

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #686,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 4, 1940, 10.50 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are off tonight.

Q What time is that speech to be tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: Two o'clock. The speech itself will be nearer 3.00 -- 2.45.

Q What about football (baseball)?

MR. EARLY: It is ahead of football (baseball?). There is only one system carrying the World Series and that is Mutual.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I get mail from people who want to call this draft a "muster." That is (what they used to call it) in the old colonial days. It is interesting that people remember we used to have "muster days."

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Not a bad word.

Q (Mr. Godwin) It is good Anglo-Saxon. It is a colonial word.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Or "selected men." The "select."

Q (Mr. Godwin) That word "compulsory" seems to stick some people.

THE PRESIDENT: I was just saying to some of these people I saw, "Where does the Latin word 'conscript' come from?" It does not mean anything.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not believe I have anything. We are leaving tonight and we have our school dedication of all three schools in one place at 2.00 o'clock tomorrow. I will make a short speech at a quarter to three.

MR. EARLY: 2.45, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What is the difference? (Laughter)

MR. EARLY: 2.45 (laughter) -- oh, I am sorry. (Laughter) I thought you said 3.00.

THE PRESIDENT: And I don't know yet, I may come back Sunday night without

going to Watervliet, and I still may go to Watervliet and come back Monday night.

Q Mr. President, with respect to the Pittsburgh speech -- I think that has been announced, has it not?

THE PRESIDENT: No speech in Pittsburgh.

Q I have been told that there is something doing there in connection with this housing celebration. Does that indicate --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, they have got some kind of -- I do not know what it is -- laying of a cornerstone or dedication of a one hundred thousand -- not house but apartment.

Q That U.S.H.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There won't be any speech.

Q What is the name of that project? Is that Terrace Gardens?

THE PRESIDENT: That I do not know except that it is in Pittsburgh. I could not tell you.

Q Mr. President, would you view the reopening of the Burma Road as a removal of barriers to world trade?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a question you will have to ask the State Department.

Q Getting back from Burma Road to Pittsburgh -- (laughter) what mills will you inspect there, what steel mills?

THE PRESIDENT: That I do not know. You will have to ask Pa (General Watson). I think Pa knows.

Q Who?

THE PRESIDENT: Pa Watson.

Q You mean the General? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Getting away from Pittsburgh -- (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which way now, west or east?

Q Back to the Far East. The new Japanese Foreign Minister, in an interview with International News Service this morning, says that Japan will declare war on the United States if the United States insists on the maintenance of the status quo, or if the United States gets into the European war.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of the interview, George (Mr. Durno). I am sorry.

Q (Mr. Durno) I told it to Mr. Early. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, earlier this week in an interview in the Christian Science Monitor, Mr. Willkie endorsed or advocated joint establishment and use of the British Naval bases at Singapore and Australia by our fleet. In view of this new situation, have you any comment?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it.

Q There is a story out of Buenos Aires this morning to the effect that United States Army and Navy officers are talking of joint use of all or part of the South American bases?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid that is a blown-up story.

Q What is the actual fact?

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, I think the actual fact is -- of course, as you know, we have a good many Latin-American officers who are here from time to time, some at the present time, some before and some in the future. In the same way, we have our officers in every country down there. It is perfectly obvious that they are discussing facilities, things like whether there are enough airports, et cetera and so on.

I think that is all that has happened. They are merely interchanging information as to what there is and what is needed, both down there and up here.

Q (Mr. Godwin) While these heavy questions are going around, I will hand you one. (Laughter) Have you any reason to believe that Germany and Italy are working for your defeat in this election?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now, Earl, it is a little bit difficult to answer that except by saying that you ought to read the Post as well as the Star. If you have read the Post this morning, or the New York Times, there was a dispatch, one of those special dispatches -- what is his name? Herbert Matthews --

Q (Mr. Godwin, interposing) They did not deliver the Post to my house (this morning).

THE PRESIDENT: There is a story in there from Rome, the New York Times man, and it is just one of them stories. I brought it over here because I was a little amused. (Reading)

"As far as the United States is concerned, the Axis is interested primarily in keeping it out of the war and in trying to prevent or minimize its help to Great Britain. The three-power alliance was intended to be one step in this direction. It may well be that another step is to be taken.

"The Axis is out to defeat President Roosevelt, not as a measure of interference in the internal policies of the United States but because of the President's foreign policy and because of everything which he stands for in the eyes of the Italians and Germans. The coming United States election is realized to be of vast importance to the Axis. Therefore the normal strategy for the Axis is to do something before Nov 5, that would somehow have a great affect on the electoral campaign."

Well, that is just a newspaper story and it is all I have to say.

Q Pretty good ad, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A pretty good ad. (Laughter)

Q What are you quoting there or, rather, what is the name of the author of the story?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Herbert L. Matthews. He wires to the New York Times,

Rome, October third.

Q Do you have any reason to believe that that was a true statement of the situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I am just quoting the press at you. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, would you say that is reminiscent of Mr. Wallace's acceptance speech?

THE PRESIDENT: I am just quoting that article at you.

Q Mr. President, have you heard that the Democrats have rented Madison Square Garden for the twenty-eighth?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it in the paper this morning.

Q Have you --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have no expectation of speaking.

Q Will you make any political speech?

THE PRESIDENT: That I do not know. I am too busy even to think about dates. I am going to speak sometime around the week beginning October twenty-first but I don't know.

Q The twenty-first?

THE PRESIDENT: The twenty-first, probably from the White House, probably not to a big gathering, and I do not know yet whether it will be -- well, you people can judge those things better than I can -- I do not know whether it will be political or not.

Q Will that be the Herald Tribune Forum, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that will be different. That will be, "How do you do?"

Q Are you making any progress in the selection of a draft director?

THE PRESIDENT: Not an awful lot. I will have news as soon as I possibly can get it. In other words, I am waiting for the other end.

Q Can you tell us anything about the number of tanks we are sending to

Canada and the consideration involved? There is a story that 105 went in yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: If you were along (on the trip to Fort Meade), you saw a lot of old World War tanks, rather rusty, in the field. Of course most of those tanks were delivered to the Government, they were practically new, finished just before the end of the war, and the actual delivery was made, in many cases, after the war was over. In other words, we did not get them to the other side. As I understand it, the Canadians have some of them for training purposes. Most of them, I personally doubt very much whether they will mote. They are only good for training purposes.

Q You do not know what number of tanks is involved?

THE PRESIDENT: Not very many.

Q Mr. President, are you going to discuss recess or adjournment with the House leaders this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not going to discuss it with them. I am going to find out from them, if they know, what they are going to do.

Q You asked them to come down.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot say that, no. Neither did they ask to come down. Neither one. In other words, we talked about an entirely different thing and I do not know whether they or I said, "Hope to see you soon."

Q Mr. President, a newspaper in Japan today publishes a report from this country that Mr. Hull is going to resign from the Cabinet after the first of the year. Any comment on the report?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That is just another one.

Q There are reports that you will make another swing through New England?

THE PRESIDENT: That is another one, too.

Q Do you expect to go anywhere else in Ohio besides Dayton?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is all. There is another one -- is it Youngstown?

I don't know. We are not definite on it.

Q Mr. President, does that tour envisage a speech dedicating the big super-highway in Pennsylvania?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that was opened. I got a telegram that it was opened at one minute past midnight last night. Remember I suggested that they go ahead and use the highway without a dedication? Sometime I am going up and we will have a formal dedication.

Q There are also stories that Mr. Kennedy (Ambassador to Great Britain) is about to resign and that Mr. Bullitt will succeed him in London.

THE PRESIDENT: I guess that is another one. Which way did that come?

Q I think we had it from the Chicago Daily News in London.

THE PRESIDENT: London to Berlin to Tokyo to Washington, is that it? Let us get back to Pittsburgh. Which way are we headed this time?

Q There is a report out of the Navy Department that the members of the British Purchasing Commission and some of the officers of the Army and Navy were visiting airports to iron out minor differences in the types of planes, that is, to standardize materials for planes. I wondered if that would be extended to other war materials?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Has there been any consideration of permitting Canada the use of facilities of our southern airports in order to train Canadian pilots?

THE PRESIDENT: To do what about southern ports? I don't get it.

Q Of using American airports in southern states, Texas and California, to train Canadian pilots during the winter months?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. There was some discussion about a private school

charter, which is a very different thing. I do not know what has happened on it.

Q There is continual hounding and urge in the press for more aid to Britain in one way or another, either money or arms or munitions. Have you anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. I think you had probably better ask, on the production end, ask Mr. Knudsen because things are going along just about as fast as any human being can make it.

Q Mr. Knudsen referred us to Morgenthau and Morgenthau referred us to the President on that question.

THE PRESIDENT: Only the general answer that we are speeding things up all we possibly can.

Q What I want to bring out is that somebody or somewhere there seems to be a complaint that we are not living up to the formula of all the aid short of war, that they are holding back for some reason and not getting enough. It may be a true statement or it may not. I just wondered if you had anything to say on that.

THE PRESIDENT: As a general proposition, it is not a true statement. You have got to specify to be able to take up any particular article or type of ammunition in order to check it.

Q I can't do that.

THE PRESIDENT: That is just it.

Q Is there any domestic or international law against Canada using our private air schools?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me put it this way, Pete (Brandt): Suppose you are a Canadian boy. You are not in the Army. You have a right to go to the United States to go to college.

All right. You have an international right to go to the United States to get a ground course in flying at a school where you pay a tuition.

What you do with the knowledge that you acquire is something you can determine after you get back to Canada.

Q Would that be true if the Canadian pilots were members of the Army, the Canadian Army?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know whether that question has ever come up. It has never been suggested.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #687,
Prior to leaving Watervliet Arsenal,
following an inspection trip,
October 7, 1940, 3.15 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you would like to make the late afternoon editions.

I will give you some figures. This is one of the oldest arsenals belonging to the Government. There are lovely houses too. The Commandant's house over there was built just a hundred years ago.

We now have got up to 2700 employees and we will get up to nearly 5,000.

Q By when, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: When, Colonel?

COLONEL GELLESPIE: Probably by May, 1941.

THE PRESIDENT: They are turning out, at the present time, about six (large caliber) guns a day and hope to get up to fourteen guns a day.

COLONEL GELLESPIE: That is calendar days and not working days.

THE PRESIDENT: That is calendar days and not working days. In other words, that includes Sundays. They are running three shifts. We have enough floor space for the additional men to work in. It was a bit of a problem, the Colonel said, when we started to expand in regard to certain skilled types of labor. They are coming along all right now.

We have plenty of floor space and that is why we are not building too many buildings in this place, so as not to have too many eggs in one basket. They are turning out guns for the Navy as well as the Army, as you saw by the signs.

We next see where General Burgoyne surrendered (referring to Saratoga Battlefield).

Anything else you wanted to know?

Q When you get back to Albany, are you --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will go to sleep.

Q Aren't you going to make --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Go to sleep. I will wave. They are planning a large rally.

Q There will be a large crowd there.

THE PRESIDENT: That's fine. I will wave.

Q May we ask an extraneous question, sir? Have you got around to the Tax Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q The Tax Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Just studying.

Q One other question -- a trifle extraneous: Have you heard of the expulsion of Herbert Matthews from Rome as a result of that press story?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q He was excluded from Rome by the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is just too bad. And, off the record, most of you boys know that it is wholly unwarranted. That is off the record. It is tough on Herbert.

Q Perhaps he would like to come home anyway.

THE PRESIDENT: He told them the truth.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #688,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 8, 1940, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we had a nice sightseeing trip yesterday. We missed you.

Q I read about it. The very good writing on the part of these young men.

They are doing a better job every time they take a trip.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, they are educational, too.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: We learned all about the Battle of Saratoga, the surrender of Burgoyne, yesterday. You did not know that, did you?

Q We had heard about that before.

THE PRESIDENT: Had you? (Laughter)

Q They have had experiences at Saratoga outside of that. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It may be said to be an expensive place in August. We are sending the veterans there, you see, in the off season, because they are poor men.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe I have got anything today. We had a very good time yesterday. We are all learning a lot, who Burgoyne was and why he surrendered and all about Benedict Arnold's leg that was loyal.

By the way, did you see the monument there? We did not go near there.

Q We saw it from the distance.

Q Can you tell us anything, Mr. President, about your conference this afternoon with Admiral Richardson and Admiral Leahy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we are just studying maps.

Q Did the conference touch upon frontiers in the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: We studied maps.

Q Pacific maps?

THE PRESIDENT: We studied maps and are learning geography.

Q Were they mostly in the Eastern Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We thought mostly maps of the Eastern Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: All three hemispheres.

Q O. K. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, does the presence of Mr. Leahy in the conference indicate that he might be called back into active service, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am finding out about Puerto Rico.

Q Is it contemplated to withdraw the marines from China?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Mr. President, did anything develop from your Labor Board discussion this morning with Mr. Leiserson?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Anything likely to?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You might say everything is in status quo.

Q Were local housing problems discussed with Mr. Carmody?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean Washington?

Q Washington, Alexandria --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They were included in the long list. I will tell you frankly what I have been trying to do: The Congress put an outside figure, as I remember it, of \$3500. per house on the average for all of these places. Some are in the South, some are in the North, some are in the West, some are in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, even the District of Columbia. I figured out that \$3500 for a house is too high for what

probably will be, in large part, temporary housing, so we have been having a little argument for about a month on how we can reduce that figure. We seem to have got it pretty well reduced except in some places where the cost of land, the cost of living, the cost of labor and material is very, very high. But I think you can say, fairly, that the average of this Government housing will be probably nearer \$2800. than \$3500., which means a saving to the Government of about \$700. per house, which is not bad, considering that they are essentially temporary houses.

Q What is a house? What do you call it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would put it this way: The design -- do you know what a Cape Cod cottage looks like? It is a one-story building -- that is the easiest way -- and the average of these houses would be about 26 feet square, not 26 square feet but 26 feet square. In other words, some might be 24 by 28, but about an average of 26 feet each way. They contain, again on the average, two bedrooms, little bedrooms, and one sittingroom and one bathroom and one combination -- what do you girls call it now? -- a dinette, and in the kitchen --

Q (interposing) A dinette.

Q Will they be individual houses or row houses?

THE PRESIDENT: Most of them will be individual. In some cases they will be duplex, and in some cases three apartments of essentially the same size.

Q If I may become extremely local, did the question of changing the U.S.H.A. local housing project in Alexandria into a housing project for the torpedo plant workers come up?

THE PRESIDENT: I could not tell you about that part of it. There was a project for Alexandria in this long list. Now, whether it was changed

from a U.S.H.A. local project into a Navy project, I do not know.

Q After his conference with you this morning, Lord Lothian said that his information seemed to indicate a general crisis in the Far East to be imminent. Do you have any information in that same general direction?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will have to ask the State Department about that.

Q The Navy last week announced the establishment of an Atlantic fighting force of more than 125 ships. Does that portend the organization of what they call a two-ocean fleet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, haven't got enough ships for it.

Q Are you planning to defer the appointment of a Transportation Board until after Mr. Owen D. Young's committee reports?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. The thing has not come up. I knew there was to be a three-man board appointed, but I do not know -- I have not had any recommendations of names yet.

Q There has been a rumor that Mr. Young might be one of those members. Any basis to that?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not heard the names of any. When is the Young board going to report?

Q He said in the near future -- no definite time.

Q Mr. President, reports reaching here from Philadelphia indicate that you are going back to Philadelphia and Camden to complete that half of the trip which you were unable to do before -- the New York Shipbuilding and the Frankford Arsenal, et cetera?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that was one of the many hopes. There is nothing on it.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether you think that firms that are found by the Labor Board to be guilty of violating the Labor Act should receive defense contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think you will have to check on what was said before the Committee this afternoon.

Q Mr. President, have you signed the Tax Bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Do you anticipate signing it today, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know. What is the last day?

Q I could not tell you.

THE PRESIDENT: Frankly, I have not finished studying it. I am working through to about ten or eleven o'clock tonight and I do not know when I will finish my studying. I think it is a fair guess that it will be signed. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there are reports from Mexico City that this Government is reinteresting itself in a trans-Mexico highway over Tehuantepec.

THE PRESIDENT: The only highway I know is the carrying down of the North and South Highway, which means -- of course it has been completed to Mexico City -- carrying it down -- it is partly finished, with a few little stretches in there -- down to what? the Guatemala line.

Q This is supposed to be Atlantic to Pacific, parallel with the Canal?

Q He is referring to the old Tehuantepec Ship Canal route. They are trying to revive interest in that.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course you know down there on the Isthmus the difficulty about the canal is that in the first place it will have to be a lock canal because it goes over a high elevation. It was in -- I have forgotten the year -- 1860, I think, that the first survey was made. They found there was not even enough water on top of the canal, on top of the ridge, to feed a canal, like Gatun Lake, or a river, like the Chartres River, and so they took up -- I don't know, I think I am a

little late, I think it was back in the 50's -- they surveyed the possibility of a railway, a ship railway. It has been taken up about every five or ten years since then. I have not heard anything about it lately.

Q Anything to be said about the Alaskan Highway?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that they are studying snowfall. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you expect to attend the National Grange Convention next month in New York?

THE PRESIDENT: Where is it? in New York?

Q In Syracuse.

THE PRESIDENT: I'd like to go to it. I was to one years ago when I took the Seventh Degree in the Grange. Some of you people will understand what that means. I would like to go very much. I have got it down on the calendar somewhere. I don't know; I never can tell.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #689,
At the White House,

October 15, 1940 - 4:15 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I have been trying to dig up something for you, but about the only thing I can find is that on October 10, 5 days ago, I approved an Act authorizing the requisition of arms, ammunition, implements of war, machine tools, and other articles and materials needed for national defense.

Under the old law, the Neutrality Acts and the Export Control Act of last July, certain articles and materials needed for national defense were subject to the export licensing system. Since the passage of the Act last July, many applications were refused--that is, for licenses--as a result of decisions by the Administrator of Export Control that the proposed exportation would be contrary to the interests of national defense. The articles or materials for which export licenses were refused had in many cases been already sold and the title had passed to a foreign purchaser. It was known that in some of these cases purchasers did not desire to sell the article or material in the United States, or because they were acting in a representative capacity they were not legally in a position to do so. They were representatives or agents. This situation was particularly acute in the case of some exportation of machine tools. A great many of these tools for which export licenses were refused were especially needed to meet national defense requirements.

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Today I issued an Executive order based on the Act of 5 days ago, directing the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy, acting jointly through the agency of the Army and Navy Munitions Board, to determine the necessity for the requisitioning of any equipment, munitions, machinery, tools, materials, or supplies necessary for the manufacture of munitions or the servicing or operation of facilities for the National Defense, and to determine whether in any case it is in the public interest to sell or dispose of any of the articles so requisitioned; and the administration of the other provisions of the Act of 5 days ago has been vested in the Administrator of Export Control.

At the same time I issued the necessary regulations to carry out this Executive order; and as a result of this approval of the Act and the issuing of the Executive order and regulations the President is assured the use of the critical items of the country and the materials required in the National Defense Program which might otherwise be unobtainable.

Steve has copies for you.

Q Mr. President, does that have any connection with the conversations that are going on with Russia on the release of machine tools?

THE PRESIDENT: O, I suppose so--yes; probably the same thing.

Q I know those conversations are going on, and Russia wants the tools.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q They will then be available for Russia.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, the general idea is, if we don't need them for ourselves we turn them over to a friendly power.

Q And Russia is a friendly power.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think Russia is the mainspring in that.

Q Just incidental.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, this order also concerns some Swedish planes that have been detained here?

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine so.

Q Mr. President, here is one that may be a little long: On your forthcoming political speeches, do you intend to answer charges made by your political opposition that you are seeking to become a dictator, and that there will be nothing to prevent you, or others after you, from seeking additional terms of office if you are elected to a third term?

THE PRESIDENT: That is interesting; it has everything except the kitchen stove in it. Who wrote it?

Q I did.

THE PRESIDENT: Good boy! My congratulations to you!

Q Is there an answer?

THE PRESIDENT: My congratulations to you; it is beautifully worded!

Q Mr. President, in view of the State Department approval, would you say that was an indication that definitely there will be a waterway treaty with Canada?

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THE PRESIDENT: No, you might just as well get that out of your head. We are talking about power at the present time for defense purposes. More power is needed along the St. Lawrence; hence, we have already allocated, I think it is, a hundred thousand dollars to develop borings in the St. Lawrence for a dam. A dam is necessary primarily for the power needs, which are uppermost. The question of the waterway I suppose brings politics into it. Obviously, after you build a dam a big lake develops behind it; and at some future date if it is decided between the two countries to do it, you can build a lock on the side of the dam; but the objective at the present time is to build a dam as fast as we can and get some more power. Is that clear?

Q What is the general location, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The International Rapids, near Massena, New York.

Q What projects will develop mostly from this extra power?

THE PRESIDENT: We need it for all kinds of industrial purposes on both sides of the line.

Q It is understood that Canada also will draw power from there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes; they are in it too for power, and we are in it for power.

Q Have you announced anything about the money allocated for the borings--has that been announced yet?

THE PRESIDENT: That may be new. Anyway, there was a hundred thousand dollars allocated for the borings.

Q The borings haven't been made?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. This allocation—I think it happened about three weeks ago. Whether they have begun the borings I do not know.

Q Does that involve the appointment of a commission on this side of the line to look after that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we are going to do it as formally as that.

Q Mr. President, the State Department said Mr. Kennedy was coming back.

THE PRESIDENT: Joe's coming back early next week—coming back to report. Stories of resignation are not true.

Q Lord Lothian is reported to have left today.

THE PRESIDENT: He has left for a short trip to report in the other direction, and any stories of his resignation are not true.

Q In connection with the Kennedy story, is the story true about the sending of another ship, a "mercy" ship, to bring back people from England?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know; in other words, we are studying the thing at the present time. Whether it is to go I don't know, but I guess Breck. Long isn't ready on the thing.

Q Is anybody being considered to fill the vacancy of Thad Brown on the Federal Communications Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet, because, as you know, on this question of appointments we might just as well save ourselves breath.

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Except in the emergency of the appointment of Dr. Dykstra, which obviously was an absolutely necessary and essential thing, probably vacancies will not be filled. There is no committee to consider nominations. We all know that. There isn't any committee that has a quorum, in the normal course, to refer a nomination to; so I doubt very much if there will be any nominations sent up to the Senate until they come back with a quorum in the Senate.

Q Mr. President, do you wish to make any comment on the new modifications of the wage-hour regulations concerning professional and administrative workers?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about it except what I read.

Q Can you tell us anything about your future speaking plans?

THE PRESIDENT: Um (pause)--speaking tomorrow morning at 8 o'clock; speaking on the 23d--well, I don't know whether it will be a political speech or not; at any rate, it will be paid for, so there won't be any danger if I mention that my great-grandfather fought in the Revolutionary War! I am going to speak--and it is going to be paid for--on the 23d. Then there probably will be either a telephone message or a speech--I don't know how it is handled--to the Herald-Tribune Forum on the 24th--I think it is the 24th; isn't that right?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And then probably one more speech somewhere around the 29th or 30th--which again will be paid for, thereby allowing me to mention my great-grandfather.

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Q Was that Isaac Roosevelt? (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: As a matter of fact, he was my great-great-grandfather; I was wrong. And then I guess that is about all.

Q From where will you make these October 23 speeches?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't know--wherever I am. You all want to know about trips; I might as well tell you about that: There are various things I need to look at for my information, and also speeding up the work, because it does seem to be a fact that after you have had an inspection trip in these places the output does improve. That is the record as sent to us by the various manufacturers and Government agencies. People get a little bit more pep on the thing and we get quicker production after we have been at one of these places; and there are several places that are within this limit of being fairly accessible to Washington--this over-night thing--where we haven't been yet; so some of you fellows better be prepared for more trips. Probably two or three of them won't happen until after the 5th of November, which is merely an incident in these inspection trips. For instance, I want very much to go down the Connecticut Valley all the way from the Springfield Arsenal to the big aviation plants at Hartford, and then on down to New Haven and Bridgeport where they are turning out a great many war motors. I don't know whether that will be before or after election--I haven't the faintest idea. I probably will want to inspect that new aviation plant out

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in Buffalo; whether that will be before or after election I don't know. I want to see the Kearny Shipbuilding Plant and the Frankford Arsenal; I don't know whether that will be before election or not. Incidentally, I haven't been to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. There is plenty left to look at. Some may be before election and a great deal of it may be after. Keep your bags handy.

Q What about the Washington Navy Yard? (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: I ought to know that--I helped to build it!

Q Do these plans include the dedication of the Battery Tunnel up in New York?

THE PRESIDENT: I promised to do that when it was started. The Pennsylvania Highway--I promised when it was started, originally, that I would take part in dedicating it.

Q You might come down to New Orleans also.

THE PRESIDENT: That is over my 12-hour limit.

Q That 12-hour limit still holds?

THE PRESIDENT: Still holds, unfortunately; but all these other things are within it, and they are an easy run from Washington.

Q Does your inspection include the Connecticut trip?

THE PRESIDENT: They have the brass companies there; what else?

Q They make a lot of cartridges and cartridge cases.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think probably; it is on the way down between Hartford and Bridgeport, isn't it?

Q Yes, it is, sir.

Q Mr. President, I understand the Democrats have contracted for considerable radio time the night before election; are you going to speak then?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I have no plans for that at all. I think I did speak on the Saturday night before election two other times--four other times.

Q Will you be in Hyde Park on election night?

THE PRESIDENT: O, yes, of course!

Q They asked me to ask you.

Q Will you take action on the sugar bill tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I have it on my desk; you can say it is going to be approved; and I am waiting for another sugar bill, I think.

Q You signed that on Thursday, the 10th.

THE PRESIDENT: Did I?--are you sure?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Then I guess I will sign this tonight. That is one of the ⁴⁵ in one day.

Q Mr. President, is there any comment on reports in the papers on negotiations with South American countries for a total defense program of the hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: O, we're talking all the time. You mean that story--I learned all about it yesterday morning--in the Times?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: That was very, very interesting. I learned a great deal for the first time.

Q Will this trip take you into eastern Massachusetts--Boston?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so--unless the need arises later on.

Q How about Rhode Island?

THE PRESIDENT: I have been in Boston and the Watertown arsenal.

I would want to see the Fall River Shipbuilding Plant; but

I have no plans for that.

Q How about Newport, Rhode Island?

THE PRESIDENT: I have done that.

Q You won't go back again?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q A great many reports have been floating around about a possible shake-up of the Navy high command. Any basis for those reports?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no basis.

Q Admiral Richardson and Admiral Stark to be replaced?

THE PRESIDENT: No, never heard of that.

Q Thank you, Mr. President!

The Conference adjourned at 4:33 P.M.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #690,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 18, 1940, 10.40 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Tom (Mr. Reynolds), how are you feeling?

Q (Mr. Reynolds) Fine.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: This (indicating a type-written statement on his desk) has not been mimeographed yet. I will read it to you and mimeograph it afterwards.

Q How are you today?

THE PRESIDENT: Fine.

Q It looks as though the copy desk has been working on it. (The typewritten statement had been pretty well marked up in pencil.)

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. I ought to know what that is. I used to run one.

Q What is the box? (Referring to an amber box on the President's desk)

THE PRESIDENT: That is very interesting. That is amber, comes from the amber mines in Lithuania. That Lithuanian group that was in the other day gave it to me.

Q No bugs in it?

Q They have a fly in the amber. Every now and then it gets caught in there.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they really? What is it made out of?

Q It is solidified resin. Geological. They have some where they have caught a bug way back in the days before Adam, and he is still fast.

THE PRESIDENT: They get it near the surface. I saw a photograph once of strip mining.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: This has not been put on the mimeograph outside. Steve

(Mr. Early) will do it right off, afterwards. I will read it:

"In the speech of acceptance to the Democratic Convention on July 19, 1940, the President said:

"I shall not have the time or the inclination to engage in any purely political debate. But I shall never be loath to call the attention of the nation to deliberate or unwitting falsifications of fact."

"There has been in this campaign, however, a systematic program of falsification of fact by the opposition. The President does not believe that it has been an unwitting falsification of fact. He believes it is a deliberate falsification of fact.

"He has, therefore, decided to tell the American people what these misrepresentations have been and in what respect they are false. With that purpose in mind, the President will make five speeches between now and election day."

Q Mr. President, are you ready at this time to give us some indication of what those misrepresentations are?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to wait until the five speeches, Pete (Mr. Brandt).

And also, for the benefit of certain people whose ethics are not just like mine, I think you can say that in these trips, they will include, some of them, some inspection work because they happen to be near where we are doing a lot of defense preparation, but the trips will be paid for, of course, obviously, by the Democratic National Committee because they contain political speeches. I have just anticipated, perhaps, certain statements that might afterwards come out.

Q Mr. President, is there a possibility, sir, that the speech scheduled here for November (October) thirtieth will be shifted over to Baltimore?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, there is a possibility that the speech will be shifted over to Baltimore.

Q That would put you in Baltimore, sir, the same night that Mr. Willkie is speaking there.

THE PRESIDENT: Does it? Good. (Laughter)

Q You said November 30th?

Q October 30th.

Q Mr. President, are you going to sign the bill for the registration of organizations subject to foreign control (H.R. 10094)?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the one I signed yesterday.

MR. EARLY: There is a long list to be given out.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a long list. I think it was signed. It was approved all along the line by the different departments it was referred to. I hope we are talking about the same bill. You had better find out.

Q I did not mean to interrupt you, sir. Did you intend to issue, sir, by Executive Order or otherwise, an arrangement whereby defense orders in industry will have priority over all other orders?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think you can say that on the priority question the matter is coming to a head but there has been no need of any priority orders yet and there is no immediate prospect, but the Government, of course, in turning out this program, must eliminate bottlenecks, if they should appear; that is to say, bottlenecks which could be avoided by a priority in delivery.

Q Mr. President, can you comment --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I might say, Earl (Mr. Godwin), that there is nothing, no particular thing in prospect at the present time.

Q Mr. President, can you comment on your visit with the Latin-American military chiefs who were with you yesterday or the day before yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we all agreed most heartily along the lines of the previous delegation that came in, and the key of the whole thing was that phrase, "One for all and all for one."

Q Mr. President, do you expect an early report on the St. Lawrence power project?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q How long have you in mind -- some months?

THE PRESIDENT: I told you the other day. We are starting the borings. We got the money for that and that is all.

Q Mr. President, following your conference --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other words, there is no -- there is nothing planned beyond getting more information about the borings.

Q You have no approximate idea as to the size of the plant, its production, or cost?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am pretty rusty on it. I should say, roughly, that the figure -- I suppose approximately the same volume of water is going down the river as it did a great many years ago, approximately one and one-quarter million horsepower for each nation. I think I am right on that but you had better check.

Q It follows the old plan, the idea that has been --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not necessarily, depending on power, location and things like that. In other words, what we are doing is trying to find out if it is practicable to build a dam at the place originally selected and, as far as the engineering goes, it may be and probably will be a dam across the river. I do not know what more I can say.

Q Mr. President, on Tuesday you indicated that navigation was not a present consideration but in your Executive Order yesterday it is noted that the Advisory Committee is authorized to check navigation and hydro-power development. Anything that we can have on that?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly simple. If you know anything about the

building of a dam, you know that at some given point of a dam you build it in such a way that if, later on, it should be decided by both countries to put in a lock, either on the existing canal -- there is one now, you know -- or somewhere nearby, that the structure of the power dam would be such that it would not have to be torn down if, at some later time, the two countries decided on new locks.

Q Following your conference yesterday with John Lewis, do you have any idea whether he may have a political --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't the faintest idea. We talked about two strike situations.

Q Have you any comment on the current controversy over whether defense contracts or any other contracts, Government defense contracts, should be awarded to labor law violators?

THE PRESIDENT: The only case pending is the case I think you know about, some of the plants of Bethlehem Steel, and my information is that there is being arranged a conference between both sides of that controversy.

Q Mr. President, have you completed your itinerary of any of these inspection trips?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Could you give us any background of your meeting this week end with the Earl of Athlone at Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Way back in 1933 -- I think it was 1933 or 1934 -- began the interchange of visits between the Governor General and the President, and the President and the Governor General. It is merely a continuation of courtesy visits. It is and it is not official. Because it is being held at Hyde Park, it is really a week-end visit. It is only official in the sense that I have never had the pleasure of meeting the Governor

General and his wife and this will give me a chance to do so.

Q Do you think it will be desirable for Canada to come into the Pan-American Union?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no thoughts on the subject. It is a very "iffy" question.

Q Can you tell us anything about your conference on European relief with Davis (Chairman Norman Davis of the Red Cross)?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing except the weekly checkup; that is all.

Q No conclusions?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #691,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 22, 1940, 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Good afternoon, Mr. President. Look what I got on your door. (Exhibiting a paint stain on the sleeve of his coat.)

THE PRESIDENT: What? Paint?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Paint.

THE PRESIDENT: No sign out there?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Plenty of them.

THE PRESIDENT: Then you can't recover.

Q We have one of the bills for the relief of Earl Godwin coming through Congress.

Q That is administration whitewash. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (Pause) Don't you wish it was whitewash? (Laughter)

Q (Mr. Godwin) Yes!

(The President had just blotted his signature on an official document and Mr. Godwin asked for the blotter. The President gave it to him.)

THE PRESIDENT: Do you know that MacKenzie King collects them -- blotters -- for his autographs?

Q (Mr. Godwin) That is very interesting.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I have one thing. Steve (Mr. Early) will give you a copy of it afterwards. It is a statement made on the signing of the bill for the use of the bequest that Mr. Justice Holmes made to the Government -- in fact, it was practically the whole of his estate, as you know -- for the publication of a memorial volume of the selected

writings of Mr. Justice Holmes and the establishment -- this, of course, would be the major part -- of an Oliver Wendell Holmes garden in the vicinity of the immediate scene of his labors in the Supreme Court.

That was decided on, as you know, by a committee after carefully talking with all the old, old friends of Mr. Justice Holmes, and we all feel that it is one of the things that would have appealed to him -- a quiet garden that you could go and sit down in and be removed, if possible, a little bit from the noise and bustle of the streets of Washington. I think it is a very appropriate use of the bequest and I am sure it would have made him very happy.

Q (Mr. Essary) Mr. President, the Secretary of the Navy stated in a broadcast this afternoon that we must have additional bases in the Pacific and will have them. Could you elaborate at all on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so.

Q (Mr. Essary) Another thing, sir, since your talk with John L. Lewis he has announced that he will make a public statement on the air in the next two or three days. Could you give us a little guidance, sir, as to what line he is going to take? (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I have not got the faintest idea. There was nothing indicated the other day, Fred.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Sir, you said the other day that you and he spoke of certain specific labor situations -- strike situations. Was that all you care to say about it at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you contemplate the sale of our flying bombers or flying fortress bombers to Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not know; I have not heard anything about it for weeks

and weeks except what I read in the papers.

Q The impression was prevalent, sir, in Canada, that some were about to be delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Tanks, yes. I head about that. They were delivered.

Q Is there anything significant, sir, in the flight of these bombers now from March Field to Langley? There were stories released today.

THE PRESIDENT: I did not even know that. I did not even know they had all gone to Martinique until I read the U.P. story the other day. (Laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you plan to go to Maryland to make a speech before the election?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. I haven't time to work it in.

Q Did Governor O'Connor invite you to do it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Is the Brooklyn speech settled now?

THE PRESIDENT: Pretty well settled.

Q Academy of Music?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You see, I have been doing that Academy -- it has become a very nice old tradition that I think I started in 1920 and I have been doing it almost every few years since. I did it several times in Al Smith's campaigns. I did it in my campaigns for the Governorship and in 1932 and 1936. I am not sure I did not do it in 1934 when Herbert Lehman was running again.

Q What night is that?

THE PRESIDENT: Always the Friday night before election.

Q How will you be able to get from there to Cleveland the next day and do some inspecting en route, Rochester and Buffalo?

THE PRESIDENT: By rail. Well, if you figure out the time you will see there

is lots and lots of time.

Q You still do plan to stop at Rochester and Buffalo on the way?

THE PRESIDENT: Somewhere up there. We have not worked it out. There are a number of plants that ought to be looked over and I will see a lot of old friends up there.

Q Is that the Friday night before election, or the thirtieth?

THE PRESIDENT: The Friday night before election.

Q November one?

THE PRESIDENT: November one, yes.

Q Is the October thirtieth date out?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. I do not know. I am keeping the time but I am not using it myself. But it is nice to have it up your sleeve, therefore it has not been released. Maybe somebody else will use it.

Q Mr. President, are you going to get up into New England before election?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not believe I can now. I told you about several trips. Well now, just for example, everybody is trying to get me to go out to the Middle West beyond the twelve-hour limit and I said I just plain couldn't go because so many things happen here and I believe it is in the interests of peace to stay near Washington, but that as soon as the situation eases up in the foreign field I will almost certainly get out to the Middle West. I want to see a lot of the defense work that is going on out there.

MR. EARLY: It is 9.00 to 9.30 the evening of the first. (Speaking of the Brooklyn speech)

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says it is 9.00 to 9.30 the evening of the first.

Q Does that forecast you made some time ago still hold good?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let us see. When did I do the last one? About, I

should think, about three weeks ago and I do not think if I were to re-do it today there would be much change. It would be substantially the same.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. It is really dull today.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #692,
Executive Offices of the White House,
October 25, 1940, 10.55 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what is the news this morning? Have you done your deed this morning?

Q (Mr. Godwin) I have done it twice.

THE PRESIDENT: How is the voice holding out?

Q (Mr. Godwin) My voice gets better every minute.

THE PRESIDENT: It is all right; like mine. If you ever have trouble, Ross McIntire has a solution.

Q (Mr. Godwin) Is it all right?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly amazing. It will last you twenty minutes. You can have a croak like a frog and you will have a voice like the most beautiful singer for twenty minutes.

Q Mr. President, we know a prominent speaker (Mr. Willkie) who may be able to use it.

THE PRESIDENT: You do? That's right. (Laughter)

We are not giving away the formula.

Q That is off the record.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I don't dare talk about politics though.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't do it.

Q (Mr. Godwin) I got an egg this morning. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Did you; did you really?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only news I have this morning is that of a list of promotions. The interesting thing relates to the promotion of Major General Emmons, G.H.Q. Air Force Commander, to be Lieutenant General,

which is just the same rank as that held by the Corps Area Commander, plus a great many other promotions. (Reading)

"The present expansion -- "

Steve (Mr. Early) has got this for you -- (reading)

"The present expansion of our army will increase its active strength from 227,000 to 1,400,000 in one year. This increased strength makes necessary the organization and activation of many new units. It permits a large expansion of the Air Corps. It increases many fold the activities and the size of our manufacturing arsenals and depots. This expansion can not be carried out without proper leadership and proper rank must be accorded to these leaders. The following temporary promotions are essential to meet the requirements of the present phase of this expansion."

They are all temporary promotions, of course. (Reading)

"As the army increases, as more new units and more training centers are set up, and as the Selective Service System brings new trainees in large numbers to the colors, additional temporary promotions will be necessary."

This is the second list. We have had one already.

Emmons goes up to the rank of Lieutenant General on the theory that the G.H.Q. Air Force, in its relationship to the Army, is at least of equal importance to a Corps Area command, and the Corps Area Commanders for some time have been Lieutenant Generals.

Then there are a number of Brigadiers to go up to Major General. Those are Corps and Division Commanders. Coast Artillery, three Colonels; Infantry, one Colonel goes up; Field Artillery, one Colonel goes up; Cavalry, two Colonels go up and, on that, it is rather an interesting fact that among those two Colonels that go up, on the record, one is Colonel Davis, Benjamin O. Davis who, I think, as far as I know, is the first colored man who has ever been a Brigadier General; six Ordnance Colonels to go up to Brigadier General; one Quartermaster Corps; one Chemical Warfare, and one Corps of Engineers.

In other words, you have to have the correct grade for a given command and I think, if you want, I will give you this now as background stuff and only background. In time of war it is a pretty important thing, of course, to keep overhead down. At the same time it is pretty important to keep the rank of officers in line with the number of men they command or the importance of their work. The other day we were up in Philadelphia and we saw the Frankford Arsenal employing 7500 men. Well, 7500 men, of course, anywhere in the field would rate at least a Brigadier General. However, the man up there -- this has nothing to do with the individual -- the man up there was a Colonel. He is pretty well up on the top of the list of Ordnance and he is in this list today being promoted to a Brigadier General. In the same way, the man who is running a private establishment, we might want to shift him to some other private establishment because a great many private establishments, in case of war, turn out solely Army material. It is perfectly possible that we might take a \$75,000.-a-year man, who is running a 7500-man factory, and make him a Brigadier General, which would certainly save the Government money. You see the point? In other words, we are trying to fit the rank to the number of men commanded, or the importance of the job.

Q Mr. President, how far down do these temporary promotions go in grade?

THE PRESIDENT: These only go down to Colonel.

MR. EARLY: One Lieutenant Colonel.

THE PRESIDENT: One Lieutenant Colonel; all the rest are Colonels.

Q What happens to the young fellows out of the Academy in both services in the course of the last two years, with a great many Reserve Officers coming into the line?

THE PRESIDENT: They all go up on merit; equally. There is no discrimination.

They all go up equally.

MR. EARLY: No nominations.

THE PRESIDENT: They do not have to be nominated to the Senate. I think the thing that is going on is a regular process, the way it did during the World War.

Q Mr. President, there will be a vacancy on the District of Columbia Public Utilities Commission in a few days. Has that come up to you at all?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. Ask Russ (Commissioner J. Russell Young).

(Laughter)

Q Mr. President, there seems to have been some misunderstanding about whether you might go to Chicago before election. Has anything been decided on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe there could have been any misunderstanding. As I said, I don't know, I suppose twenty times in Press Conferences, just as soon as the international situation quiets down and makes it possible for me to be away for more than the limit I set, which was twelve hours, I am going to various parts of the country, including the Middle West and, well, after election, to be quite frank, if the situation quiets down, I would go to Warm Springs for Thanksgiving. You see, that is more than twelve hours. But, if it does not quiet down and, at the present moment, as you all know from reading the papers, it has not quieted down. I have to be within easy distance.

Q The misunderstanding, sir, was at the other end, not here.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

Q Mr. President, do you care to indicate what general phase of the international situation is now -- may be receiving your special attention?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think so. I guess we both read the papers and I also get a lot of dispatches which confirm some of the things in the papers and some that do not. It is all rather speculative.

Q The reason I asked was because there had been numerous queries alleging or insinuating that possibly some inquiries would be addressed to you through Spain?

THE PRESIDENT: I have not had anything like that at all -- nothing like that. But, if you know -- again, if you want background, and this has got to be background and cannot be attributed to me -- just to take an example, you have got in the papers four different situations, any one of which might get worse. On the other hand, any one of them might get better. There is, first, the question of Spain, which you mentioned. Secondly, there is the question of the French fleet which, as you know from the papers, is under discussion at the present time over there. And, third, is Greece and the Balkans. And the fourth is the Far East.

So, there you have at the present moment -- and things change awfully fast -- the four possibilities of trouble. It does not mean involvement of us in any way but it means all kinds of things that would have to be done by the President -- proclamations, getting Americans out, Executive Orders, and -- what do they call it, the tying up of money?

MR. EARLY: Freezing.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the freezing of money in banks in this country. In other words, the President has to do something about those things, and, that being the case, I cannot go more than twelve hours away from Washington.

Q Mr. President, apropos of the conversation the other day between Hitler and Marshal Petain, is the French Government still in the category of a

friendly power from our point of view, or is it an unknown quantity?

THE PRESIDENT: We certainly have diplomatic relations with them, haven't we?

Q We have with Germany also.

(The President did not hear the question and looked askance.)

Q (Mr. Godwin) We have with Germany also. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Front and quick.

Q Mr. President, have you anyone in mind for the Transportation Board?

Any nominations to go up soon on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't. I have asked people for suggestions and I haven't got them all yet.

Q Sir, have you anything further to say about Ambassador Kennedy? You made a statement about rumors of his resignation several days ago. Do you care to make any further --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I think it is the same as it was then.

Do I have anything else, Steve?

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

Q Mr. President, in your speech in Philadelphia you said, "We are determined during the next four years to make our objective, work for every young man and woman in America a living fact." Does this, sir, mean that if you are elected you will, God willing, serve the full four-year term?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course. The answer is, "Of course." You can quote it if you want. (A pause) I am glad you put in "God willing"; that saves it. (Laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #693,
Executive Offices of the White House,
November 1, 1940, 10.40 A.M.

Q Good morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Getting a little rest?

Q (Mr. Godwin) Very nice rest.

THE PRESIDENT: A night in bed. (Laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think there is any news except a probable change of plan. I think probably that I will have to come back here from Cleveland and stay here until, anyway, midnight Sunday night, and maybe stay over until Monday, and then go to Hyde Park.

Q Are there any particular circumstances that impel that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except that there are things coming in all the time. And it seems wise to keep in pretty close touch.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Willkie, in some of his speeches, has referred rather caustically to your reference to "my ambassador" in connection with Joe Kennedy. Can you give us some background on your reference to "my ambassador"?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think you had better take up a political thing in a Press Conference. It is purely a political thing. Some of you in Washington know the difference between a minister and an ambassador. You had better go and check with the State Department. I think I might say something about it tonight.

Q Mr. President, may I ask you which plants you intend visiting in

Buffalo?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to the Curtiss Wright plant, and the Bell plant, and then down to Lackawanna, to the Lackawanna steel plant.

Q That is the Bethlehem plant?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the old Lackawanna Steel Company.

Q Mr. President, is that guess in that envelope just the same?

THE PRESIDENT: Just about; in fact, just exactly. I looked at it the other day and I said to myself, "No change."

Q You said what?

THE PRESIDENT: I said, "No change."

Q Can you tell us anything about the prospect of a neutrality proclamation affecting Greece?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only talk to you off the record about a neutrality proclamation regarding Greece, and this really has to be not for background even, but off the record. It is a little bit difficult situation because the Italian Minister is still in Athens and the Greek Minister is still in Rome, so that puts me in a sort of difficult place, doesn't it?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: So that is about the size of it at the present time.

Q Does that same situation apply to freezing of credits, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that is a different thing because freezing of credits is based on the control. This is also off the record. The freezing of credits is based not on diplomatic relations but on the actual occupation of the financial centers and resources of one nation by an invading nation. It is a little bit different.

You see the difference?

Q Mr. President, can you give us the topic of your speech tonight?

Any particular phase you will emphasize?

THE PRESIDENT: Another four. (Laughter)

Q Another four.

Q There is a report that the Government is contemplating the construction of fifteen or sixteen new airplane plants. Anything on that you could give us?

THE PRESIDENT: Only this, and we will put this as background: I have been a little amused at the way some people -- call them Republican representatives -- this is just background -- have taken the announcement of night before last about an addition of 12,000 planes. Obviously, you cannot simply go to Sears Roebuck and get them off the counter. You have to have facilities to build them. The present facilities that are now turning out planes in this country, actually turning them out, are insufficient to meet the old orders, the British and American orders. We all know that. Therefore, we have had to give orders, one way or another, for the expansion of plants, and those plants, for the old orders, are now under construction.

Well, just for example, some of you people went up to the plant north of Baltimore with me. They are actually in the middle of constructing a new plant as part of the old plant, but about half a mile away, through the woods. Do you remember? Now, it means, of course, not only putting up a building but tooling it and training the people to run the tools. And that relates to orders which were given, have been given since last

spring, both for American planes and British orders.

Now, the night before last -- this sounds sort of like kindergarten stuff -- I have to say it that way -- a new order for 12,000 additional planes over and above the old orders. It means, obviously, that the Defense Council has to arrange, either through private capital or Government loans, for the building of more plants to fill more orders.

Well, as I say, it is kindergarten stuff; that is all it is, and there will have to be, of course, in order to turn out more planes, there will have to be more productive capacity.

Q Can you say, roughly, how many plants?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea at all.

The desire to give orders for 12,000 more planes, communicated to us, was passed on with the hope that there will be favorable consideration by the Defense Council.

Q Has the Defense Council acted on that yet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

Q Is there a new American program in addition to the new British program?

THE PRESIDENT: There may be as soon as Congress gets back; I don't know. In other words, we haven't got to that because we are now finishing the placing of the (old) orders. When I say finishing -- you know the total they are now, nearly nine billion. A couple of weeks ago they were eight (billion) under the old orders, under the old appropriations. We haven't got to the point, because Congress isn't here, but we will work out the new program as soon as Congress meets.

Q Is that latter background also?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I think you can use it; that is not background, that latter.

Q This program is predicated on the assumption that the British are going to keep on fighting through the winter and not to come to any appeasement or peace?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q This whole program is predicated on the assumption that the British will keep fighting through the winter --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It is not based on any assumption except we are trying to get a productive capacity of 50,000 planes in this country. Now that is the only assumption you can make.

Q Mr. President, stories were printed last night that Sperry Gyroscope is about to release a bomb sight to Great Britain, with the approval of the Army. Is that story correct, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. If it is like other stories, it is not. Is that simple? (Laughter)

Q I wrote the story and the story said that the Sperry Company has been manufacturing a bomb sight experimentally, in limited quantities, for the Army. The story also said that the Norden bomb sight, which is manufactured mass production for the Army and Navy, was not being released.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, -- this has got to be off the record too, by way of warning -- I don't think that any bomb sights have been released of either the Sperry bomb sight or the Norden. Now, of course, it is possible that there may be, being built in this country, bomb sights on British order. That is something that

occurs to me that ought to be looked into. That is a very great possibility.

Q Even by the Sperry Company?

THE PRESIDENT: By the Sperry Company; sure.

Q Would that be on British specifications, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, of course.

Q Not involving any of the principles of ours?

THE PRESIDENT: No; no.

Q Mr. President, stories have been printed that the automobile industry might take subcontracts for the manufacture of parts, and the plants will be erected as assembly plants for airplanes?

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't Mr. Knudsen say something about that the other day? I think he did. Because that is one of the things that Mr. Knudsen and the other members of the Defense Council have been studying and, of course, it is entirely possible they may use automobile plant facilities to turn out many, many parts of airplanes, and then, as you suggest, have them assembled somewhere else. That is just a logical development in a program that is being set up by a production expert.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.