest of American defense it is necessary for us to engage in a greatly enlarged program of training and armament.

"At the same time our deepest sympathy has gone out to the civilian populations of war-torn areas, and I believe that this sympathy should be expressed by a concrete example of our inherent and decent generosity.

"Many millions of dollars have been given to the American Red Cross for relief purposes in Europe, but I feel that the Government itself should greatly add to the assistance that is now being given.

"In the pending Relief Bill before the Congress we are making possible the expenditure of over one billion dollars for the relief of the needy unemployed in the United States. And in addition to this, large further sums are being spent from day to day by states and municipalities in the care of the needy who cannot be given employment on work relief projects.

"In view of these large sums spent at home, I feel that the Congress would receive nation-wide support if it were to add an appropriation to the Relief Bill in the sum of at least fifty million dollars as a token of our deep-seated desire to help not only Americans but people who are destitute in other lands.

"Clearly the greater part of the amount appropriated will be spent in the United States for the purchase and export of food materials -- nearly all of which represent surplus in this country. These surpluses are due principally to the war situation in other lands. We have used and are using a part of these surpluses for distribution to our own needy families. But there is still an excess which tends, incidentally, to depreciate the prices which American farmers receive for their products. Further export of these surplus food products will help the economics of our very large agricultural population.

"There are other things which the destitute refugees need across the seas -- medicines and medical and nursing aid; bandages, surgical dressings, hospital garments and even cots and blankets and sheets; ambulances; clothing against the winter which will be upon them soon; safeguards against epidemics which could well spread throughout the world.

"The funds of the Red Cross will be needed and used for these purposes. The appropriation I am suggesting will supplement their efforts.

"The appropriation should, I think, be kept in somewhat elastic form because it is clear that at this time it is impossible to forecast either the exact needs or the exact methods of meeting them.

"I call attention to the fact that such an appropriation in no way lightens the burden which the American Red Cross has already assumed. It is

necessary that the American Red Cross continue its splendid service for wounded and sick soldiers and civilians. An appropriation by the Congress will supplement the work of the Red Cross to meet the many additional crying needs of the civilian populations who have been driven from their homes.

"Very sincerely yours,

(signed) "FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

"The Honorable
The Vice President of the United States
The United States Senate."

Then I sent a copy of that over to the Speaker for the information of the House because, if the Senate puts this on by way of amendment to the Relief Bill, it will go back to the House for concurrence.

Q Mr. President, Senators Lee and Pepper, I believe, today sponsored a move to repeal the Neutrality Act and the Johnson Act, or to modify them, I do not know which. Will you comment on that move?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know about that.

Q You spoke yesterday at Charlottesville of giving material aid to the opponents of force in Europe. Do you contemplate in that any direct Governmental action or merely an extension of the present private corporation sales of planes?

THE PRESIDENT: Primarily that. Of course there will be additional Governmental action because we are uncovering further articles which could be of use, which might be called excess or surplus goods owned by the Government.

Q Would that involve any modification of the cash-and-carry?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no.

Q Mr. President, have you gotten around to consideration of (the sale

of) destroyers?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, will the benefits of this \$50,000,000. for the Red Cross go to all the countries or only to the Allies?

THE PRESIDENT: Practically -- might as well be perfectly frank -- it will go principally to the Allies because you can't get them into the other countries.

Q Mr. President, do you hope -- still hope for an early adjournment of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Of course I got entirely misquoted the other day. I did not say I hoped they would go home. It is perfectly clear they can stay here all summer if they want to, but as far as I can see the principal work will be finished in about a couple of weeks -- ten days.

Q What do you list as principal work?

THE PRESIDENT: What they got. You know just as well as I do what they have got before them.

Q Do you care to comment on the page ad today, put out by the Committee --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Bill White's?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I had not read it and I read this morning that Bob Sherwood wrote it so I read it then. It is a great piece of work, extremely educational for the people of this country and, without going into a specific endorsement of every phase, it is a mighty good thing that Bill White and his committee are getting things like that out for the education of this country.

Q As I understand this Senator Pepper proposal, it gives you authority

to lift the Neutrality Act and the Johnson Act. Is that desirable before Congress adjourns?

THE PRESIDENT: Here is the story: As you know, I cannot comment on things that I have never read.

Q Mr. President, there have been various editorial suggestions that in view of the troubled state of the world generally, the United States should study some modification of its policies in the Pacific as, for example, possible negotiation of a commercial treaty with Japan. Would you care to comment on those expressions?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. I should say the only comment I could make, which would have to be off the record, is that there isn't any editorial writer in the country knows one-third as much about it as the State Department and I do.

Q That is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: That is off the record. (Laughter)

Q I hope -- I hope.

THE PRESIDENT: That is just between us girls.

Q With respect to the Japs, Mr. President, might it be a fair assumption that any negotiations looking for better relations would await action by the Congress on the May Bill, which would empower you to embargo materials needed --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I do not think there need be any connection between the two.

Q Mr. President, can we expect in the near future any modification of the combat zones, as at present defined?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It is supposed to be coming up to me this afternoon, a new map, and I have not seen it and, when I get the map --

as you know, I love maps -- I will probably spend some time checking distances.

Q Is it the intention to maintain some of the shipping services in the Mediterranean to neutral countries, provided the war does not spread throughout the whole Sea?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid you are a little optimistic on that. Of course possibly one could go, without going through a danger zone, from Constantinople to the other end of the Black Sea.

Q I was thinking of going from Constantinople through the Suez Canal.

THE PRESIDENT: That raises a nice question. That is one of the things I have to study. In order to go down from Constantinople to the Suez Canal, you would have to go pretty close to the Dodecanese Islands, which are owned by a belligerent, and you would have to go past Palestine and I do not quite know, frankly, what the situation with regard to Palestine is at the present moment.

Q Asia seems to be now in the combat zone?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, there have been rumors that at West Point and Annapolis the requirements for graduation might be lowered so they could get out in three years. I think that was done in the World War.

THE PRESIDENT: No, the only thing that has happened so far is that the Navy recommended that the class of 1941 be graduated in February, that is the mid-year, and I sent that over to the Secretary of War to ask whether he thought the West Point class should also be graduated in February and, so far as I know, I have not got a reply to that yet.

Q Did you take action on the Navy recommendation, aside from sending

it over to the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q It is still pending?

THE PRESIDENT: It is still pending.

Q Will you tell us what you talked to Maritime Commissioner Moran about on Saturday?

THE PRESIDENT: I will try to let you know tomorrow morning. As a matter of fact, I think you had better hold it because I have not written my letter of appreciation to Ed Moran, so if you will be good enough to hold it until I can get my letter to him. He had to resign for purely family reasons, on account of his mother (it was the Commissioner's father) died and he has to go back to look after his own family business. It is a great shock to him; purely a family matter and I am regretfully accepting his resignation. I will try to get this off this afternoon.

Q Does your information give any possible clue to the nationality of the submarine that stopped the WASHINGTON this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing has come in yet.

Q Any comment on the incident?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q In the course of your official daily routine have you heard anything from the Italian Embassy this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: The Italian Ambassador saw the Secretary of State. What was said you will have to find out over there.

Q Thank you.

Q When you say, "Nothing has come in yet," with reference to the submarine, does that mean the Government is making inquiry?

THE PRESIDENT: As I understand it, they got this very short flash on the episode. I suppose there will be something more on it later.

Q When will you send the Congressional Leaders your usual letter thanking them for their cooperation, and that your program is over?

THE PRESIDENT: Whenever they want to go home.

Q Don't you do that before that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not until I know they want to go home.

Q On the combat zone, will it be possible to maintain communication with Portugal still, as far as you know?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; I should say offhand, yes.

Q Both by air and sea?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Mind you, I have not seen this map. You cannot tell what the recommendations will be. My own idea is we still would keep communications with Portugal.

Q Who is preparing these maps?

THE PRESIDENT: State and Navy.

Q Any movement contemplated of the American Fleet from the Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Anything new to report on the National Advisory Committee on Defense -- Stettinius?

THE PRESIDENT: No, they will be in on Thursday at 2.00 o'clock. I am going to try to make that a weekly conference.

Q Can you stipulate any of the items that you say have been uncovered that might be of possible value to the foreign governments, that is the opponents of force, France and Britain? What the nature of the new items is?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I just gave you one today, \$50,000,000. (Laughter)

Q Do they include any military items, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do they include any military items?

THE PRESIDENT: No. As I said, we are going over them all the time to see if we can find any more items we can spare. I haven't got the specific items yet.

Q Have you any indication of how many Army planes can be released to manufacturers?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How many Army planes can be released to manufacturers?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know.

Q In your conference today with the French industrialist Renault, did he give you any experiences in the changing over from the manufacture of civilian goods to war materials in his factories?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Can you tell us anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, he told me about his factory and how they had gone into the three-shift basis last summer and how it had worked extremely well. Also he told me, very interestingly, about how, when the French mobilized the end of August, it took a very large number, a great many thousands of his employees, out of the plant and into the Army, and that he went right around, locally, and got the mothers and sisters and brothers, and so forth, of people who had been called to the colors to come in there and, in an amazingly short time, he was able to get his production back to the normal. They learned very fast.

Q Mr. President, would it be possible, in the light of present events,

to use the term, "non-belligerent" as applied to the United States, instead of the term "neutral"?

THE PRESIDENT: John (Mr. O'Donnell), I haven't had time since yesterday to open my thesaurus. (Laughter)

Q What about Mr. Hassett? (Laughter)

Q Is the fact that Commissioner Moran resigned -- is that off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We will let you have it a little later.

Q Mr. President, have you got around to the excess profits tax yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, they are still discussing it up there. I saw that very fine resolution that was passed by the Bob Doughton Committee.

Q That goes over --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, and as far as the House Committee is concerned, and I think as far as the House is concerned. Of course there may be attempts made in the Senate, either by the Committee or by individuals, to put an excess profits tax onto the bill. That is something I do not know.

Q Will you have any objections to it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would like to see it first.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

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Press Conference #652,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 14, 1940, 10.57 A. M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think I have very much news this morning.

Last night I signed the Army Appropriation Bill carrying a total of \$1,499,000,000.

And, in case somebody asks the question, the State Department, Agriculture and myself, we are -- we hope that the Cummings Bill for continuing the sugar program in the form in which it was reported by the House Agricultural Committee will go through.

I am setting up, with the full approval of the Advisory Commission, by Executive Order, a National Defense Research Committee and asking Dr. Vannevar Bush, President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, to act as chairman. It is to be a committee of eight members and is to study, through research laboratories, Government laboratories, also educational and scientific institutions and laboratories within industries, everything relating to experimental investigations and reports, to accelerate the defense program. There will be an Army officer and a Navy officer attached to them and they will handle practically all research problems with the exception of the problems of flight, which will continue to be handled by the NACA -- in other words, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics -- but, of course, that committee will also work with the general research committee.

The Bureau of Standards, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Research Council, they will all coordinate through this new committee. We are not ready yet on the membership because I want to talk some more with the Advisory Committee and also with Dr. Bush before

I can give you the other seven names.

Q Does Dr. Bush remain the head of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so, yes.

Q Have you, sir, received a second personal appeal from the Premier of France?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read in the papers this morning. It has not come through yet to me.

Q Have you in mind any reply, directly or indirectly, other than the Charlottesville speech?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course we have to get it in. Of course the answer is a perfectly simple one and that is that we are doing everything we possibly can.

Q Mr. President, I have a couple of queries here that I know very little about -- I have to state them to you -- one is reports that the Government or the Administration is contemplating an embargo on scrap iron to all but France and Britain and, secondly, that the Japanese Government is seeking to place a very large order for scrap material, and the question is, Can you say whether you favor an embargo or can place an embargo or what can you say about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the easiest thing is to say that I do not know anything about it. I have not heard of further demands for scrap but, of course, there is a certain amount of purchasing of scrap that is going on all the time. I never heard of any large order. In the second place, on this question of embargoes, we haven't the law yet, and in the third place, when we do get the law, the primary objective of the law is to keep within this country things that are definitely, clearly needed for national defense. Now, whether that would apply to the scrap metal situation at this time, I have not the foggiest idea. I do not know.

Q You say you were not aware of this large shipment or order?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q What kind of machinery will be set up under this provision in the law -- the embargo provision?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I do not think there will be any special machinery set up. In other words, we would undoubtedly consult, on a thing like scrap metal, with Mr. Stettinius' section, we would consult with the Commerce Department and clear the whole thing through the State Department.

Q Mr. President, do you believe that we can extend our material resources to the Allies in sufficient volume and with sufficient speed to save them?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I could not answer a question like that. It would take me two hours to answer it.

Q I have another question: There is a dispatch just came in from Berlin, saying that trustworthy sources say that Bullitt has been placed in protective custody by the German military forces in Paris. Have you had any word along that line?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Perhaps the only question I could ask would be -- well, no -- the only question I could ask would be, Protection against what and whom? (Laughter)

Q (by Mr. Godwin in a stage whisper) Mr. Trohan.

Q To return to sugar for a moment, do you care to comment on the amendment pending, which would restore the limitations on Hawaiian and Puerto Rican sugar?

THE PRESIDENT: Sugar?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: The only thing I got here is that the State Department and the Agricultural Department are in favor, and so am I, of the Cummings Bill.

in the form in which it was reported out by the House Agricultural Committee.

Q Did you say whether you might veto the bill if it had that amendment in it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; you will have to ask the other departments.

(Laughter) I do not think there is anybody in this room that know anything about the sugar situation. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, I have two more minor things which I am instructed to ask you. One is about loan contracts for low cost housing at Pensacola, the aviation field, and the Army base at Montgomery. Do you recall having signed papers on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. For Government housing?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: No -- I signed two projects yesterday for the U. S. Housing Authority, but which they were I could not tell you.

Q That might have been it. It came to me from the office at Pensacola and Mobile.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; I signed two yesterday -- what they were I haven't the foggiest idea.

Q The Chancellor of Germany, in an interview granted to Mr. Von Wiegand of the Hearst newspapers, described as grotesque any suggestion that Germany might invade the Western Hemisphere. Will you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that it brings up recollections. (Laughter)

Q Can we quote that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is quite sufficient comment. It can be enlarged on with dates and nations, et cetera and so on, going back for quite a period of years.

Q May we put direct quotations around that first part?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- "It brings up recollections" -- right.

Q There are reports today that Spanish-Moorish troops have taken over the international city of Algiers?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean Tangier? (Laughter)

Q Tangier. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I had a flash from the other side -- I have forgotten, frankly, whether it came from Madrid or somewhere else, but it was a report and that is all -- just what you got.

Q Do you have any plans for coddling the domestic manganese industry?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. (Laughter) Did you say "coddling" (Laughter) or "cuddling"? (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Have you any reports from Mr. Hillman on what skilled trades there may be need for speedy training on, or retraining in order to provide --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing) No, we haven't got to the report form yet.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #652-A

Held with the National Conference of Business Paper Editors,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 14, 1940, 11.20 A. M.

(Mr. Paul Wooton introduced the members of the Association.)

THE PRESIDENT: (referring to the fact that Mr. Wooton, with one or two exceptions, had been able to introduce each of the members by name) Well, that is an almost perfect record. It is perfectly grand.

MR. WOOTON: Mr. President, you know how important it is for publishers to be behind editors on any cooperative effort. Now, the publishers have written you a letter and I think, if I can take a minute to read real rapidly a little thing here that shows we are trying to help out in this emergency. They say:

(Reading) "Twenty-two years ago this month, when this nation found its commerce being driven from the high seas and was forced into war to defend the welfare and the very lives of its citizens, The Associated Business Papers, Inc. - the national organization of business paper publishers - offered its services to the Government in marshalling the forces of Industry and Commerce for the successful prosecution of the first World War. These services were accepted.

"Touching intimately the business lives of more than two million key men in every major branch of commerce, industry, and the professions, the editors and publishers of the organized business press were, and are, peculiarly well situated and fitted to serve the nation's needs in this capacity. To these editors business men look for the specific interpretation of important events in terms of their specialized business interests.

"Today, with our country a second time facing the vital necessity of speedily rallying the forces of production and distribution to the urgent need of national defense and material aid to the Allies, The Associated Business Papers, through the National Conference of Business Paper Editors, again comes to Washington to offer its facilities. Active as we have been in the past in this respect, we want to assure you of an intensification of this effort. A National Defense Committee has been set up to keep in constant touch with your needs and desires, and to transmit these speedily to the hundreds of editors who are daily, weekly, and monthly counseling with the very business men, from foremen to presidents, upon whom we will depend to carry out this great effort in office, store, and factory."

These, you know, are editorial writers and they have a good many hundreds of thousands of readers who take those editorials seriously, Mr. President. Industries really read these papers. They have to pay a pretty good subscription price for them, you know, and after spending their money they feel they have to read them.

THE PRESIDENT: They count a lot and I have been very, very happy in the real understanding, I won't say of all, but of a very large percentage of the papers in the general national picture.

MR. WOOTON: We thought, Mr. President, you might have some little suggestion that you might make to them on something they could write editorials on in the next two or three months, when we will be in a pretty critical time, perhaps.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, one thing is pretty important at this time -- we have to say this off the record, for background --

MR. WOOTON (interposing): They understand.

THE PRESIDENT: -- and that is a real danger we all recognize in this country. I used a phrase the other day, down at Charlottesville, about this country being put in prison, put in prison behind bars and fed at the will of people on the outside. Well, of course you all know exactly what I meant. It meant that on world trade, which does have a good deal of influence on our domestic trade, first and last, unless we have fairly free world markets, we are gradually going to be put in behind the bars.

Well, just as an illustration, Karl Von Weigand -- it is in some of the papers this morning -- got an interview with Hitler yesterday in which Hitler said he had no thought of doing anything to the Americas -- not a thought at all. They asked me in the Press Conference whether I had any comment and I said, "Yes, I have a comment and in very few words -- it brings back recollections." (Laughter)

Now, of course, the danger is that we have today a Europe which is completely dominated by a completely different ideology which does not have to come into this country with its armed forces, of necessity, but it can, through trade channels, gain practically a complete domination over other countries in this hemisphere who are dependent, even more than we are, for their existence on purchases made by Europe.

I think it was about a year ago, about the time you were down here last summer, I was formulating that in my own mind. I try, always, to put myself in the place of the other fellow. I said, "Suppose I were President of the Argentine and Europe were completely dominated by the dictatorship ideology. Well, the Argentine is solely dependent for its existence on exporting certain agricultural products, beef and corn and wheat. And this dictatorship of Europe would come and say to me, "Senor Ortiz, you may -- you may, with our permission, sell beef and corn and wheat to Europe -- that ends it -- provided you do it through my agency, which will charge a commission and will tell you how much you can sell and where you can sell it. And there are certain other catches attached to it. You have got to put your army and navy under our domination."

And, of course, the President of the Argentine would say, "But that is pretty rough; that takes away the independence of this nation, to be told how much we can sell and where we can sell it and how much we get paid," because, of course, Europe would say, "We will pay you in our manufactured goods and we will choose what kinds of goods we will ship to you."

Well, the Argentine President would say, "That is terrible, we can't do it; it would destroy our independence." And the European dictatorships would say, "All right; take it or leave it. Why don't you, if you do not want to sell it to us, sell it to your North American friends?"

Well, of course, he would say, "But the United States cannot buy beef, wheat and corn; they have a surplus themselves."

"Well," Europe would say, "it is just too bad -- just too bad."

In other words, you can gain domination over a large portion of this Continent without sending troops over, and that is something we have to watch out for. And that applies, of course, to exports and imports, and it would be a perfectly logical conclusion of the domination of Europe by those powers.

Of course the domination of Europe, unless sea power is maintained, means also the domination of Africa because Africa belongs to Europe.

That is why I think that every business paper in this country ought to fight against what may be a tendency over here on the part of unthinking people and on the part of politicians who try to gain some political end by assuming to believe stories like the Karl Von Weigand story of the interview with Hitler this morning. There are a lot of gullible Americans that will say, "You see, he says he won't do anything over here. Why shouldn't we go easy?"

In other words, we all have to work for the continuance of the freedom of trade through the world -- equality, put it that way, equality of trade.

MR. WOOTON: We rather feel that the balance of power at this moment, in this struggle, lies in American industry. Isn't that true? Shouldn't they all --

THE PRESIDENT (interposing): I would not say "balance of power" because it may be an European dominated industry on the one side as against the American industry on the other.

MR. WOOTON: I was referring to the more immediate situation, that while the English keep the struggle going ahead, American industry can be helpful

in production.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, very helpful.

MR. WOOTON: Do you know of any bottlenecks or anything that they might say something about in their editorials, or that industry can do to make itself more efficient?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, it is a lot of nonsense to talk about shortages and things like that. You take, for example, on the problem of manganese: somebody asked me a question about it at the Press Conference. We have got pretty good supplies of manganese on hand and even if we could not get any more over from the Straits Settlements, the cheapest source, we could still get some in Brazil, some in Cuba and, as a last resort, we have got manganese mines in this country, which are high-cost mines and which would cost us a lot of money, but which could be put into production.

The same way in the case of rubber. The rubber companies are working with us very well. We will probably get by and if it should come to the point where our ocean communications were cut off, there are one or two processes of making synthetic rubber that, at the present time, are probably higher in cost than the natural form of rubber but, in case of need, we could put those in and start them to work and get them in production in six months. Stettinius, for instance, has been working on that and is entirely satisfied.

I do not think there are any particular bottlenecks. On the cost end, we are all trying to keep the spiral of the World War from starting in again and, of course, I think we should all cooperate on that. That spiral was a very dangerous thing because the cost of living went up and wages went up and then the cost of living went up and wages went up. If we can keep prices down to a reasonable level, it is going to help an

awful lot.

I do not think there is anything else. It is good to see you.

MR. WOOTON: We have had very inspiring conference with Mr. Stettinius and Mr. Knudsen and various officials. Steve (Mr. Early) has been helpful in fixing up the arrangements.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #653,
Executive Offices of the White House,
June 18, 1940. 4.04 P. M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how is everything going today?

Q Fine.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you (Mr. Godwin) very nearly missed a good place.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Those fellows don't like me to run around that end. They
block me.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it; it is bad.

Does Portland, Maine, want an ironclad today?

Q (Miss Craig) What?

THE PRESIDENT: Does Portland, Maine, want an ironclad today?

Q (Miss Craig) Well, we got 70 per cent of a two-ocean Navy this morning over
at the House (referring to Admiral Stark's testimony before the Naval
Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives).

Q We understand May's (Miss Craig's) name is on that Navy Bill. (Laughter)

Q They are after a seven-seas Navy now.

(Discussion, off the record.)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have only got a couple of matters here -- probably won't be
first column, first page. The first relates to newsprint, just as an
illustration of the efforts that we have been making and are still making
to improve the readjustments -- economic readjustments in the Americas.

Down in South America, when the Scandinavian market for newsprint
was cut off, all the papers down there were up against it because they
did not have enough supplies on hand and they had to turn to Canada and
the United States on a large scale and, of course, our newsprint over
here costs a good deal more money than Scandinavian newsprint. One of

the chief troubles was the cost of carrying it down there -- it was \$15 a ton -- and, through negotiations here in Washington and through cooperation between the State Department, the American Republics Division and the Maritime Commission, the rate on newsprint from New York to Buenos Aires has been reduced from \$15 a ton to \$9.75 a ton, which is a very definite improvement over the position the papers had down there. It has helped them out a lot. Those rates will apply to all countries on the East Coast of South America.

Q The same rate, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The same rate applies equally to Rio and Buenos Aires?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know if it is the same rate. It is the same reduction in rate. The same proportionate reduction in rate is what it is. It is over 33 per cent.

Q Mr. President, who bears the reduction -- who absorbs the reduction?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I guess that the American shipping lines absorb it and I doubt very much if they are losing money at \$9.75 a ton. So you cannot say it is a gift on their part necessarily.

And the other thing: Secretary Wallace was talking to me today and I asked him to write out what he said in regard to our general agricultural situation in this country at the present time. He says that through these recent years, through an effective national farm program, it has resulted in a situation where the reserve supplies of food reserves that are stored in warehouses and granaries have now reached what might be called a "safety point," at the same time that we have built up the fertility reserves in the soil by better land use. For example, in the situation of wheat, we have in reserve at the present time about three times the previous carryover, average carryover, which seems to

be sufficient to take care of any problem of the future that we can foresee in the way of having to feed very large portions of the world population.

The same way with corn: the reserve supply is at the present time about three times the previous average normal (carryover). This corn, if and when needed, can be fed to livestock for the production of meat, eggs, poultry, milk, butter, cheese and the production of other important foods.

In other words, we are feeling satisfied with the size of the food reserves that we have in this country, allowing at the same time for the export of food reserves to other countries which either need them or may need them because of the war in the near future.

In the case of cotton, we have on hand, in reserve, as much as one year's crop, with a new crop coming on this fall. The question of cotton is not quite as easy because it is perfectly possible that we may have too much cotton on hand as a reserve, but on the main crops, food crops, we have sufficient reserves at this time and can, if necessary in the future, increase those food reserves and at the same time protect farmers' income, which we have never been able to do before.

And, finally, he points out that with this increase of reserves, we have been safeguarding the health of the people by distributing very large quantities of surplus quantities of nutritious food to families in need.

And this, finally, has been accomplished, all of this -- the greatest strength of agricultural preparedness lies in the experience of more than 6 million farmers who, through their own elected county committeemen, are cooperating with each other and the Government in carrying out the farm program, and the farmers are showing a splendid

cooperative spirit in the working out of the defense plans.

I think that is about all I have got.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about this increase in the Navy that has been recommended?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, as I understand it, it is principally an authorization bill. I believe, in some items, that there is sufficient in the way of appropriations to do a certain amount of actual starting of construction in some types, but I think I would emphasize the fact that this is primarily a Congressional authority for the future building of more ships, if and when it becomes desirable to lay them down.

Q Admiral Stark said this was not a paper program but would be started at once if authorized by Congress. Does that meet your views?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, I haven't seen the exact language he used. I would have to check.

Q Would you say, sir, there would be a corresponding increase in the military strength of the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think you can say "corresponding," Fred (Mr. Essary). In other words, they are on different lines -- like trying to compare apples with pears.

Q It is the third increase in the single session of Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A third increase in the Navy strength.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course, on the Army side we are working out -- Mr. Knudsen, for instance, is talking about two things in which the same general thought applies to both the Army and Navy, in building up productive capacity, for example, for 50,000 planes. The question remains still as to how many actual planes would be turned out by the additional productive capacity. You might confine a portion of the program to build-

ing the factories for the planes instead of building all the planes that that production would make possible. In the same way, with the Navy program, we might go ahead with the creation of shipbuilding facilities at navy yards and private plants without, of necessity, laying down the full number of ships that those shipbuilding facilities would make possible. Do you see the point? I cannot tell you the number of ships but probably we will use a good part of this authorization and the money that we already have on hand to increase, oh, things like the machine tools to build ships with, the tools for electric welding, just for example, and the actual building of ways with the overhead cranes, without of necessity deciding now as to whether we will start ships on those ways.

Q Mr. President --

Q (interposing) Have you, from your sources, sir, any intimation of the terms of the Axis powers to France?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not a word. The last I got was one of the press associations' reports that the meeting was over. Nothing has been given out yet that I know of.

Q Mr. President, the other day you said you liked the (first) paragraph of a New York Times' editorial on compulsory military training. Can you elaborate on that in any way?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, only to this extent: Perhaps I should not have -- should not have spoken so fast. I did not, frankly, intend to imply that there should be compulsory military training for every boy in this country, because, after all, the word "military" may connote to some people turning the boy into an infantryman or a pilot of a plane, a war plane, or an artilleryman or a machine gunner at the front. Of course, what I was personally thinking about at the time was the much broader definition of

the word "military." As you know, for every combat soldier at the front, you have to have -- I have forgotten what the Army figures are -- but at least another soldier who is in uniform but is not a combat soldier behind the lines, and when I say "behind the lines," I mean airplane mechanics at the different airports -- just using typical examples -- people on the line of supplies of the Army, bringing up ammunition and food, et cetera and so on. Well, those people are, in one sense, military and they are probably in uniform but they are not combat troops. Now, we ought to train people for that.

Then you come to, let us say, a third category, the training of young people in work behind the lines where they are not in uniform -- airplane factories, ammunition factories, clothing factories, all kinds of industrial work which is necessary to keep Army and Navy forces going.

And then, perhaps, you come to a third -- a fourth category, and that is the maintenance of certain -- certain necessary conservation so that war won't wreck the future economies of the Nation, so that in the event of a future war we would not make the mistake of 1917 and 1918 and plow up the prairies, cut down all the forests, as has happened in some countries in Europe. In other words, that, in conducting the war, we would still remember the fact that the Nation had to exist on its resources after the war was all over.

Well, in a sense, that is a military duty and using the word "military" in the sense I am talking about, its very broadest application, I do think that we undoubtedly are going to come to some form of Government service for every boy, no matter what class in life he belongs to, where he will be under some form of discipline because even the CCC Camps have discipline.

It is rather an interesting thing that a certain gentleman who had

just taken an automobile trip out through the Middle West said to me the other day. He said, "I saw a lot of young people, a lot of young people out there. They were all patriotic, without any question, but a whole lot of them had all sorts of weird ideas in their heads, what I call 'isms.' They thought they knew a lot more about the problems of the Nation, government social, economic, than anybody else did.

"And the place where I found," he said, "probably the sanest and soundest idealism that was not running off after all kinds of isms, was in the CCC Camps."

I said, "Why?" "Well," he said, "I do not know why except this, that perhaps it is because they have two things: they have discipline, which does not mean military training, but they have got discipline and, secondly, they have got to learn -- they have all had to learn that in their daily life they have got to think of somebody else besides themselves. In other words, that they cannot make a mess without cleaning it up because it would affect the lives of 199 other boys who have to live with them, and that, after a very few weeks, they learn how to live with their fellows without being nuisances to their fellows, and they get a point of view of a certain, what might be called, 'responsibility to mankind' which has been very, very helpful to them and given them a pretty sane point of view."

Well, that is not military training but it is discipline, which is a darned good thing for all of us, probably every one of us in this room. It would be a mighty good thing if we could be put into -- there are probably 200 of us -- if we could be put into a CCC Camp together, and a good many of us would have to get over some darned bad habits. Isn't that right? Oh, well, we don't have to name any names but we know. (Laughter) It would be one of the best things that could happen to us

and, of course, if that is true with us older people, it is probably equally true of young gentlemen -- young ladies, for that matter -- eighteen or twenty years old.

Well, that is the general idea -- I think that we are coming to some form of universal Government service.

Q When, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, don't be too didactic. I am in the middle of studying it now. I will have to say something on it pretty soon. I am getting ready but do not go into any details because I haven't gone into any.

Q One more point on that: you mentioned boys, how about girls?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is one of the things we are studying very definitely and there again one of the difficulties on the girl end of it, quite frankly, is to find enough different varieties of things for them to do.

Q Well, make this coeducational. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: We are going to have twenty-five miles -- it is a big country -- between any boys' camp and any girls' camp. (Laughter)

Q And no autos. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, when will you have something to say --

(At this point Mr. Godwin was interrupted by a correspondent behind him who, simultaneously, asked a question about "wearing out shoes.")

Q Mr. President, when will you have something to say in furtherance of the statement that was given out yesterday by Mr. Early with respect to the control of surpluses?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the report on that yet, Earl (Mr. Godwin). I think it is due on --

MR. EARLY (interposing) Thursday.

THE PRESIDENT: Thursday.

Q Would you care to say anything about that now?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Will you say anything about what you discussed with Charles F. Roeser of Fort Worth, the oil man?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, he came up to talk about oil and I turned him over to Secretary Ickes.

Q Did he talk about the Texas shutdown?

THE PRESIDENT: They are having a meeting down there now and, of course, on the oil production problem, it probably has got to be handled realistically on what the Treasury would call a 24-hour basis because the events in the world may on one day greatly curtail our export field and then the events of the next day may curtail some other oil field in a different part of the world and make our oil more available. It ought to be handled on a day-to-day basis, with the different states in the oil compact ready to take action at a minute's notice to meet the fluctuations.

Q Mr. President, the United States at various times has indicated its general interest in the probable disposition of the Dutch East Indies. Would you care to comment whether the United States would have a similar interest in the possible disposition of French Indo-China in the light of this situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, it is over my head.

Q Mr. President, are you going to bring any new personnel into the Government right soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Pretty soon -- pretty soon.

Q Mr. Forrestal?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better wait. I think you had better wait.

Q Does Tobin mean anything to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I know him very well. He is an old friend of mine. I think you had better wait.

Q Several weeks ago various representatives of South American countries signed a project to create an Inter-American Bank. Will you tell us, sir, if you expect to ask the Congress to ratify that convention at this Session?

THE PRESIDENT: Did it have to be ratified?

Q Yes, sir; calls for ratification.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know -- I had forgotten all about it. You might send word up to the Hill that if I ask for ratification I hope to God they will ratify it. (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Mr. President, may we ask one more question on universal training? Your remarks -- does that imply there will be a Message to this session of Congress on the subject?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I do not know because that is a question -- because on the question of when Congress will be here, none of us know, but the chances are that they will take a recess of some kind and come back.

Oh, by the way, I cleared up one point the other day. I did not know in my own mind whether, if Congress were in recess, I could still call them back into extraordinary session and all the good lawyers say that I can, so it is all right. In other words, if they were to take a recess for six weeks or eight weeks, as long as I have the right to call them back in the meantime because of something that has happened, I am perfectly safe. In these days I would want to be able to get them here on four days' notice and some people thought in a recess to a future definite date that I could not call them back, but everybody says now I can. And probably on this universal Government service -- oh, I don't know, I might have it ready -- something to say in a letter or a Message -- in the course of three or four weeks and maybe not for six weeks. I do not know.

Q Is that likely to be a year's training?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is there anything you care to say, Mr. President, or can say at this time about the possible ultimate disposition of French or British possessions in the Atlantic or Caribbean?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.