

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #814
Executive Office of the President
March 24, 1942 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything formal today. I have just been -- there is no story in this -- looking at some of the new inventions. We are building some of our Navy patrol craft now upside down. Just a new method of shipbuilding, that's all. Starting them upside down, you weld from the outside -- weld the plates together. Then you begin to turn her over and eventually she turns up, right side up, and then is ready to go into the water. They put the deck on after she has been turned over. And apparently we are building them literally by the yard, and turning them out at the rate of one per week. Sea-going ships -- 173 feet long. This particular group I have been talking with Captain Swasey about, they are 170-footers and are being built in Bay City, Michigan. And we are trying the same construction method in several other places. Well, that is something that happened since the last war.

Q Are they able to go down the St. Lawrence?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, are they St. Lawrence size, or do they have to be cut?

They don't have to be cut? Can they go through it as it is now?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, what is the advantage of building them upside down?

THE PRESIDENT: Speed -- because you work on a very -- on a surface that is very easy to work on, whereas if you build a ship from the bottom up, of course, you lie underneath the ship -- the thing is over your head.

You have to weld -- do your welding upside down, instead of being above to work. It makes for much greater speed in the same operation.

Q Are those shallow-draft vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are those shallow-draft vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are the regular draft for a 173-foot ship.

Q What tonnage would that be, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q About what tonnage would that be?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. What tonnage would you say? (turning to Captain McCrea)

CAPTAIN McCREA: I don't know, sir. I do not know.

THE PRESIDENT: I should say, off-hand, about -- what? -- 200 to about 250?

CAPTAIN McCREA: I think it's larger than that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Little larger than that. Roughly 300 tons. I don't know the actual.

Q Mr. President, is there any other classification for them other than just patrol boats?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. I don't know. They will get some mystic number painted on the bow by the Navy when they get through, but essentially they are patrol boats. We have them all sizes.

Q Mr. President, can that be extended to some other types of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: Can it what?

Q Can that be extended to some other types of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we have built any bigger than that by that method yet.

Q Are any of these in service yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q They are?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, last Tuesday you came out for more parades, more bands, and the like. New York is going to have a parade -- Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and other cities ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Grand.

Q (continuing) All except Washington, D. C. I wondered if you could use your influence? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think I have got any in Washington? (more laughter)
I thought one was on.

Q It was -- it was canceled. Two arguments were given against it. That -- one, the danger of concentration of crowds, troops, and spectators. The other, the difficulty of getting troops. It seems that the 3rd Cavalry has left Fort Myer.

THE PRESIDENT: We will have to bring some Marines up from Quantico.

Q That sounds like a good idea. Would you be in favor ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will talk to the Secretary of War about it tomorrow.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, Dr. --- (laughter) --- (Herbert) Evatt of Australia and Mr. (Walter) Nash of New Zealand both have emphasized the point that they don't feel that they have direct contact with the United States Government in control of the operations in the Southwest Pacific area. Mr. Nash indicated he expected something very shortly on that line. Could you throw any light on what he might be expecting?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think we have got pretty good contact at the present time. I don't think we have yet come to the point of setting up a board with a fancy name. Now if it will make anybody happy for us to set up a board with a fancy name, let's do it. Actually, there is extremely good teamwork going on now without the fancy name.

Q Is that good teamwork, sir, of recent development, or has it existed for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. That has been within the last -- since the Abda area failed to exist -- went out of business.

Q I see.

Q Are the Australians and New Zealanders then satisfied, do you think, with the present status ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I think so.

Q (continuing) --- of contact?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, did you talk with (Senator) Bennett (Champ) Clark today about the collectorship of Internal Revenue?

THE PRESIDENT: Where? In Missouri?

Q In Missouri, Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't know there was one.

Q Has your attention been called to the speech by former Assistant Secretary of Commerce (Richard) Patterson, dealing with the 6th column menace?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't read it all, but I heard about one pretty good line that he used. He was talking about the 6th column, and the 6th column consists of those people who, I think he said, wittingly or unwittingly are carrying out the work which is devised by the 5th column.

Well, that is something that the country ought to think over, be-

cause it is about as pat a statement as I know of. There are an awful lot of 6th columnists, and I might put it the other way around: that there wouldn't be any successful 5th column in this country unless they had a vehicle to distribute their poison. In other words, if the 6th column would go out of business, we needn't worry about the 5th column.

Q Mr. President, have you been asked the question -- will you tell us how you came to pronounce it "Cliveden"? (like "give") (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Pronouce what? Cliveden? I went there once.

Q (interposing) Was that report ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In fact I spent a very, very interesting weekend there with a number of members of the British cabinet of the time, in July, 1918, when the World War was on. So my authority is correct.

Q Mr. President, could you elaborate a little on this 6th column, how -- how they are carrying out the schemes of the 5th column?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so, because I would have to include quite a lot of people in the room. Now, that wouldn't be polite.

Q You mean by conversation, or by writing?

THE PRESIDENT: Both.

Q Things of that kind? False rumors?

THE PRESIDENT: The various means of communication.

Q (interposing) Carrying on false ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Newspapers, radio, conversation, cocktail parties, tea fights, etcetera.

Q Mr. President, the ex-president of Argentina, Dr. (Marcelo de) Alvear died today. Would you care to say a word about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I was very sorry to hear about it because I had the pleasure of meeting him, and I always considered him one of the -- one of the

strongest forces for Democratic principles that we had anywhere in the Americas. Therefore his loss is not just an Argentine loss but common to all of us.

Q Mr. President, has anything further been done about the recommendation for the abolition of the tariff on war materials and supplies moving between Canada and the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I really honestly don't know. You had better ask -- what? -- the State Department, I guess. I haven't heard anything about it.

Q Mr. President, have you detected the presence of the 6th column at all in the present controversy regarding Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know -- I don't know enough about it. Some people say Yes, and some say No. There was one Member of the House (Rep. W.T. Schulte, Democrat, of Indiana?) in a debate -- I don't think what he said was carried in any of the papers -- who claimed that it was an -- an organized activity. He made quite a speech about it, and I don't think anybody carried it, but -- but he claimed there was. Well, I don't know. Maybe there was.

Q Mr. President, can you give your ideas on how this 6th column could be controlled, or repressed, or something done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am inclined to think that they will almost go out of business themselves, because public opinion will catch on. It has very largely already.

Q Well, if -- if, as you say, a number of news people themselves are unwittingly 6th columnists, they of course are going on about their business of printing what they think is legitimate news. Their judgment may be wrong ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- but as long as that condition exists, why they will probably perform just about as in the past.

THE PRESIDENT: Just so long as they don't fool anybody, it's all right.

Q It's a matter of judgment, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think so. And what is -- freedom of the press as a whole is a matter of judgment. I don't think the press has as much influence as it had sometime ago. Neither does anybody here.

Q I do.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you? Do you really?

Q Mr. President, do you think the people are fooled on Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you think the people have been fooled on labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, very definitely. I told you about my -- there are 5 editors now who have written to me -- editors from small-town papers, who are fine, honest people. I know them all personally. And they plead with me to let people work. The one thing in their letters: "Please let people work more than 40 hours a week in defense industries."

Q Mr. President, aside from the reference by the single Member of the House, do you have any other evidence to lead you to believe that this campaign is an organized campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Part of it is, and part of it is not.

Q Who was the Member of the House, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Who was the Member of the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q How large a part is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Percentage? Well, you can't put it on that basis. You can't

say large or small.

Q Do you think, sir, it started as an organized campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, the Governor of Connecticut has sent you a protest, I believe, against the manner in which Army Air Corps commissions are being given out in his State. Has that come to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I got it, and I sent it over to (Lieutenant) General (Henry H.) Arnold to prepare a reply.

MR. EARLY: Arnold, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Arnold?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you care to say anything about your luncheon today with the Haitian President (Elie Lescot)?

THE PRESIDENT: I had an extremely interesting luncheon, in regard to the useful work that could be performed in Haiti. And that is one example of a good many other Republics around the -- let us say the Caribbean, in providing additional, very much needed foodstuffs and other things that are essential in the war. And he brought up with him his agricultural adviser, who is a Dr. (Thomas) Fennell, originally from our Department of Agriculture. And I am going to see Fennell tomorrow to talk about the planning, growing, and providing of additional things that are very much needed by all of us.

For example -- I will just use one example -- they have down there a sisal plant, from which they make hemp and ropes. Well, hemp and ropes are extremely scarce at the present time, and I am going to talk with Fennell. It is one of those more or less technical, agricultural

problems to see how much more sisal we can produce in Haiti.

Q What is the name of the man you are going to talk with?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is Fennell -- F-E-N-N-E-L-L. I am going to get a story out. (to Mr. Romagna): Where is he?

MR. ROMAGNA: Shoreham Hotel, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Shoreham Hotel. Go get a story out of it.

Q Mr. President, did you talk to Colonel Olds of the Ferry Command?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. He is coming in at half-past four.

Q Can you tell us what for?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Mr. President, was there any news in your meeting with Senator (R.B.) Russell (Democrat, of Georgia) and Secretary Wickard yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. We just had a general discussion about price levels, industrial and agricultural inflations of various kinds. Very satisfactory talk.

Q Mr. President, there has been talk -- there has been talk again about changes in the Cabinet, and also a change in the status of Mr. (J.G.) Winant (U.S. Ambassador to England). Do you have any comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I read it today in a paper. This has to be off the record. I wonder what the fellow who wrote that story -- how he feels with himself? I really wonder. I wonder what a fellow who writes a thing like that feels after he has written it, even if he wrote it in good faith? Now, of course there isn't a word of truth in it, not a word. But I wonder what his conscience is like? That -- that -- it's a question -- I don't know who wrote it -- I have forgotten -- it was in the Wall Street Journal -- I wonder what a fellow thinks of it, because even if

somebody invented it and told it to him, why didn't he come and find out if there was any truth in it first? In other words, he has distributed something that isn't true.

Now, what happens? He causes trouble. Somebody sees that. They get all upset about it. It just isn't -- this is quite aside from time of war, we have had it before -- but how does he feel with himself, thinking about it inside, distributing false information to the public, even if it is to the Wall Street Journal clientele? I am one of their readers too. (laughter) But it raises a very nice question -- deliberate statements there which are completely untrue. Now how does -- how does he feel when he goes to bed at night?

Q Mr. President, I don't know anything about this story or the one you are talking about, but I would like ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Didn't you read it?

Q No, I didn't read it.

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to read the Wall Street Journal.

Q I know it. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, you will learn a lot.

Q But I would like to talk to you a minute about the problems that we are up against.

THE PRESIDENT: I know. I know.

Q Last week we heard that a ship was sunk off Morehead City, North Carolina, that the men had been washed ashore and they were without care, lying on tables and floors, because there was a disagreement on the part of the Government agencies as to which should handle it. Now, we investigated that story. We got hold of some intelligent newspapermen in Wilmington, (N.C.), who said that they had looked that story up, and

they had been getting the report from all over the United States, so much so that the wires had been tied up for hours getting it in. Does that look like what you call the 6th column activity?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so.

Q (interposing) Well, anyway ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I wouldn't classify that as anything but an honest effort to get certain information.

Q But how does it spring up all over the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: In the process of getting a thing like that, I don't think, frankly, that the official censor crowd have shaken down into a reasonable and proper method of handling the many cases. Now when a thing like that comes around I can't see any particular reason for withholding that news from the papers.

Q Neither can I. Yet later in comes the story that these men have landed in a little town called Southport.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is stupid on the part of the press censor and Navy Department or the Army to do a thing like that.

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Mr. President, that's not censorship, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not? What is it?

MR. EARLY: That news is in the department to which -- if it were a Navy ship it would be Navy Department, and if it was Army it would be Army.

THE PRESIDENT: What is it then?

MR. EARLY: The censor has nothing to do with it. The war censorship regulations provide, Mr. President, I believe, when it is announced by any competent authority, it is news. It doesn't go through the censor, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Then who handled this one?

MR. EARLY: I never heard of it before.

Q I don't know who handled it because we got denials of it all the time.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think a thing like that ought to be withheld.

Q I am not trying to point my finger at a single soul, but I am just trying -- trying to find out when we are saying the truth -- telling the truth.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are dead right, that the press has behaved absolutely magnificent. Now there are various things -- for instance, the question of airplane accidents in this country. This is all off the record -- I am just talking to you amongst ourselves -- there are a lot of people who have two opinions. We have -- I don't know -- I don't know how many -- you probably know far better than I do -- young pilots in training all over the country in training camps. They are in the last stages -- they are ready to go into the combat service. And almost every paper we pick up, morning or afternoon, there is this: "Two planes collide in the air. Everybody killed." Or there is a plane that hasn't been heard of, and fell into some place in the Rocky Mountains.

Well, there are a lot of people who feel that -- that has been cut out in England, where they are training a lot of pilots, and they don't give out training accidents -- and people here, they see, are getting awful jittery over the number of people that are killed in training for flying.

Now there is the other school of thought that says people will get accustomed to it. They have got to realize that in training pilots that there will be a certain percentage of fatalities anyway, and that the percentage of fatalities is about the same now as it was a year ago, or two years ago, and therefore doesn't do any harm to give out these

things.

Now there is -- there is a nice question: Is it the best thing to do, not to print the stories of accidents in training, or should they all come out?

Now, frankly, I don't know. I haven't made up my mind. I would like to know what you people think. You are very apt, of course, to get from the small town that the plane fell into -- you are very apt to get a wire story out of there -- very natural. Probably would be one of the Press Association people who wired it out, or the local paper. And it would be carried on the front page -- second page -- of practically all the papers. It would be a hard thing to cut it out, except by voluntary agreement on the part of the editors of the papers. Well, I don't know whether we should ask them to do so or not.

Q If you are going to cut out the loss of a few men ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- why wouldn't you cut out the losses of ships with several hundred sunk at a time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, couldn't you get an index to that from the reception that was given the loss of that submarine off the Panama Canal? That was -- it was taken simply as a casualty of war. Although it was an accident, no attention was paid to it comparable to what would have been paid to it in peacetime.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) It seems to me you would get the same ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The same reaction.

Q (continuing) --- reaction.

THE PRESIDENT: Personally, I think the average person in this country -- I am inclined to think that they are not accustomed to it. They are sorry about it, etcetera, but they regard it as one of the risks of war. That would be my first slant. But, on the other hand, there is a very large part of public opinion which says, "For God's Sake don't print all this stuff."

Q Mr. President, if it weren't printed, people because they -- they weren't printed, wouldn't that create a much more fertile field for rumors?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly possible.

As I say, in England they cut it out entirely, but it's on smaller planes.

Q It has been suggested that instead of building dormitories on the Mall you could use the barracks that have been vacated at the Arlington Experimental Farm. Have you given it any thought?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it in the paper. My only problem is the question: what people do they hold?

Q Takes the 12th Infantry.

THE PRESIDENT: I think about a thousand places.

Q Easily, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the number given. I think it is well worth considering.

Q Mr. President, is Lord Beaverbrook in the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I read ---

Q (interposing) The intimation out of London indicated he was?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word. Not a peep -- really and truly.

Q Mr. President, anything about your conference with General (Wladislaw) Sikorski?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We talked about the major strategy of the world.

Q Mr. President, one more Labor question. There has been a development on the Hill in favor of the 48-hour week, starting time-and-a-half after the 48th hour. Could you express an opinion on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I told you all about that once or twice before. I don't think we want to reduce the pay envelope of the average person employed in this country at this time. I don't think we should increase it in a great many of the higher brackets.

Q Mr. President, there has been a suggestion also for overtime pay, there being substituted "incentive pay," that is that money be paid on a basis of the amount they produce, as a man who produces more than ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The old piece-work basis.

Q Very much.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes.

Q That idea -- Mr. (Donald) Nelson suggested that the other day ---

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

Q (continuing) --- calling it "incentive pay."

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know about it at all.

Q Mr. President, have you any plans for taking a "February" vacation?

(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope -- I hope not to work on Easter Day.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #815
Executive Office of the President
March 31, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Come in Pa. I am going to talk about you. What do you want to say?

GENERAL WATSON: I haven't been to one for such a long time, I thought I would come in.

THE PRESIDENT: It's your turn to get talked about.

GENERAL WATSON: I don't know anything good that you can say about me.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the trouble. (laughter)

GENERAL WATSON: I am going to the concert tonight. (Russian War Relief Benefit)

Q How are you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Where is John Henry?

Q John is around. He started out ---

Q (interposing) He is bringing up the rear.

THE PRESIDENT: Bringing up the rear? Tell him I want to see him.

Q Got the gavel for him?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got the gavel for him. (holding it up) A very nice one.

Q We have the culprit, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We have the culprit.

Q John's here.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is he? (holding up the gavel) I am going to have it inscribed. It came out of George Washington's cherry tree. (laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: It's a bigger tree than we thought.

Q Not out of the Mayflower, Mr. President? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Stay afterwards, John. We will decide on the inscription, whether it is to be ribald or not. (more laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: In keeping with our dignity.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

I don't know why anybody is coming in today. I am too sleepy to talk.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got a very nice letter from Norman Davis today. He says, "On December 12 you issued a Proclamation asking the American people to subscribe to a Red Cross War Fund a minimum of 50 million dollars. The first appeal for the War Fund came just before the holiday season, so most of the committees started their organized work about the first week in January. By the 7th of February the 50 million dollars was in hand, but to keep pace with the growing war need, the Red Cross asked for an over-subscription, which would bring the total to 65 million dollars. That total has been exceeded today, and still more will come in. The total result seems to us magnificent proof not only of the vitality of the Red Cross but of the determination of the people to make whatever sacrifices are called for to win the war."

Now that is a very satisfactory answer to the appeal.

Q Mr. President; in that connection, I understand that the District has not met its quota. The only large city in the country, I believe. And they said that -- the local Red Cross people said the donations had run somewhat short in the Government. I don't know ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think the more attention that is called to that the better. In other words, Washington papers please copy.

Q I had that in mind. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And this being Holy Week, I wanted just to read from a sentence from a letter that I got, which I think is worth quoting:
"No matter what may be the religious faith of individuals, most Americans see in Calvary's Cross the eternal symbol that light will conquer darkness, truth proves stronger than error, and life greater than death. It is the only sign by which we can conquer the powers of black paganism that now threaten everything which we hold dear."

I don't think I have got another thing.

Q Is that an excerpt, sir from a personal letter?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Yes.

Q Is that an excerpt?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is it possible to say from whom it is?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's not the news part of it. The news is what was said.

Q May we have that excerpt, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. ROMAGNA: Later? Or now?

THE PRESIDENT: You read it, and I'll check you.

(the foregoing quotation was read back to the newspapermen)

Q Mr. President, this Pacific Council that meets tomorrow -- there have been stories that London would decide policy and this Council strategy. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q A similar Council in London?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. They are consultive, both.

Q Both of them consultive?

THE PRESIDENT: Consultive in each place, and consultive with each other.

Q Will all the powers represented upon the Council, Mr. President, have equal representation and equal powers in respect to their voice on that Council?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't a question of equal powers. They are consultive.

Q Mr. President, is there some means provided by which the liaison may be maintained between that Council and the Joint Staff Board here?

THE PRESIDENT: That the what may be?

Q How will this Council cooperate, if it will, with the Joint Staff Board here in Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the trouble is that you always try to be -- everybody tries to be didactic, and this is one thing that you can't be didactic on. It's a consultive body. That's all it is. It doesn't go out and fight. It consults here in Washington. There are mostly laymen on it.

Q What do they consult about -- supplies?

THE PRESIDENT: No. About the -- what time the moon is going to rise tomorrow night. They are going to consult on the general progress of defending ourselves against the powers of darkness, according to that letter that I read. You see, Pete, you can't, as I say, you can't be didactic. It is a get-together meeting, to see what we are doing, and consult among ourselves. That's all it is. It is not supply, and it is not fighting a naval action, and it is not sending airplanes at a given time tomorrow night.

Q That's what I wanted to get.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, (Dr. Herbert V.) Evatt and Mr. (Walter) Nash, the Australian

and New Zealander, on several occasions have referred to a wish that the Anzacs would be represented on the Munitions Assignments Board. Is there such a step in prospect?

THE PRESIDENT: No. For the very good -- for the very good reason that all these consultations end up, as they have in the past, in an agreement -- a general agreement. And when you come to carry out some of the details of that, it's the people who make the munitions that actually carry it out. It will be carried out in good faith for all nations, in accordance with general policies arrived at, either by -- Oh, what? -- combined staffs, or a Pacific Council here and in London.

And I am afraid -- I am afraid that we cannot -- it would not be right to assume that there is going to be a row, in view of the fact that there is in all probability going to be unanimity. I am afraid there is not going to be any real story about rows. It spoils your stories, of course, but there we are.

Q Mr. President, the United Press carries a dispatch today from General (Douglas) MacArthur's headquarters, indicating that the General still -- there is still a question as to whether he has command of the naval forces. Would you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I can't. I haven't heard anything since I got back. I would have to check up. I think within his particular area that he is the Supreme Commander. Is that right John? (McCrea)

CAPTAIN MCCREA: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Within the Southwest area he is the Southwest Commander, and that means air and land and -- and Navy.

Q Mr. President, India was omitted from the Pacific Council. Is there any chance of that being corrected?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that the Pacific laps the shores of India, as I remember it.

Q But Pacific operations do.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Pacific operations do.

THE PRESIDENT: Do they? Where?

Q In Burma.

THE PRESIDENT: But that is not in the Pacific either.

Now, as a matter of fact, of course, you will realize that on this general geographical question the Pacific Ocean is generally -- and what might be called in lay terms -- considered to stop at Singapore, and that on the west side of Australia you begin to get into the Pacific Ocean -- I mean into the Indian Ocean. On the east side you are in the -- in the Pacific Ocean. And, proceeding according to what might be called a layman's explanation, everything west of Australia would be in the Indian Ocean area, and not the Pacific Ocean area.

In fact "area" is probably not a good term. We are adopting a new term, called "theater." The Pacific "theater," and the Indian "theater," which is a simpler word. You don't get confused with sub-areas like the Southwest area in the Pacific theater.

Q Well, General MacArthur's control would have to extend, to some extent, into the Indian Ocean then, would it not, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Where?

Q On the west side of Australia?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- that -- No, no -- I say things west of Australia are in the Indian Ocean area except for what might be called a reasonable distance out, where you are bound to have a certain amount of over-

lapping in any theater. You don't have a brick wall. Planes might very easily fly from the Indian area into the -- close to the edge of Australia, and vice versa.

Q Mr. President, does that lead to the assumption that there will be a Near Eastern--Indian Ocean Council, in addition to the Southwest Pacific Council?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know, what kind of a separate command there would be in there, but certainly it is not -- it is not under -- under the Americans.

Q Well, you really have (Lieutenant) General (Joseph W.) Stilwell in part of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I was going to say -- you can't -- you can't put up a brick wall. Of course, China itself is naturally considered as being in the -- in the Pacific theater, and there is always an exception to the rule. A little southern corner of China does lap over into the Indian theater, and that is where Chinese troops under General Stilwell are now fighting. And of course relatively it is a very small portion of the Republic of China. Nearly all of it is in the Pacific area -- theater.

Q Mr. President, have you anything to say on the international cartels that have been discussed on the Hill -- the Standard Oil agreements, and the others?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Don't think -- don't know what it was.

Q I mean the charge has been made, and later denied, that the United States has been deprived of certain products, such as buna rubber and others, through the Standard Oil of New Jersey.

THE PRESIDENT: To tell you the truth, I haven't looked into that. I thought

you were going to talk about the nudist problem? (laughter)

Q Let's discuss that too.

Q Have you anything to say on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. All I can say about that nudist problem is that -- of course this has got to be off the record, so stop writing -- (cries of "Oh," and laughter) -- I would have to be too careful if it was on the record. (more laughter)

This is off the record. Of course, it is a very serious thing, these charges about the old gentleman (Maurice Parmelee, Board of Economic Welfare economist) having written a book on nudism eleven or twelve years ago, because of its -- it has entirely disrupted production in this country. It has slowed us down terribly -- everybody. You know, the circulation of the newspapers has almost doubled in the last forty-eight hours. But of course the worst is yet to come -- this is off the record -- you are soon going to find out -- in fact some of you here never thought of it -- that there is a much more serious thing, which is almost going to stop the production of airplanes, and tanks, and ships, and things like that.

We have discovered that in the House of Representatives itself, we have got something far worse than a nudist -- we have got an exhibitionist! (loud laughter)

Q Is there just one, Mr. President? (more loud laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

(continued laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #816
Executive Office of the President
April 3, 1942 -- 11.00 A.M., E.W.T.

VOICES: (to Earl Godwin, hobbling to his chair, using a cane to support a bandaged foot) Welcome home!

THE PRESIDENT: Well, look at the old boy! How are you?

MR. GODWIN: Well, I am getting ready to escape the draft! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that will help you, because they will put you in an armchair, like a lot of other people. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You look awfully well.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: You have put on a lot more weight -- bad business.

MR. GODWIN: If I could keep away from these cocktail parties, it would be all right.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It must be Hell. Nobody ever gives me one. (laughter)

Q We can whip one up in a hurry for you, Mr. President.

Q Tom (Reynolds) is going off the wagon tomorrow, we can fix it up.

MR. GODWIN: Russ Young celebrated his 60th birthday ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Who?

MR. GODWIN: Russ Young.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes, yes. Which was yesterday, wasn't it?

MR. GODWIN: Yesterday. He looks better than he ever did.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. He is doing a grand job, too.

MR. GODWIN: Swell.

Q (to Mr. Early) Feeling better, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

Q How did you do? (at Bowie) Did your fever get better about Noon?

MR. EARLY: No. Nothing got better.

THE PRESIDENT: Aren't they all coming in?

MR. EARLY: (to the President) The Secret Service put in a new check-off system. They call them name by name out there.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. Comparing fingerprints? (laughter)

Q That's for next week. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got -- as far as news goes -- anything at all this morning. I want -- I want a little help. It's a question of official correspondence. There are several agencies of the Government that want a term to designate the present war. And I don't want to invent a term myself. I would rather it came from the -- down below, instead of up on top. And I would like to have some advice as to what term we should use. So far we have gone along with calling it the Second World War, as distinguished from the First World War. But I wish we could get a very short name that would have some connotation of the fact that this is a -- a war for the preservation of smaller peoples and the Democracies of the world. How you can put that into one adjective, I don't know. It would be much better to put it into one adjective. So if you people could be thinking it over -- you can write a story about the fact that a name is needed. I don't think Second World War is particularly effective.

Q Are wars ever named while they are in progress?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that may be true.

Q There was the Hundred Years War, and the Thirty Years War, and the Seven Years war.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) What was the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You are a cheerful fellow this morning.

(laughter)

Q You notice I kept shortening it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Did the Civil War have a name when it was going on, do you happen to know?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, unfortunately, during the -- I think during the course of the Civil War in the North it was called by a term which was discarded fairly shortly afterwards. It was called the War of the Rebellion, because a lot of the war records that were published after the war were labeled by that -- that term.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But it didn't set very well, and was abandoned very soon.

Q Mr. President, during the War of the American Revolution, any reference to The Revolution during that war meant the Revolution of 1688.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is perfectly true. Well, we will try to find something. Somebody suggested "The War with the Axis Powers." Well, that takes too much paper and ink.

Q Mr. President, would you mind calling it, so far as the enemy is concerned, the "GIP" War -- for German -- Italian -- Japanese ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's right.

Q (continuing) --- the "GIP" War? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got anything else at all, except that this is all part -- I might say one other thing that went out yesterday

from the Budget Director and myself, and that was a checkup by the different departments in an effort to save paper. You will all be pleased to hear that. The less paper we use the more paper there will be for the newspapers.

Q Are you in favor of that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sure. (laughter)

They have had to come -- for instance, in England nearly all of their official stuff is written on both sides of the page. You have seen that. Quite a lot of the stuff I get from England is written on both sides of the page. Of course we never do that on a typewriter.

MR. GODWIN: We get it from the War Department -- mimeographed on both sides of the page ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Do you?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- on stuff that ---

Q (interposing) A lot of it.

Q A great deal of it.

THE PRESIDENT: We ought to do more of it.

Q It means you have to have two people to paste them up. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Mathematically correct.

Q Practically correct. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything, sir, about your discussions with the Pacific War Council?

THE PRESIDENT: It was a very successful meeting. I think we meet again on Wednesday next, is that right?

CAPTAIN McCREA: Tuesday, wasn't it?

Q They said yesterday, Tuesday.

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute -- hold on.

CAPTAIN McCREA: You said that we would meet on the 8th, a week from that Wednesday, which was the 1st.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Wednesday.

CAPTAIN McCREA: The 8th, at 11.30.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to participate in any way in the observance of Pan American Day on April 14th?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q In what respect?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are all coming over here instead of my going over there this year. They are all coming over here.

Q Do you speak?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, are you seeing the Labor group today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They are coming in at twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: When?

THE PRESIDENT: Twelve.

Q Do you expect, sir, to discuss questions of personnel for war industries with this group, or is some other specific problem coming up?

THE PRESIDENT: No specific problem. Probably touch on them all.

MR. GODWIN: Do you expect to have -- can we expect a sharp story out of this Labor group ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- an important announcement, or anything of that sort?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, there has been considerable discussion lately -- you might say a lot of smoke more than fire -- about consolidating information

agencies in the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We are all working on it, and it is an awfully difficult technical problem, as you can well imagine.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I have been doing a lot of studying on it. And I haven't -- I haven't got anything yet that is satisfying.

Q Is there any truth to the report that Casey Jones (managing editor of the Washington Post) might head it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Neither Casey nor Jesse. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that one man would -- would head ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Pete, there is no use in my talking about it. Of course, as I say, -- what? -- there are half a dozen different ways of doing it, and I haven't got anything yet.

Q You haven't got to that stage yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on Martin Dies' solution for the -- the solution that everybody he names be fired?

THE PRESIDENT: I think what I said the other day covers a multitude of sins. (laughter)

Q Is that still off the record, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that is a perfectly normal remark. That is all right to print that -- a multitude of sins.

Q I mean the original remark?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess so. It's pretty well around town. (laughter)

Q You mean it has done its work?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You mean it has done its work?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it has done its work.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

Q Mr. President, have you received any report from your representative in the Vatican, on the report that the Vatican and Tokyo are about to exchange representatives?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this is only from recollection. I would like to -- you had better check on it -- as I understand it, the Vatican is exchanging representatives with Tokyo, and Chungking.

Q And Chungking too?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, may we expect soon ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think you had better qualify that, and say that they are discussing exchanging representatives, because I think that is safer.

Q Sir, may we expect soon the naming of a new Ambassador to Spain to succeed Mr. (Alexander W.) Weddell?

THE PRESIDENT: Very soon. I am just waiting for the Senate to meet.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to have a permanent representative at the Holy See too?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can't tell. I can't tell.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, the official ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is a question of transportation.

Q The official British wireless -- the official British wireless, the day before yesterday, announced that Britain had called to the attention of the Vatican the anxiety with which it would view the exchange of diplomatic representatives between the Vatican and Tokyo. Did we make some such similar representation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, no, no. I didn't even know that.

Q Mr. President, is Chile classed with the Argentine in regard to defense materials?

THE PRESIDENT: How do you mean?

Q Well, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They are both getting them, I think.

Q Are they both getting them?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, a very serious question was raised this morning -- a report that the War Production Board is banning the use of tin plate for beer caps.

THE PRESIDENT: That is serious.

Q Have the brain-powers of the Government been saddled with the problem of finding a substitute for that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. But I guess we could work out something, of course, and get one which is a little easier, and cheaper, and quicker all right. (laughter)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #817
Executive Office of the President
April 7, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. GODWIN: How do you do, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: How are you coming along? All right?

MR. GODWIN: Can't dance very well. Steve says I am back to normal. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to have a talk with "Pa" (Watson). He has taken off
11 pounds.

MR. GODWIN: How do you do it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: I haven't eaten anything since lunch. (laughter)

Q Carrying that Phi Beta Kappa key.

THE PRESIDENT: Where does he wear it? Where does he wear it?

Q I think on his pencil chain, or something.

MR. GODWIN: I think I will have a talk with him.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

What's that, your draft notice? (laughter) (Earl Godwin's papers
spread out on the desk)

MR. GODWIN: That comes off pretty quick, doesn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I had a nice story for you, and Steve (Early) told me I can't
use it until Friday, ---

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Oh, nuts.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- so I am stuck. I have nothing.

MR. GODWIN: I notice, sir -- was that the end of your statement? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: I notice -- I notice in connection with Army Day your use of the term "total war." Is that the term that you have decided to use for this war, instead of ---

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. There is nothing original about that, anyway.

Q Have there been any good suggestions on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Not very good yet.

Q What do you think of this one: "The Peoples' War"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- might have to characterize the "peoples."

Q Do you have any comment on that Anthracite Commission report?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except I think -- I think I can say this, that it is -- as a -- as a temporary thing it is a definite contribution. In other words, it advocates the putting in of industries in a section of the country where there is a large population with -- without enough work mining coal, which could very usefully in wartime turn its attention to certain industries. It isn't of course the final solution of the problem, but it calls for further studies on that, and it is a thing that at the end of the war we will have to take up as one of the important -- might call it the "area" problem.

Q Mr. President, it was reported from India last week that you might mediate the differences between the Indian leaders and the British government. Have you any ideas either on that or any other phases of the Indian question?

THE PRESIDENT: No. None at all.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything of your conference with the Attorney General (Francis Biddle) and Mr. (J. Edgar) Hoover?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we were talking about intelligence -- of course, with that

group there that is an obvious thing -- (laughter) -- and information, and propaganda, and anti-propaganda. I don't think you can get a story out of it because most of it was highly confidential.

Q Mr. President, there is a story this morning to the effect that plans for the Navy to operate the Merchant Marine had been brought in?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They have not.

Q They have not?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Mr. President, the crowd in the House that is trying to resolve this difficulty about State taxes on defense contracts seems to have run into quite a lot of difficulty.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I did too.

Q (continuing) Have you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) A long time ago.

Q (continuing) --- seen any formula? Have you discussed with them ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I didn't know they had taken it up.

Q It's the fight about income taxes, gasoline taxes ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and all that stuff.

THE PRESIDENT: By the Ways and Means Committee?

Q Yes. The Ways and Means Committee did report on a bill. Then they ran into great difficulties to amend it. Now they have got three or four amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it at all, about what they have done, but as you know, we took it up about eight or ten months ago ---

Q (interjecting) A year ago.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and it has never yet been solved.

Q Mr. President, what are your ideas on the principle of any of the States

taxing defense, disregarding the details of how it can be worked out?

Do you favor changing the State Taxes -- the cost plus ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know, Pete, what I favor.

Q What?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what I favor. Of course, the problem is really -- is really this: that should the -- should the Federal Government stand the cost of certain State taxes on the creation of Federal activities and Federal public works? Under the present system the States taxing Federal contractors and their machinery, and so forth and so on, doing work for the Federal Government, it helps the State financially and it hurts the Federal Government financially.

Q One of the arguments that this -- Federal expenditures in the State does increase the State's taxes, because the State taxes the retail purchases of the workers, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q (continuing) --- and that the point was that if you don't change the law it will cost about a billion dollars.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There you are.

Q The question is whether to subsidize the States?

THE PRESIDENT: It is perfectly true. You have stated it very fairly and clearly. (laughter) I don't know the answer.

Q Mr. President, as a corollary, it has been reported that you are giving some study, or have studied the matter, whether we should suspend some of the State laws which set up varying restrictions on Interstate Commerce on the tonnage of trucks, and that sort of thing, for the duration of the war, in order to simplify and broaden the action?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there were some States -- I think Kentucky, wasn't it

Mac (Marvin H. McIntyre), that had very, very drastic restrictions on size?

Q There is quite a diversity of State laws.

THE PRESIDENT: There is quite a diversity, and it ought to be made -- as an emergency measure only -- more possible for a truck that is engaged in defense work to go from one portion of the country to another portion of the country without running foul of State law.

Q Well, isn't -- is it possible that you will -- you will take up that problem with the Governors before long?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it has been taken up, in some cases, but I am not dead sure. You had better check on it.

Q Mr. President, the Morgenthau tax plan would double the income taxes of Members of Congress, raising it from 1 thousand to 2 thousand dollars or a little over. Have you figured up what it would cost you?

THE PRESIDENT: Not for next year. It's bad enough now. (laughter)

Q Well, that does not incline you toward a general sales tax, does it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you had ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- in spite of great personal hardship. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you had any late reports on plans for further increased use of the inland waterways along the Atlantic coast?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have been discussing the matter with Judge (Joseph J.) Mansfield, and quite a number of other people -- Joe Eastman, etcetera. And we are increasing the use of the inland waterways from -- you had better check on this -- I think it is from Jacksonville north we can get an eleven-foot channel -- I think I am right. But from Jacksonville south

it is only about a six-foot channel. And, of course, there is no way of getting across Florida. You would have to go -- either way -- around Key West. But don't start a controversy about the Florida Canal -- Ship Canal this time. (laughter) And once you get around to Georgia you do have a pretty good channel along the Gulf coast. But that gap from Jacksonville round to Georgia or Alabama is only six feet. Of course that almost precludes the use of those canals. You have to have a transfer of cargo. And I think it would take probably too long to deepen out those channels, or build as we call it a dike -- a creek -- that is a polite word -- across Florida. Probably take too long to do it now. To start it now it would use up an awful lot of valuable manpower and machinery. We will have to do the best we can with what we have got at the present time. But it is -- we -- we -- we are laying plans for the greater use of it.

One of the studies that I got under way at the present time -- Maine papers please copy -- where is (May Craig) -- she isn't here today? --- (laughter) --- is the building of wooden barges in those old yards up in the State of Maine, and New Hampshire, and certain portions of Massachusetts and Connecticut, where they used to build the old wooden schooners -- and there are still a lot of old people that are awfully good shipwrights -- and build wooden barges primarily for use on the -- on these canals, where they can be used with a maximum draft of less than eleven feet. That is a perfectly possible thing to do, without interfering with steel shipping.

Q Do the "Sea Otters" figure into this consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q They don't?

Q Mr. President, has any thought been given to a pipeline across the neck of Florida, from tanker to tanker?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, have you inquired into the feasibility of concrete self-propelled barges? There has been some talk about that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but when you come down to concrete self-propelled barges it is a whole lot cheaper, and easier to launch, and use material that is more available, to build them out of wood.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conversation with the Pacific War Council today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose -- I suppose the only thing that I can say is that we discussed a great many of the things that we talked about before, and a great many new matters which would come up in the Pacific every single week that goes by. There will be a lot of new problems come up, because the whole problem of the war in the Pacific region, and the connection of that region with other regions, they vary from week to week. As one of the members said to me, "You know, it is a pretty good record here. We have had two meetings, and there isn't a headline of dissension in either meeting."

Q Lord Halifax told us, sir, that you had given the Council a review of the American reinforcements, both in terms of men ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and materiel ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's right.

Q (continuing) --- in the Pacific, and that he was very encouraged.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is there anything you could say beyond that, within the limits of military information?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can.

Q Mr. President, in your talk with the Attorney General this afternoon, did you discuss the Sedition Laws, and how that policy could be stiffened?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except in one particular. It doesn't relate to Americans in this country, or to this country. And I can't tell you the details of that, because they might skip out.

Q Americans in this -- I didn't get that. Americans in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: It did not relate to Americans in this country.

Q Mr. President, there are stories from New Delhi this afternoon that Pandit (Jawaharlal) Nehru has sent a message to you. Have you received ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. I haven't received any message.

Q Can you report any progress on your Information revision program on consolidating ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, except we are working on it very hard. That is one of the things I talked to the Attorney General on -- this group that was in.

Q Several weeks ago, sir, you told us that you were then considering, among other things, a plan for controlling wages as well as prices. Are those studies developed any further? Is there anything you could tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think they are coming along.

Q (interposing) Can you give us any clue ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I wouldn't give you any date, because from past experience, when I say a date in my own mind, it takes twice as long.

Q (interposing) Can you give us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But we are coming along.

Q Can you give us a clue or direction toward which they are going?

THE PRESIDENT: I can give you a clue, if you won't -- well, I hope your guess

will be good. That's all I can say. I hope your interpretation of my few choice words will be -- will be fairly good.

I have been thinking -- trying to think in terms of the average man, woman and child in this country. And there are two salient factors. The first is: a fellow, even in time of war, thinks a great deal, and very, very rightly, as to what it costs him and his family to live. And the second is that the average man, woman and child -- not even average, but the overwhelming majority in both cases -- are patriotic and want to do all they can to turn out things that are needed in the war.

And then the -- then there is one other thing, which is a sort of a corollary to it. I have been giving a good deal of study to certain other studies that have been made, in regard to the output of the human being. And I have never seen that stressed. During the World War and after it -- Oh, for ten years -- a great many studies have been made in -- here, and in Great Britain, and on the Continent of Europe, as to the most -- the number of hours per week which, week in and week out, will turn out the most goods.

And that is something that you can all follow up. I will give you a lead. It was found definitely, for example, that everybody is agreed that the average human being in industry turns out more goods, week in and week out, when they work 48 hours a week than when they work 60 hours a week. That is something that the people of this country ought to examine and get into their heads.

I think it was Mr. (Henry) Ford, a great many years ago, who said that over 48 hours -- or it may have been over 44 hours, I don't know which -- anyway, it was a reasonably small number of hours -- anything over that doesn't count for an addition to production -- does not increase the total

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stuff that he turns out with his hands.

Saying which, write your stories.

Q Mr. President, in your letter to the United Auto Workers, you said that no employer or group of employees should profit from the relinquishment of double pay.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Have you any method of implementing that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't thought out any specific method yet. I think it can be done by discouragement of double pay. But a practical way of doing it is not -- have none.

Q Mr. President, you referred to the human output per person, and increasing the output of each man working in the plant. Would you consider the proposal which was made sometime ago for bonuses to -- cash bonuses to workers who -- who turn out a greater number of pieces, as ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am utterly opposed, first, to the piecework system in peacetime, and to its extension, especially in time of war, because I think most people in time of war are going to turn out all they can without bonuses. I don't like the bonus method.

Q Mr. President, regarding that Anthracite report again, can you say what the prospects are for following out its emergency recommendations of putting in war plants ---

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THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I sent it over to the Army and Navy, and the -- what's the name of the board ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Nelson.

[War Production Board?]

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the Allocations Board ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Nelson.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the plant Board, and also to W.P.B. (War Pro-

duction Board), to try to locate some industries in that region.

Q Mr. President, we are having a little war of our own in Pennsylvania. The Democratic State Chairman up there gave an interview to the press two or three days ago, saying he could say without fear of contradiction that you favor the nomination of Dr. (Luther) Harr for governor. I would like to have your comment.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't favored the nomination of anyone for governor. In fact, I got to the point -- this is off the record, it will have to be -- about two months ago, and I decided not to read any Philadelphia papers -- (laughter) -- so I wouldn't know anything about Pennsylvania State politics. (more laughter)

Q That still goes?

THE PRESIDENT: And I stuck to it.

Q Is the first sentence on the record, Mr. President? I am in favor -- before you said it was off the record, you made the remark that you have not favored nomination of anyone for governor?

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) That's on.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You can use that.

MR. EARLY: That's on.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #818
Executive Office of the President
April 10, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Where's the hammer? Where's the hammer? (gavel)

MR. EARLY: Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, here it is. (laughter)

Q Might keep us in order?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Might keep us in order?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(to John Henry): All ready to make your speech?

MR. JOHN HENRY: Well, not a very good one, Mr. President.

Q We'll cheer anyway, John.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We'll cheer anyway.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a little -- carrying out a promise -- a little present to give to the president of The White House Correspondents' Association. I found it at Hyde Park. It is one of the gavels that was used in the 1936 Democratic National Convention. And it is very simple. It is just plain wording. It says, "White House Correspondents' Association, from F.D.R., 1942."

And you will notice that I am handing it handle first to John Henry.

(laughter)

MR. JOHN HENRY: Thank you, sir. I hope we will be able to preserve the old order and not the new order. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything today.

Of course we all feel badly about Bataan. There isn't any further news, except a very grand message from General (Jonathan M.) Wainwright, which I -- to thank me for what I had sent him. Just one part of that message that I think that you can use -- just a few words: "Our flag on this beleaguered island fortress still flies."

Q Did that come in this morning, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did that come in this morning, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q That is from Corregidor, is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, did you have a conference this morning with Mr. Eccles, Mr.

Morgenthau and the Vice President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Haven't seen anybody this morning.

Q Mr. President, is the Administration contemplating some anti-inflation drive?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is there some general plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's coming to a head.

Q Could you tell us anything further?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Could you say whether an increase in the tax bill is part of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you anything about it, because it hasn't jelled.

Q Mr. President, what has become of the 2 billion -- the proposed 2 billion increase in Social Security taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is part of the tax thing -- and I said I couldn't say anything about it.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about the reports you are getting from Louis Johnson in India?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had anything for -- Oh, I don't know, what? -- yesterday morning early, and just the same -- the same stuff that you have had that has been published. Nothing different in it.

Q Anything new on the war information setup, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q On this war information setup?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

Q Mr. President, has any plan reached you yet for bringing the Merchant Marine into the Navy? Secretary Knox indicated that you were considering it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it. Literally not a word.

Q Mr. President, can you tell what the present status is of the -- of the bill for the care of soldiers' dependents? I understood the Bureau of the Budget had sent it over to the White House.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got it yet. I don't know.

Q Would you care to say anything about the general subject?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I haven't -- I haven't even studied it. It is supposed to be coming to me.

Q Mr. President, any plans being made for the -- us older people to register on April 26 or 27?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I am having a party..

Q You are having a party?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We are all having a party.

Q Everybody at that age?

THE PRESIDENT: Everybody over 45.

Q Easter eggs?

THE PRESIDENT: Most -- a lot of the people in this room are all having a party.

Q Mr. President, can you comment at this time on the situation in India?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. As I say, I haven't heard anything since yesterday morning early.

On that registration, Pete, I think that you could say something like this -- all of you -- and that is the whole thing relates more or less to manpower -- and manpower includes womanpower too -- and we are seriously considering voluntary registration for all women from 18 to 65. One trouble -- one difficulty of this is the number of people who would come forward and enroll -- the mechanical difficulties of getting the machinery going, that is why. We did talk about having something like that -- voluntary registration for women on the same date, April 27, but the mechanics were too difficult because we would have had so many women. They haven't worked out the questions and printed the cards, so probably if the thing -- I say very definitely, if anything like that goes through there would be a voluntary registration date set for a later time.

Q Could the mechanics of it be assigned to the women?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could the mechanics of it be assigned to the women?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is one of the things they are talking about too.

Q What would be done with these women, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Find out! (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything you could say yet about the Government's plans for the overall handling of the entire manpower problem, the channeling of these people into the proper war industries and the whole -- the whole subject that you have been working on for several weeks?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except this: that one of the real problems in setting up

machinery on the -- on handling the manpower and womanpower effort, we know what they can do and where they are, and so forth and so on -- training. In my mind it is a question really of whether we want to set up a completely new organization on that, or whether we want to set up a mere supervision -- central supervision over a great many agencies of the Government that are now actively and actually engaged in the use and allocation of manpower and womanpower. We have, of course, a good many organizations which are carrying on the functions at the present time. Well, I can't think of all of the organizations. I suppose the Employment Service is the -- is the largest in point of numbers, although it may be exceeded -- I don't know -- by the -- the individual plants who are running their own service, taking people -- taking people in and training them. There is vocational education -- there is N.Y.A. -- general supervision by the Labor Division of W.P.B. (War Production Board) I may have left some important ones out, but that is the general idea. In other words, we have the machinery, and do we want to set up another complete agency of Government to take over all of that machinery? It may be possible to arrive at the same thing through a rather small -- Oh, I hate the word, but have to use it: coordinating committee, to see that they all tie in together. That hasn't been set.

Q Has your Cabinet committee, which has been studying this problem for you, reported as yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Only verbally.

Q Only verbally?

THE PRESIDENT: We have talked about it at almost every meeting.

Q The Labor group have made recommendations, have they not, to go into the Department of Labor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes..

Q Mr. President, are there any plans for a super-labor body of any kind?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q When do you think, sir, that a decision might be reached on this question?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, probably within a week.

Q Within a week.

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) But don't hold me to it.

Q Mr. President, have you heard anything from Mr. (Harry) Hopkins or General (George C.) Marshall, or do you expect to?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have had a report of progress.

Q Anything from Jesse Jones (Secretary of Commerce) or Eugene Meyer (publisher of The Washington Post) since their fight?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no news. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you in a neutral corner on that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you in a neutral corner on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope they don't make me the umpire -- (more laughter) -- or the referee. That would be bad.

Q Are you counting time?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you counting time?

THE PRESIDENT: (the President laughed in reply) However, I can say this, but not for quotation: I hope that there won't be a second round. (laughter)

Q I think we have got to put it on the sports page.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you think we ought to put it on the sports page?

THE PRESIDENT: (softly) Yes.

Q Mr. President, how are we to take that remark, that there should be no second

round?

(the President laughed in reply)

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.