

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #792  
Executive Office of the President  
December 16, 1941 -- 4.10 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it all right to say that Byron Price wrote this himself?

MR. L. MELLETT: You can still say that that's not domestic censorship.

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

MR. L. MELLETT: You can still say that that's not domestic censorship.

MR. EARLY: Oh sure.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. L. MELLETT: Not domestic.

MR. EARLY: Complete domestic.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) What time are you on the air now?

MR. GODWIN: In the morning, in Washington, at 7.45. That's too early, but  
Walter Winchell hears me. And in the evening it's 7.15 to ---

THE PRESIDENT: I know that, but that time is no good at all. Nobody's up  
at that time, besides yourself, and a few birds -- a policeman and the  
milkman.

MR. GODWIN: If you want to know how many hear you make a mistake, then you  
will find out.

THE PRESIDENT: Was his pronunciation clear on that last word?

MR. GODWIN: What are you talking about?

THE PRESIDENT: He knows just what I mean.

MR. EARLY: Sons of yellow --- . (dastards?)

MR. GODWIN: I gave you as an authority.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I had to pause myself before I said it. (laughter)  
It's a one-second interval.

MR. GODWIN: Wonderful opportunity.

Q Did you make a slip on that?

MR. GODWIN: No, I never did. I get letters from people, they say we have to conduct this war with kindness.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. It was one of those long-range broadcasts out of Japan, from a woman speaking in English. She said that God was on the side of the Emperor.

MR. GODWIN: I bet He's sorry. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to read you something. Just before you write your headlines, you ought to know -- this -- this is off the record -- the author was Byron Price. So be charitable.

This relates to a thing which will go into effect as soon as the War Powers bill, which is now pending, is passed. The War Powers bill is, of course, essentially -- I think it is almost identical with the war powers in the World War, and principally ties in the various legislation of the past, and at the present ---

Q (interposing) A little louder, please, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A little louder, please, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) This is going to happen just as soon as the bill goes through.

(reading): "All Americans abhor censorship, just as they abhor war. But the experience of this and of all other nations has demonstrated that some degree of censorship is essential in war time, and we are at war.

"The important thing now is that such forms of censorship as are necessary shall be administered effectively and in harmony with the best interests of our free institutions.

"It is necessary to the national security that military information which might be of aid to the enemy be scrupulously withheld at the source.

"It is necessary that a watch be set upon our borders, so that no such information may reach the enemy, inadvertently or otherwise, through the medium of the mails, radio or cable transmission, or by any other means.

"It is necessary that prohibitions against the domestic publication of some types of information, contained in long-existing statutes, be rigidly enforced.

"Finally, the Government has called upon a patriotic press and radio to abstain voluntarily from the dissemination of detailed information of certain kinds, such as reports of the movements of vessels and troops. The response has indicated a universal desire to cooperate.

"In order that all of these parallel and requisite undertakings may be coordinated and carried forward in accordance with a single uniform policy, I have appointed Byron Price, Executive News Editor of the Associated Press, to be Director of Censorship, responsible directly to the President. He has been granted a leave of absence by the Associated Press and will take over the post assigned him within the coming week, or sooner."

Q You left his title out.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You left his title out.

THE PRESIDENT: Director of Censorship.

Q That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: I think Lowell (Lowell Mellett, Office of Government Reports) wanted that distinctly understood. (laughter) Steve has got it for you outside.

Q Mr. President, have any tentative mechanics been set up, or will that be done after Byron is in?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It won't be done until Byron gets here. I don't think I have anything else.

Q Mr. President, can you discuss censorship of mail, etcetera, now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask Byron that. I suppose, off-hand, it would be a censorship of outgoing and incoming mail. Not



domestic.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the coordination of military direction, such as the joint staff, between the warring powers?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along very well.

Q Could you tell us, in that connection, Mr. President, if there have been discussions among the powers that are fighting the Axis -- military discussions?

THE PRESIDENT: I think, at the present time -- off the record -- that they have been going on for quite a long time, and they are still going on. I don't think you had better use that, because I don't want to get into when they started. As a matter of fact, nobody can assign a basic date. Of course, people have been talking about the possibility of a need of it for some time. Just like, for instance, the Navy General Board, or the Army General Staff; they all have plans for things like that, even before they happen.

Q Mr. President, I am afraid I was a little dumb, while you were reading that. Is this to be partly a mandatory and partly a voluntary censorship, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess it will be a combination of the two.

Q You haven't decided yet, sir, whether -- how it is going to work out? -- Will it be -- will the military information be censored at the source -- in part? Do we have to submit copy?

THE PRESIDENT: My God! Think of the problem of that!

Q What's that?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't -- I wouldn't have any bad dreams until that happened.

Q Mr. President, where will Mr. Price function? Where will he be?

THE PRESIDENT: Washington.

Q Where?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose.

MR. EARLY: Try to find a place in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: If we can find a place for him.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you remember in the last -- in the previous war, down in the Navy, they enlisted a lot of women to serve as Yeoman -- Yeomanettes? I think the Army and the Marine Corps did also?

THE PRESIDENT: I took a review of them down here.

MR. GODWIN: I know it -- you did. Have you any such idea that that will occur?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Haven't got around to it?

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like the job drilling them? (laughter)

Q He did in the last war, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I know he did.

Q Mr. President, there have been some reports around town that there will be some sort of re-organization for strengthening of the Civilian Defense setup. Perhaps some appointment of additional officials to tighten up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know.

Q What -- would it be correct to say that it would be premature to talk about that, or is there anything in prospect?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the whole organization is in a state of development. I suppose that's the easiest way of putting it.

Q Mr. President, one of the most interesting reports -- parts, I thought,

of Mr. Knox's report on Hawaii yesterday was that in regard to the Japanese fifth column activity. There was so much else to be reported. The Secretary discussed it to some extent, but not very completely.

I am wondering whether you can tell us any more about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, it is being analyzed, in order to try to prevent a recurrence of it in other parts of the world.

Q Do you -- do you have a pretty good line on what the Japs were doing -- how they got the information?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are -- they are investigating it, and studying it and analyzing it. That's all you can say. They know more now than before it happened.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox indicated yesterday that a Board of Inquiry would be appointed by you today.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Can you make an announcement later in the day?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Would that mean your report, sir in this conference -- after this Press Conference -- with the War and Navy people?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, are you offering any job to Wendell Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not at the present time. I don't think I would say that I am not offering any job, because he told you yesterday that he hadn't been offered a job yesterday. So I don't think that the negative -- what they call a "negative pregnant" is now called for, if you remember your old Hill's Rhetoric. (laughter)

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether you had ever studied that. You had better. It's good.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #793  
Executive Office of the President  
December 19, 1941 -- 10.55 A.M.

Q Good morning, sir.

Q Good morning, sir.

(the President waved his hand in acknowledgment)

(pause here as newspapermen file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have two things here that relate to the general improvement of -- simplification of defense work. The first is -- a telegram went out early this morning to the forty-eight Governors, and Steve has had this mimeographed, so you can take your time, you will get it when you go out.

(reading): "Now that this country is actually at war it is more than ever necessary that we utilize to the fullest possible extent all of the manpower and womanpower of this country to increase our production of war materials. This can only be accomplished by centralizing recruiting work into one agency. At present, as you know, the United States Employment Service consists of fifty separate State and territorial employment services whose operations are loosely coordinated by the Federal Government. In order that there may be complete responsiveness to the demands of national defense and speedy, uniform, effective action to meet rapidly changing needs, it is essential that all of these separate employment services become a uniformly and of necessity nationally operated employment service. I have, therefore, given instructions to the proper Federal officials that the necessary steps be taken to accomplish this purpose at once. I ask that you likewise instruct the proper officials of your State to transfer to the United States Employment Service all of the present personnel, records, and facilities required for this operation. Inasmuch as the Federal Government is already paying practically one hundred percent of the cost of operation and the State personnel has been recruited on a merit basis, there will be no difficulty in transferring State employees into the Federal service. These employment offices will continue to serve the unemployment compensation agency so that there will be no need to set up duplicate offices. I shall appreciate your advising me at once of your full cooperation so

that the conversion of the present employment service into a truly national service may be accomplished without delay."

That has gone to the forty-eight Governors, and to the two Territorial Governors. I think it explains itself. It won't cost any more, but it will make very much for efficiency at the present time, where they have employment offices. That -- there are practically two -- two doors. One is the State door, and the other is the Federal door. And the cost of both offices is borne by the Federal Government, as it is today, through the matching basis, and now will be all concentrated into one.

Now, right along that line, the Governors Conference and the Council of State Governments is cooperating with us one hundred percent. I had thought -- oh -- last week, of having a meeting with all the Governors, down here in Washington, but there was such a complete understanding and cooperation that it seems an unnecessary thing to have them all come down here, and to be a -- a waste motion. We are in very close touch with each other -- the Governors of all the States -- and the thing is going along one hundred percent.

This telegram -- statement rather -- which has not been mimeographed -- you will have to take notes on this -- is from the Governors Conference, or rather a Committee of the Governors Conference and the Council of State Governments. It is approved by the Board of Managers of the State Council of Governments, and by the Executive Committee of the Governors Conference, on which I used to serve myself.

It is a statement. Each Governor will -- as authority for using it in their own States -- emphasize the need for consistent fiscal action by Federal and State and local governments. It indicates how the State and local governments can help combat inflation, expedite defense pro-



duction, and prepare for post-war readjustments.

Then there are six -- six clauses, which we boiled down. First, that in adjusting their own services they give priorities to activities that will best promote defense. In other words, giving that a priority on all their work. Second, they postpone non-defense public works, and adjust other services so as to release the utmost manpower and materials. Third, that they maintain public facilities in good condition, simplify the specifications, perfect purchasing procedures, develop cooperative buying arrangements, and otherwise improve administrative organization and methods. Fourth, that they begin now to prepare programs for useful post-war public works. In other words, the thing that -- as you know, we have been setting up here a thing I call my "kitty" -- a whole lot of public works which will be used to cushion the post-war period. Five, that they retire the debt, or accumulate cash reserves, so as to be able to finance post-war readjustment. And sixth, that they safeguard their essential services and their own vital role as basic service institutions in a free democracy.

That comes from them, and is one hundred percent, when they call attention to the fact that that includes not only State governments but also local and municipal governments as well.

I think that's all.

Q Mr. President, going from the point of the "negative pregnant," is Mr. Willkie going to come into the national defense picture for some official work?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news on that today.

Q That then, sir, is not denying that he might come in?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. But I still would not use it that way. As I

said before -- in other words -- there is no news on it today; and at your risk you interpret that, and probably you'll be wrong. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: It depends how -- do you include Governor Russell Young in these -- does the District of Columbia come in on that labor-employment statement that you made?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Have they got their own Employment Service in the District, or is that a Federal one?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Under W.P.A.

THE PRESIDENT: It's under W.P.A.

MR. GODWIN: Then I wouldn't have to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q Mr. President, could you add anything to the prospects of getting power on the Boulder -- Douglas Dam?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That is still being discussed, and "Hope springs eternal."

Q It's an important "hope" isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Very.

Q Have you heard anything today on your labor-industry conference, as to any progress?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing today. I got a report of good progress last night -- I don't know, what? -- about seven o'clock. I haven't heard since then.

Q Mr. President, any expectation of a release to the public of a report by this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: By what?

Q A report by this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I haven't ---.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you took up with the Australian Minister, day before yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: The usual thing -- defense. Common defense in a common war.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say about an Inter-Allied Command?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not today.

Q Is there to be a conference of that here, Mr. President? The story has been printed.

THE PRESIDENT: No. There have been conferences on that for a long, long time. Every day.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) For weeks.

Q Mr. President, there is great concern here, among about one hundred or two hundred patent attorneys, for fear they are going to have to move their offices and everything up to New York. Can you tell us whether or not there is anything in that, sir, and if so what?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, as you know, we have to get more space in the District to work in, and there has been prepared a long list of "happy thoughts" -- people who could be moved -- bureaus, and individual departments, and things like that. And, of course, on the first going over of that list, we, by common consent, eliminated a portion of that list. It is still a long list.

And if I were to talk about any individual bureau, or department, or agency, or anything like that, what would you have? You would have a concentrated drive -- I suppose a concentrated drive, not only on me but on the Congress, "For the love of Heaven, don't move us."

Now it is going to be a hardship -- we have to ask -- somebody's got to be moved. And it is going to be a hardship on a lot of the employees in the bureau, department, agency, commission, who have got



homes here in the District. We all know that. That is one of the results of war. I have no idea who is going to be moved. It still is a list that is too long.

And I am not going to tell you who is on the list at the present time. I want to avoid what is essentially another form of lobbying -- to stay here. Perfectly -- perfectly natural thing. I don't know. I suppose probably in the course of the next week we will get that list down still further, and we will have to take some action on it pretty soon.

Q Is it contemplated, Mr. President, that most of these agencies will move to New York City?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no. All over the place.

Q All over the place?

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh.

Well, just for example on the -- on this list which is altogether too big, there is a suggestion that some of them move to half a dozen Middle Western cities, some to Southern cities, some to New York and all points North. In other words, we have got the whole United States to send them to, if we have to.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) About how many will they have to move?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q About how many will you have to move?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it will be a shorter list than the long list. (laughter)

Q Very clear, Thank you. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I thought that would be helpful.

MR. GODWIN: It might be -- it would certainly be interesting to figure on

the number of employees that you might add to the Federal list now.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Have you any information on that -- that could be based on?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the possibility of relieving Midway and Wake Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, did any facts or arguments develop in Congress in the last two days to modify your purpose, as Commander-in-Chief, that the draft age should be 19?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are working on it now. It is now in the hands of the Congress.

Q My question, sir, was whether anything had developed in the debate to modify your stand?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't read the debate. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have there been any conversations with France in regard to the French islands on our northeast coast, similar to Martinique?

THE PRESIDENT: Martinique? You mean Saint Pierre and Miquelon.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Saint Pierre and Miquelon--Scotch whiskey.

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

Q Mr. President, what -- when will Byron Price be down?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q When will Byron Price be down?

MR. EARLY: (interposing) He is expected to arrive today.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Expected today.

THE PRESIDENT: Expected today.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

Thank you, Mr. President.



CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #794

Executive Office of the President

December 23, 1941 -- 4.00 p.m.

(The guest at this Press Conference was the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) The boys are in front of the chairs.

(the President then introduced Mr. Eugene Casey, Mr. Lowell Mellett, and Mr. Lauchlin Currie to the Prime Minister)

MR. EARLY: All right.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. (newspapermen begin to file in)

You got in awfully fast.

Q We have been waiting a long time too.

(pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) We ought to have an amphitheatre for this, because it is only in the front two or three rows that you can see.

MR. EARLY: (to the President) They are checking credentials very carefully, and there are so many it is going to be slow.

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) It is going to be slow. They are checking the credentials. We are afraid there might be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

(to Mr. Early) Steve, has that been given out? (regarding Executive Order establishing Office of Defense Transportation)

MR. EARLY: No, sir. It is available after the conference.

(pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

MR. EARLY: (aside) I would like to get the gate receipts today.

Q When will they all be in?

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister, after conversing with him in an undertone) He (Earl Godwin) not only writes stories but he also broadcasts twice a day.

MR. GODWIN: Three times.

(another pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

Q How do you rate that, May? (who was sitting down beside Mr. Godwin)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Steve invited me.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to have taken so long for all of you to get in, but apparently -- I was telling the Prime Minister -- the object was to prevent a wolf from coming in here in sheep's clothing. (laughter) But I was thereby mixing my metaphors, because I had suggested to him this morning that if he came to this conference he would have to be prepared to meet the American press, who, compared with the British press -- as was my experience in the old days -- are "wolves" compared with the British press "lambs."

However, he is -- he is quite willing to take on a conference, because we have one characteristic in common. We like new experiences in life.

I only have one or two things. And the first is -- I will get myself out of the way first -- the first is that I have established the Office of Defense Transportation, in the Executive Office of the President. They are to coordinate all of the transportation policies and the activities of the several Federal agencies and private transportation groups, compile and analyze estimates of the requirements of the future, and coordinate and direct domestic traffic movements. They will have in the Office a Division of Railway Transportation; a Divi-

sion of Motor Transport; a Division of Inland Waterway Transport; a Division of Coastwise and Inter-Coastal Transport, and such other operating and staff Divisions as the Director may determine.

And I have appointed Mr. Joe Eastman (Joseph B. Eastman, Commissioner of Interstate Commerce Commission) to the position of Director, and asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to give him leave of absence for that purpose.

I think that is all that I have.

If you want to know something about plans for the immediate future, I think last night's statement covered the great purpose and the objective of the Conference Mr. Churchill and I are having with the staffs.

And we want to make it clear that this is a preliminary British-American Conference, but that thereby no other nations are excluded from the general objective of defeating Hitlerism in the world. Just for example, I think the Prime Minister this morning has been consulting with the Dominions. That is especially important, of course, in view of the fact that Australia and New Zealand are very definitely in the danger zone; and we are working out a complete unity of action in regard to the Southwest Pacific. In addition to that, there are a good many nations besides our own that are at war.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (interjecting) Canada.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Canada, the Prime Minister suggests, is also ---

THE PRIME MINISTER: (interposing) In the line.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- in the line -- both sides of Canada. I

think it is all right to say that Mr. Mackenzie King will be here later on.

(the Prime Minister nodded his head)



In regard to the other nations, such as the Russians, the Chinese, the Dutch, and a number of other nations which are -- shall I say -- overrun by Germany, but which still maintain governments which are operating in the common cause, they also will be on the inside in what we are doing.

In addition to that, there are various other nations, such as a number of American Republics who are actually in the war, and another number of American Republics which although not acting under a declaration of war are giving us very definite and much-needed assistance. It might be called on their part, "active non-belligerency."

At five o'clock we are having a staff meeting. We have already had a meeting with the State Department officials, and during the next few days those will materialize. We can't give you any more news about them at this time, except to say that the whole matter is progressing very satisfactorily.

Steve and I first thought that I would introduce the Prime Minister, and let him say a few words to you good people, by banning questions. However, the Prime Minister did not go along with that idea, and I don't blame him. He said that he is perfectly willing to answer any reasonable questions for a reasonably short time, if you want to ask him.

VOICE: (interposing) Will you ask him ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And so I am going to introduce him, and you to him ---

VOICE: (interposing) Can't see him.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and tell you that we are very, very happy to have him here.

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the President) Before you do, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute. Steve's got something.

MR. EARLY: (aside to the President) Before you do, there are many here -- there are many visitors who are -- who are not familiar with the rules of the conference. I should suggest to them the use of "third person."

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes.

There are many here who are not familiar with the rules of the conference, Steve says, and I would suggest that they remember that there are no "quotes" -- nothing is to be quoted. Everything is to be in the "third person," and can be used, with the exception of two matters. The Prime Minister doesn't know this himself. A thing that is "background" may not be attributed to the President, or the Prime Minister, but it is for your information in writing stories. A thing that is announced as off-the-record is for your information, but not to be disclosed under any circumstances.

And so I will introduce the Prime Minister.

(to the Prime Minister): I wish you would just stand up for one minute and let them see you. They can't see you.

(applause greeted the Prime Minister when he stood up, but when he climbed onto his chair so that they could see him better, loud and spontaneous cheers and applause rang through the room)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the press) Go ahead and shoot.

Q What about Singapore, Mr. Prime Minister? The people of Australia are terribly anxious about it. Would you say to be of good cheer?

THE PRIME MINISTER: We are going to do our utmost to defend Singapore and its approaches until the situation becomes so favorable to us that the general offensive in the Pacific can be resumed.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. Minister ---

Q (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, isn't Singapore the key to the whole situation out there?

THE PRIME MINISTER: The key to the whole situation is the resolute manner in which the British and American Democracies are going to throw themselves into the conflict. As a geographical and strategic point it obviously is of very high importance.

Q Mr. Minister, could you tell us what you think of conditions within Germany -- the morale?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I have always been feeling that one of these days we might get a windfall coming from that quarter, but I don't think we ought to count on it. Just go on as if they were keeping on as bad as they are, or as good as they are. And then one of these days, as we did in the last war, we may wake up and find we ran short of Huns.  
(laughter)

Q Do you think the war is turning in our favor in the last month or so?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q Do you think the war is turning in our favor in the last month or so?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I can't describe the feelings of relief with which I find Russia victorious, the United States and Great Britain standing side by side. It is incredible to anyone who has lived through the lonely months of 1940. It is incredible. Thank God.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. Prime Minister, there have been suggestions from various sources that possibly the German retreat -- or the Russian success -- has some element of trickery in it, that the Germans are not particularly routed. In other words, a bit of camouflage. Can you throw any light on that, or do you care to?



THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, of course, it is only my opinion, but I think that they have received a very heavy rebuff. Hitler prophesied that he would take Moscow in a short time.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) Now his armies are joggling backwards over this immense front, wondering where he can find a place to winter. It won't be a comfortable place. They have had immense losses. And the Russians have shown a power of resiliency, a gift of modern warfare under their leader, Stalin, which has rendered immense service to the world cause.

Q Mr. Minister, can you tell us when you think we may lick these boys?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q About what year ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the Prime Minister) When they might lick these boys?

Q How long will it take them to lick them?

THE PRESIDENT: (aside) Oh.

THE PRIME MINISTER: If we manage it well, it will only take half as long as if we manage it badly. (loud laughter)

Q How long, sir, would it take if we managed it badly?

THE PRIME MINISTER: That has not been revealed to me at this moment. We don't need to manage it badly.

Q How long if we manage it well, sir?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q How long if we manage it well?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Yes.

Q How long if we manage it well?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, it would be imprudent to indulge in a facile optimism at the moment.

Q Do you favor a personal conference of yourself, Mr. Roosevelt, Stalin, and Chiang Kai-shek?

THE PRIME MINISTER: In principle, Yes. (loud laughter)

Q Do you think it is important, Mr. Prime Minister, that our American war materials continue to go, to some extent at least, through the Middle East and to Russia during this particular period?

THE PRIME MINISTER: My feeling is that the military power and munitions power of the United States is going to develop on such a great scale that the problem will not so much be the -- whether to choose between this and that, but how to get what is available to all the theatres in which we have to wage this World War.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, in one of your speeches you mentioned three or four of the great climacterics. Would you now add our entry into the war as one of those, sir?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I think I may almost say, "I sure do." (loud laughter)

Q Mr. Prime Minister, during your talks here, will you take up economic, and diplomatic, and post-war problems?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I hope not too much on them. Well, really, we have to concentrate on the grim emergencies, and we -- when we have solved them, we shall be in a position to deal with the future of the world in a manner to give the best results, and the most lasting results, for the common peoples of all the lands. But one has only a certain amount of life and strength, and only so many hours in the day, and other emergencies press upon us too much to be drawn into those very, very complicated, tangled and not in all cases attractive jungles.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, can you say anything now about the prospect of an anti-Axis command on those discussions?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I think it would be -- it would be very difficult to arrange. What you require is the broad blocking in of the main plans by the principal personages in charge of the action of the different States, and then the release of that to the highest military expert authorities for execution. But this is a war which is absolutely -- literally world-wide, proceeding at the same time from one end of the globe to the other, and in the air, on the land, and on the sea. I do not think there has ever been a man born -- even if he were Napoleon, he wouldn't know anything about the air -- who could assume the functions of world commander-in-chief for the -- I would say associated powers.  
(laughter)

Q Mr. Prime Minister, are you giving consideration to creation of an Allied supplies command, whereby materials of the anti-Axis powers would be allocated under a central agency?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, there is the very closest liaison between our people over here and the United States officers. Lord Beaverbrook is here with an executive staff, and we have, I believe, quite a large staff here, and they are in the closest accord. Then at the summit of the problem is a fairly simple one of allocation in accordance with the emergency. And of course, the rule we have got to follow is to -- to see how much we can help each other. It should be a rivalry in mutual helpfulness, and that is the only one.

Q (interposing) Mr. Minister, do you anticipate a German offensive on a new front in the near future?

THE PRIME MINISTER: There is a lot of talk about their coming along --



coming along and making an attack in the Mediterranean. There is a lot of talk about their getting ready for an invasion of England next year. We have heard a lot of this, and I expect something will come of it, but where, I can't tell. I will be very glad to be informed. Gentlemen, if you have got any information, it will be thankfully received. (laughter)

Q Mr. Minister, have you any information as to whether the Germans have lost more materiel in Russia than they can replace by spring?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I should think that they have got ample materiel, because they not only have their own vast factories -- which were running at full war speed when the war broke out -- they have a great accumulation, and they have what they captured from so many other countries. I shouldn't think that was where they would run short. But of course, the quality of the materiel, as we move on each year into new and better times, they might not have the power to keep in the race with that.

Q Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Q (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, what are the materials that Germany is most likely to run short of? What are the materials of which they are most short?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I did hear something about oil and other things, but it is rather technical for me.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, can you interpret any of the recent events in Germany as possible internal collapse -- symptomatic of an internal collapse?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Don't let us bank on that. We have got to bank on an external knockout. If the internal collapse comes, so much the

better.

Q Mr. Minister, have you any doubt of the ultimate victory?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I have no doubt whatever.

Q Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Q (interposing) What about a Christmas Message for the American people?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I am told I have to do one on Christmas Eve, but I won't give it away beforehand.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #795,  
Executive Office of the President,  
December 30, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M.

Q Good afternoon, sir.

(pause here as newspapermen file in)

THE PRESIDENT: (indicating nearly empty workbasket) Isn't that basket rather good for these days?

Q A couple of quiet days.

THE PRESIDENT: Right up to date.

Q How are you coming along with the Budget, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Ah! (holding his hand to his head) (laughter) I think I will probably finish it three minutes before it goes to the Hill. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Steve if we had any news. He said Yes, you already had it -- a remarkable Message I sent up to the Hill today on parity for peanuts. Outside of that I don't think I have anything at all, except I have been working on the Budget, and it is rather more of a headache this year than previous years. A good many problems, as you will understand when you see it, not merely the program super-imposed on the present program, but also as to whether we will put into the Budget -- put it into the Budget on an expenditure basis, or put it on -- into the Budget on a -- on a complete cost basis. Of course those figures are very wide apart. And I suppose I will be working on it most of the time from now on until next week.

Q Can you say anything yet, sir, about the prospect of curtailment on non-defense expenditures? Have you set any goal?



THE PRESIDENT: No. We have quite a long list of non-defense expenditures which are being reduced. We haven't arrived at the total yet.

Q Can you give us any estimate, or guess, as to total, on the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because that depends on just -- as I was saying -- whether it's merely on an expenditure basis, or whether it will include the whole thing.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to deliver your Annual Message on the State of the Union in person?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. And what the date will be, I don't know.

Q (interposing) Had you been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Does anybody happen to know whether they passed that Joint Resolution?

Q They did, sir.

Q They did.

Q For the 5th.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress will not re-assemble until the 5th. Well then, at a guess, I would say that I would go there on the 6th or the 7th. And the Budget, as usual, will be soon after I appear, and we will have our usual combing over of the Budget, as soon as I come back from the Message to Congress that same afternoon.

Q Mr. President, can you explain this expenditure of the whole cost basis? What is that? When you say "whole cost," you mean looking farther ahead where you have authorizations?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. What I mean is this: For instance, suppose some time -- mind you, I am talking about the '43 fiscal year Budget -- suppose we were to get authority, the end of this spring, to build "X" number of "Y." (laughter) I have got to the point now where I have to be

awfully careful. (more laughter) On the expenditure basis we would only put into the Budget what would be actually paid out of the Treasury. Now, that might not complete the program, which might last beyond the first of July, 1943.

Q You haven't made a decision on that yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q What has been the practice in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What has been the practice in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: We worked it both ways.

Q Mr. President, have you anything to say about Government decentralization?

THE PRESIDENT: I could talk to you for a week on that. On what phase of it?

Q Well, anything at all. Any further plans -- any discussions on the present announced plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. I see. You are not talking about Government decentralization ---

Q (interjecting) Moving Government offices.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- you are talking about moving offices out of Washington?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, that is purely -- it is a war measure.

There is great hardship for a lot of people in the conducting of any war in any walk of life. Even if you are in the Army, or the Navy, or in civilian life in a department, sometimes families have to be separated, because we are in a war period today. And we try to cause as little trouble and hardship as we possibly can, but there is a great deal of hardship. There is a great deal to be said on both sides of

any one bureau, or department, as to whether they should be moved, or the one next door should be moved. All we can do is to do the best we can.

Q Mr. President, is there going to be a reorganization of the speeding up of civilian defense?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably you will find that things will come to a decision in a great many lines within the next week. As a matter of fact -- of course in general, the plans -- the planning stage is just about finished, and they are ready to go now to the operating stage, although some of that has already been done.

Q What about LaGuardia remaining?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about individual personalities -- only the program as a whole.

Q Mr. President, I have been told -- perhaps mistakenly -- that relatively few factories are still working on Sunday. Have you any reports on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't, except I am trying to speed up -- after all, it is only -- what? -- two weeks since the general plan went out to work seven days, and it means -- it means stepping up orders for supplies, so that people can work on supplies.

Q Mr. President, does the Army propose to accept the offer of Colonel Lindbergh for active service?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it.

Q Mr. President, Mr. LaGuardia is coming down to town today. Do you plan to see him?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose so. I nearly always do. Certainly on Fridays. Sometimes other days too.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything of your plans for establishing



the War Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. They are working on it.

Q This week perhaps?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, regarding the Budget, do you see any possibility of a drastic cut in relief expenditures on account of increased industrial operation?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a little difficult to say Yes or No to that, because, for instance, a thing that the -- I don't suppose the country realizes fully that while relief expenditures have been cut enormously, and will continue to be cut enormously, there may be certain things where we have to take care of human beings. As for instance, in changing an automobile factory over into a tank factory, or an airplane factory; we may have a good many hundred thousand people out of work during the retooling process. That is one thing that is forgotten. In other words, some of those people may have to be taken care of.

Q That includes business groups?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The business situation too?

THE PRESIDENT: That, to a certain extent, although I think that is getting a lot better than it was.

Q Mr. President, can you comment on the story that was printed in Toronto, to the effect that we are going to pool with Canada and Great Britain our resources?

THE PRESIDENT: Going to pool what?

Q Pool our military resources with Canada and Great Britain, and not go ahead with the Lend-Lease program?

THE PRESIDENT: We have been doing that for a month. That is not new.

Q It was on the basis of not keeping books on it requiring repayment.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, those things will all have to be adjusted. It depends on whether the thing is used entirely.

Q That was on the ticker today, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's -- it's about -- it's as old as the 7th of December.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your conference with the Supply chiefs last week, in the drafting of what has been called by the O.P.M. a "Victory Program"?

THE PRESIDENT: You'll spoil my Message to Congress if I tell you that.  
(laughter)

Q I wouldn't want to do that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I wouldn't want to do that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I can give you at least a hint, but don't -- don't put your own interpretation on it -- put it out as a hint -- let everybody decide for themselves what it means.

Up to the 7th of December we had a thing which was labeled by some people an "All-out Program" and other people called it a "Victory Program." I have discarded both those names. I'm calling it today the War Program.

Q The what, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: War Program. And it seems to me that is -- what will I say? -- a less dramatic thing to call it, than an "All-out Program" or a "Victory Program" because we are going to call it -- all of this new additional effort -- we are going to call it a War Program, from now on.

Now that Program on the 7th of December -- I have got to go back to my Algebra -- let us call it "X." And "X" looked awfully big to the people who brought it to me, with, I might almost say, fear and trembling that I would knock them over because it was so big. And I took a look at it, on the night of the 7th of December, and I said that was made up before the attack. And I sent it back to them to make it bigger. In other words, I added "Y" to it. And I got back a combined Program of "X" and "Y." And as a result of our talks during the past week among ourselves, and with the British, and with the Canadians, I have come -- not reluctantly but very gladly -- to the decision that the "X" plus "Y" Program does not represent the productive capacity of the United States, and in order to bring it to that total productive capacity, I am adding "Z" to it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think you get the point?

Q Continuing to another equation, would "X-Y-Z" roughly equal "3X"? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I will tell you why it is dangerous to approach it in that way. Some lines of production might be increased ten times, other lines of production might remain exactly the same, others might be increased half again. So I can't even take any relative figure. But what I am trying to do is to find out what the total over-all capacity of the country is to produce.

And somebody was asking me a little while ago about Lend-Lease. The general theory is -- of course there will be an accounting kept on it -- but when a thing is ordered we can't tell what we will do with the article when it is completed. No human being can tell. It may go to Britain, it may go to Russia, it may go to the Dutch Indies, or



the Philippines, or Kamchatka.

Q Where? (laughter)

Q (interjecting) Russia.

THE PRESIDENT: Look it up on the map -- a very famous peninsula, which happens to be the most available practical land west of the Aleutian Islands.

Q Mr. President, you spoke of a War Program. Wouldn't it be a good idea to stop calling them Defense Bonds and call them War Bonds?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about that with Henry Morgenthau, and he really wanted to, and we may very easily do it, except that the thing hasn't been going very long, and everybody has got "Defense" Bonds in their heads pretty well. I think in time there will be a change made, but when it will come, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, may I ask one other question about Lend-Lease? Is it still the present understanding anyway, that American arms used by our Allies would still theoretically be paid for under the terms of the Lend-Lease Bill, or is that issue up for reconsideration?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say that nobody has given it a thought during the past week, which was devoted not to thoughts of the future but thoughts of the present. I don't know.

Q The reason we ask the question is that that was the burden of the story printed in Canada, that now the issue of money was entirely eliminated in the distribution ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- of defense aid.

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't say that.

Q Mr. President, is Daylight Saving Time in prospect for the country? Are

you considering any plans?

THE PRESIDENT: That is being considered. The Attorney General is taking it up with the leaders on the Hill, and I don't know what they will say.

Q (interjecting) There was a bill introduced today.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It will save, according to -- I think to the Federal Power Commission -- 500,000 kilowatts every day, which is an awful lot. A good thing.

Q Is that kilowatt, or kilowatt hours?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that kilowatt, or kilowatt hours?

THE PRESIDENT: Kilowatt hours.

Q 500,000?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q 500,000?

Q (interposing) That is for the entire nation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The year around, Mr. President? Every day the year around would it be the same?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is the time now -- the time between when we would go back to regular fall to the time we go on Daylight Saving in the spring.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Churchill said in his speech in Ottawa today that American and British Empire forces were going to the aid of the Dutch East Indies forces. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: It is perfectly true as stated by him. Of course, I couldn't tell you anything about the actual moves.

Q Did you hear the speech, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Grand.

Q Mr. President, you say that the new program that you had arranged would take care of the total productive capacity of the nation. That would mean the one hundred percent curtailment of civilian lines, like autos, washing machines ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There will be exceptions to what might be called more essential civilian services. Well, I can give you another inkling of the whole Budget, which I suppose is the easiest way of doing it.

(turning around at a remark of Mr. Early's) What? Spoiling all Steve's stories for next week.

In Great Britain something like -- I don't know -- I would be afraid -- don't take this figure, but well over half of the national income goes into defense activities -- the national payroll. And I am trying to work this country up from the present, which is geared at about 27%, based on national income, in other words, payroll, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, that 27% is next year's statement?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That 27% is next year?

THE PRESIDENT: The end of this fiscal year.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- to about 50%. Now that is quite a big jump, and of course that is an over-all.

Q Yes, so that there will be cases where you would have one hundred percent curtailment? Then again there might be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other cases there might be no curtailment at all.

Q In any direction where there is now an overflow?



THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Sir, what period of time will that cover?

THE PRESIDENT: During the fiscal year 1943.

Q What about taxes, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: You shouldn't have such a vulgar mind as to think about taxes.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, what national income will that 50% be figured on? What is anticipated?

THE PRESIDENT: About a hundred. About a hundred billion.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: He's frightfully vulgar, isn't he? (laughter)