

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #819
Executive Office of the President
April 14, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

Q Good afternoon, sir.

Q This is the best -- best baseball weather yet.

THE PRESIDENT: You bet it is. Don't rub it in. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a -- I would almost say a request to make. The U. S. O., and the Red Cross, and the American Library Association have sponsored a campaign to provide 10 million books for soldiers, sailors and Marines wherever they may be, and they are planning to have Friday, April 17, as Victory Book Day. This campaign has been going on for a short time, and they have already got 5 million books for the soldiers, sailors and Marines, and they want 5 million more.

The plan is that on Friday the milkman, the bakery, the department store delivery truck, and everybody else, is to be authorized to pick up the books. And school children, boys and girls in high schools and colleges will be asked to bring books for the fighting men to their school on that day. Motion picture houses are going to collect books on that day. And this campaign has already had a great deal of support from many newspapers throughout the country, who have put on the "Give a Book" campaign. They deserve a word of thanks, plus a request to renew their efforts, and the efforts of the radio people, to carry on until the needed 10 million books are in the hands of the armed forces of the country.

So that is a word of encouragement to all of you to get in on this campaign.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you have any suggestions as to what sort of books should be contributed?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Anything -- except algebras. (laughter) Well, in other words, the kind of book that you would read in your own family. I suppose that is the easiest criterion -- interest you and the family.

Q Mr. President, is Governor (Herbert) Lehman of New York coming to Washington, or going to enter the Government in some official capacity?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I have never heard of it, except from newspaper stories.

Q (interposing) Do you think it would be a good idea?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The only information I have whatsoever.

Q Mr. President, have you found a name yet for the global war?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I took it up with the -- I talked to the meeting of the Pan American Union, and the Ambassadors and Ministers of our sister Republics this morning about it, and I suggested a name myself -- The Survival War.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Survival?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I always liked the idea. What was said this morning, it was taken down, and Steve has it for you. (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: Afterwards.

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as you have finished you can get it.

Q Mr. President, is that going to be it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is it officially named?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I just threw that name out. They liked it.

Q Mr. President, speaking of newspaper stories, there is also one that

Joseph Kennedy might come back to take some kind of job in connection ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I also read that in the newspapers.

Q You don't know any more ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Certain papers. I wouldn't say that was a connotation of what I have in mind for all newspapers by any means. The connotation might apply to a few papers.

MR. GODWIN: One paper started off that story by beating the life out of him.

Was that the story that you read?

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

Q Mr. President, anything new on the over-all inflation -- anti-inflation campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We are working on it right along.

Q Is there a Message going up on it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there a Message to go to Congress on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't made up my mind as to date or method. I wish you could -- all of you -- give up the word "inflation," because very few people know what it means. Very few people in this room know what it means. I am not quite clear myself, so I am not using the word.

Q What word are you using? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You will see, in time.

Q Having a contest to name it? (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, are our relations with Vichy going to be changed as a result of the difficulties there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think you will have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, there is a great deal of disturbed feeling in Australia as reflected by dispatches by American correspondents from there, as to the

authority that General (Douglas) MacArthur has, and as to what naval forces are at his disposal. Could you tell us, sir, whether ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can only tell you in a negative way, that there has been again one -- and I am thinking of one especially -- I don't know whether he is in the room at the present time or not. There has been singularly little error -- there has been overwhelming correctness on the part of the Press in talking about the command of General MacArthur. There has been a very minor part of the Press or newspapers which have -- I trust not deliberately -- completely falsified what I did say the other day.

What I have in mind is that this particular little group has talked about the command of the Pacific being under General MacArthur. Of course, any reference to the stenographic minutes of the Press Conference will show that nothing like that was said. (See Press Conferences 812 of March 17, page 5 on, and 815 of March 31, page 5 on).

The word was Southwest Pacific. And that is true today, as it was when I stated it two or three weeks ago.

I think that's all that need be said -- Southwest Pacific.

Q In other words, he has full authority there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: In Southwest Pacific.

Q Including naval?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Including naval?

THE PRESIDENT: Including naval.

Q Does that include New Zealand?

THE PRESIDENT: Well now, there is -- there is a difficult thing, because there are operational problems down there which might be affected by an

actual public statement as to just where the area command began and where it ended. I could cite two or three examples of that, which you would readily understand if I were to cite them. But for operational reasons we can't talk in terms of whether this particular -- I am not saying New Zealand, I am thinking of the other islands -- little bits of islands -- as to whether they fall into one zone or fall into the other zone. They may or they may not. And it is better to have the enemy do the guessing than for us to tell them.

Q Does that difficulty apply also to the Fiji Islands and New Caledonia?

THE PRESIDENT: All of the islands down through there. I should think probably the rule of common sense would govern when I say Southwest Pacific.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox told a Congressional committee today that an executive labor policy will soon be formulated and announced. Is there anything you could tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess you could make a pretty good guess that it is all tied up with that word -- vile word that you used.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Paul used.

THE PRESIDENT: Paul used -- inflation.

Q Mr. President, has any directive been sent to the War Labor Board to hold wage rulings in future cases to wave levels, or existing wage levels?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Would such a directive -- is that contemplated at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I really honestly don't know.

Q Can you tell us, sir, whether this unnamed program includes more taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. .

Q You can tell us whether it does?

THE PRESIDENT: It does, sure.

Q Is there any other name ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) When I say more taxes I mean a new tax bill.

Q Beyond the one now pending, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Beyond the present tax law.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) For forty ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Beyond the present tax law. In other words, it has not been determined at all as to whether the recommendations of the Treasury which were made in -- what was it? -- March, early March, would be added to or not. I don't know on that. But the present -- the present pending bill as it is today is a very steep increase over the present law.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you comment or expand on the Executive Order today, giving the Board of Economic Warfare new authority?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it explains itself. It is to give the authority to that Board to direct certain purchases of materials outside of this country, thereby centralizing the responsibility in their hands.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, getting back to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That doesn't mean, of course, necessarily they will carry it out. There would be a directive that would be carried out -- purchases -- by perhaps certain other agencies of the Government. It centralizes the policy in their hands.

Q Mr. President, getting back to the inflation -- delete -- inflation program, does that contemplate any further savings in non-defense expenditures?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. I had an awfully funny time on that. There

was a very, very famous economist who wrote to me about it -- a very serious person, a very old friend of mine, I like him a lot -- and he put his question to me just as you put yours. In other words, a generality.

And I wrote him back, "Have you got a copy of the Budget? If not, I will send you one. Tell me where?" Well, that was 6 weeks ago, and he has written me 3 letters since, and he hasn't answered the question. So my question of course is to you just where it would be to him:

Where? In what particular? What is a non-defense expenditure?

Q Does that mean, Mr. President, there will not be any? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is like one of his three replies to me. It begs the question which I asked.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, you are very familiar, I presume, with the list^{of} -- of items that Senator (Harry) Byrd (Democrat, of Virginia) and his Committee have put up.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) You have no comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, let me give you a very, very simple example. I think on that list was the abolishing of the whole of N.Y.A.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) All right. Now at the present time N.Y.A. is training about 400 thousand boys and girls each year to go into industry. All right. Now, if we abolish N.Y.A. we have to set up something else to train 400 thousand people.

Query: Where is the economy?

Now that is a very good example. And of course that is a necessary part of the war work. I don't care where they are trained. Heavens, you can put them under -- Oh, Heavens, I don't care -- if you want to

you can put them under the Secretary of State.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) The point is ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't care where it is, as long as I get 400 thousand trained boys and girls.

MR. GODWIN: I see.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how about some of the farm subsidies?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about some of the farm subsidies? Are they so necessary in view of the high farm prices now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, as you approach parity you get away from farm subsidies, don't you?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q In that connection, will it be necessary, sir, to change the prices at all in connection with farm prices, in order to stop this evil word -- inflation? Do you think that the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, because the farm parity level is based on -- Oh -- a form of index, and if the index doesn't go up, the farm prices don't go up, based on parity.

Q Mr. President, did you notice the statement a little while ago of Senator (Kenneth) McKellar (Democrat of Tennessee), that no training was needed for boys to fight forest fires?

THE PRESIDENT: No what?

Q No training. In opposing the C.C.C., he said that no training was needed for forest fire fighters, that all they needed was numbers.

THE PRESIDENT: The unfortunate part is that forest fires occur in some States that "ain't got" numbers. That is a pretty good answer. A lot of

places up in -- well, let's say Idaho, where I suppose there are many hundreds of square miles with nobody in that area, not one human being.

I don't know how you fight fire in a place like that.

Q I have heard they needed training.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I heard they needed training.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they do need some training too.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Thank you, sir.

5

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #820
Executive Office of the President
April 21, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is Steve?

MR. EARLY: Here.

THE PRESIDENT: What have you got?

MR. EARLY: The Leo Crowley material.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all?

MR. EARLY: Nothing else that I can find. Nothing else that I can find.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing to himself and indicating a document in Chinese)

That's Chinese. I will leave it face up.

Yes. It's all right. (for the newspapermen to come in)

Q Do we get all those? (indicating the large pile of papers in front of the President)

THE PRESIDENT: You may need them -- those are pardons! (laughter) You stepped right into it. (more laughter)

Q Is there anything prophetic ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q I hope there is nothing prophetic about that.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not.

Q Well, I want to talk to you about that anyway.

Q (indicating the Chinese document) Can you read that red and black one over there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's from the Generalissimo. That's why I left it face up. (laughter)

Q Dave Lu is over here. (David Lu, Central News Agency of China)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Dave Lu is over here.

MR. EARLY: Dave will read it. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It's all right. I wouldn't mind that at all.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have very little today. I have one that I talked to Leo Crowley about yesterday, in regard to alien enemy-owned patents. And the Alien Property Custodian says that already a great many of them have come into his possession, especially in the chemical and the pharmaceutical field, and several thousand more will be acquired by them in the course of the next few months.

We talked it over, and I asked him to take the necessary steps to make available for war production and national needs all patents that are controlled either directly or indirectly by our enemies, and that these patents should be made freely available for war purposes and national needs, and that there should be a continuation or new research started in connection with their maintenance and expansion. So he is starting in to do that, and to make an exhaustive survey of every known kind of enemy-controlled patent. We think that a great many of them, actually owned or controlled by enemies, are ostensibly in the hands of neutrals, or allies, or American citizens.

Q Mr. President, you mean to say, sir, that their ownership of these foreign patents has been ostensibly transferred to an American citizen, but that will not prevent their seizure?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is ostensible ownership.

Q Yes, sir.

Q In that same situation there has been brought out before one of the Senate committees -- indicating that some of these patent agreements between German and American firms have clauses which would provide for their resumption after the war ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and it seems to be a moot question as to whether action by the Alien Property Custodian now will affect post-war use. Do you intend to take them and keep them for us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, in view of the past experience of this Government. During the World War we took over alien enemy-owned patents, etcetera, and after the war was over we took no steps to keep them from sliding back one way or the other into alien hands. And I think that that should be prevented -- a recurrence of that at the end of this war.

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, what about bona fide American patents that are pooled with foreign patents -- with enemy alien patents -- and are needed for the production of the materials?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my idea is we take everything we need, no matter what the technicalities are. The first thing to do is to win the war.

Q Can we imply from that, sir, that you would favor this Bone bill that is in the Senate now? (Homer T. Bone, Democrat, of Washington)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us something about the Pacific Council meeting this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: It went off very well.

Q Understand there was a report by Mr. (Harry) Hopkins of his trip?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's right.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, will these patents be made available to all .

United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Will the patents be made available to all the United Nations, or will we keep them?

THE PRESIDENT: For war purposes, Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, does that also include something on the international cartels? That is where the patents were tied up. Could you say whether legislation was needed to find out where these patents are? I mean there are apparently very secret cartel agreements, and they have secrecy clauses, and freezing clauses, and that they are not to divulge these patents and secrets to anybody.

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I don't know the technicalities of it. I just suggest -- Lord, if we need them we are going to get them, if we can find them.

Q Mr. President, couldn't you use some of the War Powers Act authority to take those patents, even if they are final?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Take it as property?

THE PRESIDENT: Take it as property, because after all it is a property.

MR. D. CORNELL: Speaking of taking over things, Mr. President, do you think there is any need for a certain amount of fear on the part of the public, that their private cars might be taken by the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of that at all.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Coming back to Mr. Hopkins, Mr. President, there has been a report that there will be a joint supply, or joint production council -- commission set up between the United States and the United Kingdom, as a result of Lord Beaverbrook's return here. Is anything like that in the wind at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard of anything like that. I think that we are developing existing machinery pretty well on that, and also the machinery on -- on what I call allocations. It is really the -- the distribution of the material when it is -- when it is ready, and along the general line of giving opportunity to different nations actively engaged in the war, such as the Chinese and the Australians, to be heard, and make a case, before the final distribution is decided on.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Well, through what mechanism does that clear?

THE PRESIDENT: That goes through the distribution committee, as long as it is in line with the decisions on the military end.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: I must admit I am not quite sure what -- just what is the construction of this distribution committee?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's Mr. Hopkins here. He is the chairman of it. That's the primary consideration -- the distribution of our own things. And then there are representatives of the British on it, and I think the -- I don't know -- you fellows will have to check. Find out who else is on it.

MR. EARLY: It has been announced.

Q Are you referring to the Munitions Assignments Board?

MR. EARLY: It has been announced, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: It has been announced.

Q We were not familiar with it under that title.

THE PRESIDENT: The Munitions Assignments Board. The only -- the only thing is that we are giving the opportunity to other United Nations to be heard by that Board.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conference last week with --

with Joseph Kennedy?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I had a very pleasant talk. That was all.

Q Is there some thought of his being brought into the Administration?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, have you any comment on Pierre Laval?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I had better not. (laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: One of his complaints is that the British are bombing French territory. Is he likely to have any complaint of that sort against the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there any comment you can make on the -- on the recent developments in the Southwest Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any what?

Q Comments that you could make, on any of the recent developments in the Southern Pacific?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so, except I can suggest that people shouldn't believe what they read in certain papers.

MR. F. PERKINS: How about the -- the -- the -- the story about the bombing of Tokio?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the only thing I can think of is -- on that -- you know occasionally I have a few people in to dinner, and generally in the middle of dinner some -- I know she isn't -- it isn't an individual, it's just a generic term -- some "sweet young thing" says, "Mr. President, couldn't you tell us about so and so?"

Well, the other night this "sweet young thing" in the middle of supper said, "Mr. President, couldn't you tell us about that bombing? Where did those planes start from and go to?"

And I said, "Yes. I think the time has now come to tell you.

They came from our new secret base at Shangri-La!" (laughter)

And she believed it! (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is this the same young lady you talked about --- (loud laughter interrupted)

THE PRESIDENT: No. This is a generic term. It happens to be a woman.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Is it always feminine? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Is it always feminine? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Now May, why did you ask me that?

MISS MAY CRAIG: I wondered.

THE PRESIDENT: I call it a "sweet young thing." Now when I talk about manpower that includes the women, and when I talk about a "sweet young thing," that includes young men. (again loud laughter)

Q Do you have those kind of men ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) In the House? (meaning the White House) (more loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Romagna) What did he say?

MR. ROMAGNA: In the House. (the President laughed heartily)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and the Senate too. (more loud laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: Would you care to go so far, Mr. President, as to admit that this Japanese ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Wait a minute -- wait a minute. "The President Admits" -- there's the headline. (laughter) Go ahead now.

MR. F. PERKINS: Would you care to go so far as to confirm the truth of the Japanese reports that Tokio was bombed?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I couldn't even do that. I am depending on Japanese

reports very largely. (laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: Mr. President, is there any reason to doubt the report of the Chilean ambassador to Chile -- (laughter) -- Japan, that there was a bombing?

THE PRESIDENT: The killing of what? (more laughter)

MR. F. PERKINS: The report of the Chilean ambassador to his own government that Japan was bombed?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That didn't get to me yet.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. EARLY: (to the newspapermen as they filed out) Sweet little things!
(laughter)

Q Steve, does he mean to imply that Fred Perkins is a sweet little thing?

(continued laughter)

Press Conference #820 -- April 21, 1942 -- Excerpts

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Q. (continuing) --- and it seems to be a moot question as to whether action by the Alien Property Custodian now will affect post-war use. Do you intend to take them and keep them for us?

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THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. I don't know.

(and then further on)

Q. Mr. President, will these patents be made available to all United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

Q. Will the patents be made available to all the United Nations, or will we keep them?

THE PRESIDENT: For war purposes, Yes.

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THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I don't know the technicalities of it. I just suggest -- Lord, if we need them we are going to get them, if we can find them..

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THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q. Take it as property?

THE PRESIDENT: Take it as property, because after all it is a property.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #821
Executive Office of the President
April 24, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: It's going to be a very dull Press Conference. I haven't got anything, and I don't know "nothin'."

Q Good morning.

Q Good morning, sir.

Q Do you know the reporter over here, Mr. President? (indicating Mr. Fred Shipman, Director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. He sees that the record is adequately kept for future generations.

Q I think he is doing a pretty good job on it.

MR. EARLY: (to Earl Godwin) Have you been out West?

MR. GODWIN: No, not West, down South a little. I wasn't here the last time because I was asleep.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid this is going to be a very barren day. I haven't anything, Steve hasn't got anything, and I don't think any of you have got anything. (laughter) Have you got any ideas?

Q Mr. President, what are your plans for registering on Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I think probably there will be a photograph taken. That's a good guess. (laughter)

Q Do you expect it will be done here?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Yes.

Q Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, have the other members of the manpower commission been nominated to you along with the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- Executive Director?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Any news today, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) On what?

Q (continuing) Is there any news today from Shangri-La? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing at all, except that evidently one of the planes which came out of Shangri-La didn't get back there. It went across to visit Russia.

Q Will that become a Lend-Lease plane now, Mr. President? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I read in the papers that it had been -- what do you call it?

-- officially interned at ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Interned. Have you any official note of that sir?

Has it come to you officially?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Same thing. Just what you got.

MR. GODWIN: Just what we got.

Q From the Soviet government?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q From the Soviet government?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Could it be interned on the Kalinin front?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Could it be interned on the Kalinin front?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No. I have nothing else you haven't got on it.

MR. GODWIN: What, Mr. President, might -- is there something going to be

done about it, or is it a detail, this plane?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it has been interned. That's all. Yes.

MR. GODWIN: That's all there is to it.

Q Mr. President, we were given to understand that the names of the Americans on the ship had been forwarded to Washington. Is there any possibility they will be released?

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

Q Mr. President, when you intern a ship like that, do you immobilize it?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so. I don't know.

Q Well, sir, the Soviet communication to Washington then would tend to confirm the Tokio announcements that the raid took place.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that doesn't require any answer. You didn't put it in the form of a question. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, there are complaints in Tokio that our Army and Navy are keeping too quiet. Could you do anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I read that too.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your plans for this labor division of the War Production Board? Do you -- who, for example, do you plan to have the head of that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't done anything about it. I am going to see Donald Nelson about it today or tomorrow.

Q Has everybody been guessing right about your speech Monday -- Message?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I did some work on it yesterday -- Message to Congress, and I will work on it today and tomorrow -- Sunday. It is not nearly ready.

Q Do you expect it will go up Monday, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, have you evolved your own term to replace "anti-inflation"?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think so. I think "cost of living" is easiest. Most of

you guessed it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, have you anything to say about (Rear Admiral) Emory Land's testimony with reference to loafing in shipyards?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't read it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: He has twice testified that this program of shipbuilding has been slowed down by that.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, I wouldn't -- I don't believe he said that, Jim. Well, of course, it depends on the words "slow down." I don't know what ---

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interposing) He said loafing -- the word "loafing."

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but was that general?

Q He applied it to both management and labor.

MR. GODWIN: What he said, sir, was that there was too damn much loafing in the shipyards.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good burr under the tail for both labor and management. It's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Then the National Maritime Union got after him about it, and they are still rowing.

THE PRESIDENT: I see.

Q The net of it is though, Mr. President, that that seems to be the one part of the war program that isn't up to schedule, and that is the big bottleneck, apparently, in the picture right at this minute. And I thought probably you would ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I suppose really before you could write a general story, you ought to find out what percentage of not only shipping but any other part of the program which does this loafing of the -- what percentage of the slow down over what it ought to be. And I don't believe that it is on the whole very great. You probably can take an

individual plant and get a higher percentage, but a general statement of that kind isn't worth an awful lot unless you know more facts.

Q Mr. President, he also said that the slow down was due to shortages of steel plate. Do you have any personal knowledge of that or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. There is a shortage of steel plates all over the country, and we have had for a long time.

Q Mr. President, Admiral Land testified before one of the Congressional committees that the amount by which they were behind their schedule could be traced to the shortage of steel, dating from last fall until the first of March. Would you have any idea of what might be the relative importance of that and the supposed slow down?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would say the primary steel -- the primary reason for being behind the schedule is the shortage of steel -- I don't think there is any question about that -- not coming through nearly as fast as it ought to come through.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Well, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is a certain amount of converting of strip mills. They are using new processes, turning their -- converting quite a number of -- not plants but portions of plants, to turn out more plates and shapes. But of course we have to remember that the Shipping Board program -- the Maritime Commission program has very, very greatly increased, and so has the Navy program. And with the two of them put together, there is just a plain shortage of shapes and plates.

Q Mr. President, are you planning any action to revitalize the shipbuilding program? It does seem to be the one branch of the four goals about which we know, that is, airplanes, tanks and anti-aircraft guns -- it seems to be the one which is behind.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would say that most everybody is working on that thing at the present time. You can't make bread without flour.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, the Chairman of the Board -- the Admiral -- indicated, I think, quite frankly, that he believed or intended to have someone believe that part -- part of that plate shortage could be attributed to priorities, that somebody got the steel that they needed. Now that may be true and it may not. Do you know anything about that, or do you know -- do you care to say anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have got to have -- priorities affect the whole program. Anybody that doesn't get what they want the day they want it begin to shout about priorities. That is obvious.

MR. GODWIN: If the shipyard doesn't get the steel, they don't get the steel. That really slows it up.

THE PRESIDENT: If the tank shop doesn't get the steel, they don't get the steel.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Of course, there is one thing that I have been working at -- pleading with the production people to check up on, and W.P.B. (War Production Board), and that is the civilian use of steel, which I personally consider too high. I think they have been letting out among the priorities too much steel for civilian use. Now they said they haven't. They said the only steel -- civilian steel they let out is for ultimate war production. Now they are checking up on that.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us in an over-all way how the war production program is moving along, without revealing ---

THE PRESIDENT: I would say, considering the fact that it was called a fantastic program in January, that it was working out extremely well.

Q Mr. President, is anything being done to increase the over-all capacity of the steel industry as a whole?

THE PRESIDENT: I have forgotten ---

Q (adding) New mills?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to check on that. You had better check. I have forgotten how many million tons of new capacity is being built -- plants or additions to plants are being built this year. It's quite a sizeable amount.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It takes about a year to build a steel plant.

Q (interjecting) Also takes considerable steel.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And it takes a lot of steel too.

Q Have you heard anything, by the way, from the people that said there was plenty of steel about a year ago?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there was at that time for the program.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's the thing they not often visualized -- what the program was. Nobody had any conception -- nobody in the United States -- what this new program would be -- this January program. The year before that there wasn't anybody ever thought of a possibility of that kind. Most -- a great many people didn't in January of this year. They called it fantastic.

Q Mr. President, have you had reports on the fact that some aircraft companies have had to lay off large numbers of men because of bottlenecks along the line?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q You haven't gone into that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, what was your personal reaction to the action of the Republican (National) Committee at Chicago, apparently withdrawing from the principles of Isolationism?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you off the record: I didn't read it. (laughter)

Q Didn't even hear it on the air, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard anything on the air. I didn't even hear you (Earl Godwin) for a week.

MR. GODWIN: I don't see how you can carry on your job. (laughter) I want to ask you a question, sir, which may be perfectly obvious. When you speak of building the plants -- the steel plants, and it takes so long, could you say, or could we believe -- could the public know that when these proposed plants are built that their output is not -- that it will meet the requirements of this tremendous program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not necessarily.

MR. GODWIN: You couldn't say that?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't say that, because by that time we might have an additional program.

Q Mr. President, the steel industry already says that a shortage of scrap is confining them somewhat in their production. Now with this additional production coming along, how are you going -- are you making any plans for solving that additional scrap problem?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think the scrap problem is a very serious one. There is still a good deal of scrap in this country.

Q (interjecting) Maybe we can get some back from Japan.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is plenty of scrap in this country. You

can get by all right. If you go on a railroad train, for example -- just to use a simple example -- they have what they call empty car sidings -- not switches but sidings -- old rails which have been down 20 or 30 years. Now they have not been taken up yet. Why keep them there? We haven't got any empty freight cars to put on them. Well, we have got people that are trying to use their heads, trying to discover things like empty sidings. I suggested that as one of mine. I suggested that about a week ago. Why I never thought -- now there are a good many other sources with a lot of scrap steel -- on farms. There is still some scrap steel in the woods. Well, I went driving the other day through certain woods, sometime ago when I was at Hyde Park, and I found -- I hadn't thought of it at all -- an old what you call a dump, right in my own woods. And there were 8 or 10 old farm machines -- and an old farm truck. What they were doing was trying to fill up the swamp. And we are taking steps to haul it out of the swamp and convert it into scrap. Now there is a lot of that all over the country.

Q Mr. President, one suggestion has been made that they use W.P.A. labor to take up these abandoned street-car rails. It is a very costly operation. In many places they have just put the asphalt over the rails.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Could that W.P.A. -- has that suggestion been brought to your notice, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard of that one. That is a good one. I will pass it along.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, do you have any comment on Lord Beaverbrook's recommendation last night, that we attack?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't read it, May. I didn't know it. I read the main

headline, and stopped there. I have had very little time this morning to read the papers thoroughly.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #822
Executive Office of the President
April 28, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why everybody is coming in. If this gets any bigger we will have to move out on the lawn this summer. Didn't we do it once?

MR. GODWIN: For pictures you did. You did it for pictures one day.

THE PRESIDENT: Was that it?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Godwin says I have nothing. (laughter) He is not always right, but it's all right.

MR. D. CORNELL: Mr. President, in your Message yesterday you said that everybody's dimes and dollars not absolutely needed for vital necessities ought to be put into War Bonds and Stamps. There is a limit of 5 thousand dollars that an individual can purchase in a year on small Bonds, and 50 thousand on the big. What is going to be done about it -- this limit, if anything?

THE PRESIDENT: Put them into the big Bonds. How much on big Bonds?

MR. D. CORNELL: 50 thousand on the big ones. Personally that isn't worrying me considerably. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It's going to worry less of you and me and other millionaires next year. As a matter of fact, of course, what I am talking about is not investing previous investments in War Bonds. I am talking about investing earnings in War Bonds -- current income. There isn't very much use after all, if you have got a thousand dollars in the savings bank which is probably doing pretty useful work somewhere, taking it out of the savings bank and putting it into Government Bonds. Now, of course,

any people that have got larger current incomes than 55 thousand dollars, which I think you total up -- might be some difficulty.

Q I am sure everybody here would appreciate it if they would lift the limit of 12 hundred dollars on tax anticipation notes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think there is a lot in that. I don't know. You had better ask the Treasury about that.

Q Well, in connection with the Bonds, Mr. President, would they be considered as taxes for purchases over the 25 thousand net income proposed, or would people have to buy them out of that 25 thousand that is left.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you will have to ask the Treasury -- technical question. Those are details. Remember yesterday I said something about details.

Q Mr. President, in connection with that, you remember you were very generous a couple of weeks ago in translating Mr. (James) Landis' (O.C.D.) "termination of the illumination" as "turn out the lights." How about "stabilize the remuneration"? (laughter) Can you translate that one for us?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are going to get it tonight. (more laughter) You just hold your horses until about quarter-past ten. In other words, about half-way through the speech.

Q Mr. President, in your Budget Seminar you spoke about the desirability of getting "calendar" and "fiscal" year straightened out, and having them coincide -- something of that sort. Have you done anything about it since sometime in January?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have spoken about it to some influential people who pass laws. And nothing has happened yet.

Q They are not getting anywhere?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. (It would) make it easier for all of us, you know. A year would be a year.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, have you, or will you issue a Directive to the War Labor Board asking them to stabilize wages?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a detail, Pete.

MR. P. BRANDT: Pretty big one.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Lots of big ones. That's not the only one.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, if I could get rather personal, I would like to know how you are getting along with the wooden coal barges?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard, May, for about a week. They said they have got -- I think they listed 19 places that were capable of building them, that used to build them in the old days. Now how many of the 19 will be put to work on them, I couldn't tell you.

Q Mr. President, there have been reports that all of the tankers would be taken out of the East Coast Atlantic. Could you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard of it at all.

(pause)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #823

Executive Office of the President

May 1, 1942 -- 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

Q Good morning.

Q Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's the first of May. End of the coat for a while.

(the President was not wearing his coat)

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have had a -- an informal report from Mr. (Paul V.) McNutt on a thing we talked about before, and that was registration of women. He has consulted with the Social -- the women members of Social Security Board's Federal Advisory Council, and with other Government officials, and they are agreed that at the present time we ought not to have a -- a registration of women.

Then, he says, the conclusion is based on a careful study of the current and potential demand for women workers, in relation to the numbers of both men and women who are now available for and seeking work. Over the whole country -- over the country as a whole there are more women workers who want and are available for jobs than there are job openings for them at the present time.

Almost a million and a half women workers are now registered with the offices of the Employment Service as being available for work. They believe that they are being given and should be given an increasing opportunity to serve. Pre-employment training of women for industrial jobs is being rapidly expanded. Any woman now has an opportunity to register voluntarily for work at any one of the United States -- 15

hundred United States Employment offices. And the Advisory group further recommends that State laws and regulations covering the conditions of women's work should be preserved and extended in those States which are -- which haven't got enough in the way of women's laws, such as the total number of hours a week, and the One Day Rest In Seven, and other meal and rest periods, and proper safeguards for health and safety. And that they -- so they recommend that nothing further should be done at this time. That is not a permanent thing, of course, but -- at this time.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, I noticed in the morning papers that (Brigadier) General (Lewis B.) Hershey talked about registering boys from 18 to 20. Sometime ago you were having a study made as to whether the law should be changed so as to make that class available for military duty. Have you reached any conclusion?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had any report yet, Jim. That's the first I have heard of it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nothing has come to me.

Q Is there anything said in that report about the number of States which were below par?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, you are accepting the recommendations -- I mean to the holding up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, at this time.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President -- Mr. President, you have noticed this Housing program -- you had your Housing heads in here yesterday. It would appear from what we read that the House of Representatives did not ap-

propriate for a Housing program that was up to your original expectations. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

MR. GODWIN: Would you like to say something on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and they are going to try all they can to get the Senate to restore the amount that we asked for, because I think it is very much needed.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. May I go back to the McNutt matter? In those employment agencies where I have had any knowledge at all on the subject, most of the women were applying for non-industrial jobs. They were office and housekeeping -- housework jobs. That figure of a million and a half might not mean that they were there asking for war jobs. Does that mean anything to you at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, apparently they feel that enough of them are applying for war jobs to take care of the situation at the present time. It doesn't mean that a million and a half are applying for machine tool jobs.

And I have a -- I think Steve told you yesterday about these checks that are coming in to help win the war. And I have one check here -- a money order for \$107.50. I think it is a pretty good illustration of a great many of these that are coming in.

Here is a man with a wife and three children. (reading):

"We realize that wars cost money, and can only be won by sacrifice and loyalty to one's Government and those gallant boys who die for us, but not in vain. I registered yesterday with the 45 to 64 class along with the President. Tonight our President casually mentioned a casual air-raid on Japan. I would like to hear of more of them in due time. (laughter)

"As a self-sacrifice and appreciation of what is being done for us, I and my wife are sending half our life savings to

our Government, to be used for another bomber to blast our enemies in repayment for Pearl Harbor. Our bank account is just \$215.00. So we send a check for \$107.50, and I promise to buy War Bonds till it hurts. The \$107.50 is our family's contribution to the bomber."

Q Mr. President, could you tell us the occupation of that man?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. He doesn't mention it.

Q What city is it from, sir, can you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not giving out names -- any of these names. It might be called an invidious distinction. There are an awful lot of them. If I gave out one it would be a bit unfair for all the others I didn't mention. It's just typical of the many letters coming in.

Q Would you care to comment on the condition of the contents of the basket?

(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, most of it has been -- has been done, because most of the stuff is for file.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us whether you discussed this B.E.W. Order with Secretary Hull yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Are you planning any modifications?

THE PRESIDENT: Wouldn't call them modifications. I would say -- I would say clarifications.

Q Will that tend to give the State Department the amount of authority it should have in that field?

THE PRESIDENT: The way I would put it is this -- instead of putting it that way, I would say that there is no question that the State Department is in charge of the foreign affairs of the United States. Some people haven't quite realized that fact. Some people in other departments of the Government want to run foreign affairs. Legally they can't.

When it comes to certain financing in other countries, of course, that is a purely administrative job. And I suppose the easiest illustration I can use on it is -- well, I don't know whether this should be off the record or not. I don't think it makes an awful lot of difference.

You take the problem of getting out -- getting rubber. We don't grow any rubber in this country. There is a lot of wild rubber and several other trees down in Mexico, for instance, that you can get sap out of that does make rubber. And the policy was, up to a few months ago, to offer a very high price for that rubber. In other words, a purely financial matter. And we tried it out. We supposed that if we offered a price that was higher than the market, the rubber would be forthcoming out of the forests.

Well, they were very grateful for this offer of a higher price, but the rubber did not come out of the forests. The B.E.W. very properly -- because it wasn't coming out -- recommended that we organize a -- what might be called a business operation -- a procurement operation is the correct word, to go down there and organize crews that would go into the forests and bring out the rubber, because the previous method hadn't -- hadn't got what we hoped for.

Now on that -- in this Order as I signed it, it wasn't clear, quite frankly. The negotiations with our sister Republics ought to go, obviously, through the State Department. The actual operation, after the negotiations had been completed, was with the sister Republic. The actual operation of procurement would be done by B.E.W., because the State Department, obviously, is not a procurement agency.

Well, there was some question as to how the negotiations should be carried on with our sister Republics, and I think that is going to

be clarified. As I said, the State Department does remain in charge of our foreign relations.

Q Well, I take it, Mr. President, that it would be clarified by some kind of directive?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. A letter, or an amendment to the Order. It doesn't make much difference which way.

Q Mr. President, I wondered if you had had an opportunity to read Stalin's speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't.

Q Mr. President, have there been any reactions in Vichy to your remarks the other evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a peep yet. (laughter) I suppose there will be.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, it might be a detail entirely, but when you were speaking of this rubber and the expedition to get it, that is wild rubber, isn't it ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- that is jungle rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that this -- some of you people who cover the State Department might know -- and B.E.W. A great many years ago -- 25 years ago, when the price of rubber was very, very high, a lot of people got together and planted these trees. I know a great many of them in Haiti -- in Mexico. Some of them were planted in Haiti -- not rubber trees. I can't think of the name -- (phonetically) ka-reel-eo? (Castilla?)

Q Guayule?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. Guayule is a plant not a tree.

The State Department will tell you. Sumner Welles knows all about

it. And these trees -- the people who put them in found that they didn't -- they wouldn't pay for a long time. And then now they are 25 to 30 years old, which is the ideal time. But they have been allowed to run wild. In other words, the companies that put them there went out of business. And there are the trees in out-of-the-way places, and we hope to be able to go in and tap them.

Q Any appreciable number of them, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Any appreciable number of them?

THE PRESIDENT: Quite a lot. I was surprised.

Q Mr. President, is that (phonetically) Kos-tee-a? (Castilla?)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q (phonetically) Kos-tee-a? (Castilla?)

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's it. Something like that. I don't know how to spell it.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, can you tell us where you got all those good human interest stories the other night -- that we can't get? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, I will tell you -- I will tell you off the record, entirely off the record -- what happened.

Monday night I was sitting upstairs, going over the fifth draft of the speech, and I said, "My God, I want some human interest in this." And Harry Hopkins was sitting over in the corner. He said, "Why don't we see if they haven't got some real stories in the Army and Navy?"

Q (interjecting) We tried that! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I know you have.

Well, there was a lot there that I did not use. Well, I called up (Captain) John McCrea that same night, about nine o'clock, and he

went around to the Navy, and sent word to the Army. And by ten o'clock Tuesday morning we had those stories, and three or four others which I did not use. And I -- I agree with you absolutely that we are not handling human interest stories of that kind in the right way.

Q That would be grand if we could ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It would be grand if we could get them. There is no reason in God's world why you shouldn't. Those stories have been over there on this for -- I don't know -- several weeks ---

Q (interjecting) I know it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and you fellows ought to have had them.

Q We don't get them.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it. I have been yelling -- I have been yelling about it ever since. I hope you will get them. I won't guarantee anything.

Q If you will yell, sir, we will get them.

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

Q You say you have four of them. Couldn't you tell those now? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, this check for \$107.50 is one of them.

Q If they could give them out from time to time ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- it would really be grand.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, how is your plan for reorganizing the press services coming on?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming on pretty well. I am getting somewhere. I would say in about a week we are going to have something.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, when you reorganize, couldn't you coordinate Press Conferences so you wouldn't have three or four at one time in the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: Couldn't I what?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Couldn't you coordinate the Press Conferences so that there wouldn't be two or three of them at one time?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's what this meeting is for, to coordinate the Press Conferences.

MR. GODWIN: That's right.

Mr. President, there are one or two very bold Government officials that have called Press Conferences at 10.30 on Fridays, for instance.

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt did once. (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And where did you go, May?

MISS MAY CRAIG: I came here, and went late there. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, you said in your speech the other night that aid would be gotten to China under all circumstances. I wondered if, in view of the fall of Lashio at the end of the Burma Road, you could tell us if steps are already being taken in that direction, in a general way?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that might almost be called a military secret.

Q In a general way?

THE PRESIDENT: It's going along all right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #824
Executive Office of the President
May 5, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. Tell them to come --- (newspapermen begin to file in). Oh, here they are. (then turning to Mr. Early): Got anything for me?

MR. EARLY: All the news is off the record.

(long pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says I have nothing. Not a thing.

MR. EARLY: I said all the news is off the record.

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't even off the record. Too hush-hush for that.

Q Is there anything you can say on the Madagascar situation?

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

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, if I -- the news this morning indicated, I think, that you had asked for reduced appropriations for certain things, including the C.C.C. and N.Y.A. Was that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Keeping -- keeping just the war activities.

MR. GODWIN: The last time you mentioned N.R.A. -- N.Y.A., you spoke of it as having produced a large number of trained machinists, I think you said.

THE PRESIDENT: About 400 thousand a year.

MR. GODWIN: How many?

THE PRESIDENT: 400 thousand.

MR. GODWIN: Would this reduction interfere with that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I think it keeps that going ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- or from some other source?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the only activity that is kept going.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us something about that special request you sent up in regard to the F.S.A. -- Farm Security?

THE PRESIDENT: What was that?

Q 120 million.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I don't know. (laughter) I don't recognize it.

Q The letter to (Vice President Henry) Wallace?

Q Mr. President, getting back to Madagascar, have you any information as to whether those cruisers, which were reputed here to have arrived in Madagascar or be on the way, were there -- the French cruisers?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. Except quite a long time ago -- I think they went out for the day and returned the same night. I am not sure, but that is my impression.

Q There was a report that they went to Madagascar.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is when they started in the morning, and I think they came back the same evening.

Q Could you say anything for the benefit of the gentlemen in Germany who want to know about the two battleships that went through the Suez Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. They are on the way to Shangri-La.
(laughter)

Q Any news of activity there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Any news of activity there, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are building a drydock there. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything in general about the meeting of the Pacific War Council?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It continued harmonious and successful in its operations.

I think that's about all the news. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

Q About a -- a -- a month ago you sent up the nomination, Mr. President, of Earle G. Harrison to be Commissioner of Immigration ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and Senator Guffey of Pennsylvania announced that he didn't like the appointment and would oppose it. It has been held up there meanwhile, apparently with no action.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

Q That is what I wanted to ask you.

THE PRESIDENT: I am asking you. I certainly have not withdrawn it.

Q Would you care to say whether you have any intention of withdrawing it?

THE PRESIDENT: No intention of withdrawing it whatsoever.

Q Do you desire early action?

THE PRESIDENT: I do. (laughter) The reason is I think he is a good man for the place.

Q You don't think that the Senator's objections are any good then?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, you mentioned Social Security taxes in your speech the other night. Is that a part of the cost of living program, to increase Social Security taxes at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: It is part of the -- part of the tax -- the original January tax Message.

(pause)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

Q (aside) For what?

THE PRESIDENT: For what is right. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Not much of a meeting, Mr. Early. Not much of a meeting.

(Notebook VIII-PC -- page-152 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #825
Executive Office of the President
May 15, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

Q Here is another interesting document that was rather widely syndicated.

(handing to the President The Washington Post for May 15 -- Broadway Glossary, by Leonard Lyons, as follows):

"Equality -- At Hyde Park last weekend some of the visitors discussed the proposed 25 thousand dollar ceiling on incomes. 'It'll be a true equalizer if incomes are limited to that figure,' said one of the visitors.... 'Think so?' asked the President.. 'Well,' was the reply, 'it will mean that for the first time the President of the United States will make as much as the president of General Motors.'"

THE PRESIDENT: Probably true. (laughter)

Q We were scooped.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We were scooped then.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would add to it that I will be worse out of pocket than the president of the General Motors Corporation. It will be a larger deficit.

Q What we were mostly interested in was the wide publicity given the Hyde Park trip.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't that curious? Strange things happen in common.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got to read something first. (pause) Oh, let's see -- number one, I have got another chart like last month's, on Lend-Lease aid. And Bill (Hassett) will give you the chart. It shows another rise for the month of April, of exports from here under Lend-Lease, to well over 600 million dollars for the month of April.

Q That is the total for the month, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Bringing the total aid from March, 1941, through April, 1942, to 3 billion 835 million dollars. You can have that. (handing the chart to Mr. Hassett)

MR. HASSETT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, can it be said whether or not shipments to Russia are now up to the Moscow protocol?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along all right. That's all I can say.

Q Mr. President, would there be any figures outside of the Lease-Lend that would add to the picture of what is being sent abroad?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes and No. Of course, things that go to our own people on the other side are going over all the time.

Q He means purchases of the British, I think.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I imagine so, because I don't believe that all of the material which they ordered themselves direct -- before March, 1941 -- has yet been delivered. I don't know how much that amount is.

Q Could you tell how many months it took at the beginning to equal that 600 million dollars -- how that compares with the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You mean when the previous purchases equaled the Lend-Lease deliveries?

Q No, back to Lend-Lease. At what time -- by what time had you sent 600 million dollars under Lend-Lease -- the first 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you. Wait a minute -- give me the -- give me the chart. (turning to Mr. Hassett who handed it to him) These are those column things. (indicating) They don't quite equal the actual

-- actual figures, so I would have to guess it. You can see from this -- if you take a ruler you can tell pretty well. It's the only way you can do it.

For instance, in March, 1941, there's a little tiny bit, and then each month -- April, May, June, July, August, September, etcetera -- each month it goes on up. Well, if you add all those little things together until you have added enough together to make that column of 600 million dollars, you will get an approximate estimate.

Q It looks as if it went quite a way.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, now, let's see. I would say -- you will have to measure this -- this is not any statement by me -- I am doing it by eye -- one, two, three -- I would say at a guess: last October. By last October we had sent a total of 600 million over -- March to October.

Q Including October?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Including October?

THE PRESIDENT, Yes, I should think so. But as I say, you would have to take a ruler and measure it, and do it yourself.

Q Mr. President, how much of this material has actually been delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How much of this material has actually been delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can't -- you will have to take a ruler. You will have to see what we shipped out of here. I can't tell you the proportion that actually got there. Pretty good proportion.

Q Does that also include the Services over here?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That also includes the Services over here, does it not, this 600 million?

THE PRESIDENT: No. This is stuff shipped.

Q Stuff shipped.

Q Mr. President, does it not include ship repair in American ports?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to look and read it more carefully. I don't know.

(pause) I should say, Yes, because of this sentence: (reading): "The major part of the aid supplied is in the form of finished munitions."

Now that means that the minor parts would be in things like ship repair.

Q Does it include food, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Oh, Yes.

Q Mr. President, does the 3 billion 835 million dollars represent exports or total expenditures?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- as I was just saying, I gather from that sentence ---

Q (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that the major part represents finished munitions which means export.

Q Is the breakdown on that confidential and secret ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- as to what nations got it?

THE PRESIDENT: Then I have got -- I have signed the (phonetically) Wack bill -- W.A.A.C. -- taking ladies into the Army. (laughter) I have also signed an Executive Order establishing the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, and providing for its organization into units. The objective of this Order is: the number of units shall not exceed a hundred, and the total enrollment shall not exceed 25 thousand. That, of course, is for this time.

Q Could you tell us, sir, who is to head it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

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Q Have you selected the Director?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you selected the Director?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, since the Board of Economic Warfare informally took over some shiploading, it is reported that ships are going out of New York Harbor for South Africa only partly loaded. I wondered if you had any decision as to whether the Board of Economic Warfare or the War Shipping [Administration?] Board is to handle loading?

THE PRESIDENT: The Shipping Board. There has never been any question about that.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, in a current magazine there is a piece appearing this week called "Congress For Victory." A statement is made in that piece that this coming Congressional election may well be the most important, from the American point of view, since the Civil War. Do you coincide with that view?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, in the first place, what magazine was it?

Q It's the New Republic.

THE PRESIDENT: The New Republic -- which I haven't read for a great long time. I haven't read the article, and categorical statements like that are perfectly silly.

Q Mr. President, going back to Lend-Lease, you said you couldn't give us the destination, but could you say whether even a small part of it went to South America?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't even tell you that. If I were to say that, then somebody would say, "How much of it went to China?" and so forth and so

on. You would get the whole story.

Q Mr. President, after the Pacific War meeting the other day several of the people who participated came out talking about a lecture that they had heard on loose talk.

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I guess so. It is quite customary on my part.
(laughter)

Q (continuing) We ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And very much needed. Because, My God, the loose talk -- I think there is more of it in Washington than all the rest of the country put together, quite frankly. The country is all right. The country is keeping a pretty close mouth, but I don't think Washington is.

Q Didn't you mention to them loose talk from the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Didn't you mention to them loose talk from the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, various places of loose talk, not just the Far East.

Q Prime Minister (John) Curtin says you are not aiming at him. Could there have been anybody else in Australia ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wasn't aiming at Australia. I am aiming -- there are lots of other places -- India, Egypt, South America. In fact every continent.

Q A place called Capitol Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A place called Capitol Hill?

THE PRESIDENT: That is included in the District. (laughter)

Q Is there any loose talk in Shangri-La?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are perfectly marvelous. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say as to what you visualize in taking over these commercial airlines, upon what appeared today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, simply this, Jim, that we need all the planes that we can get of every kind. Actually we have even taken over a lot of "puddle-jumpers," little bits of one-man planes and two-man planes for various purposes. Anything that will fly almost is useful to the Government, in this war. And the same way, there is -- as we extend the fighting, actually getting into the fighting in various parts of the world, we have to have more transport planes. We are taking over a great many transport planes -- commercial planes that belong to private owners for war necessities. And I think people in this country are going to be -- going to understand it very well.

Well, just for an example, I always, you know, use the personal equation a good deal. A couple of weeks ago I had come down from New York -- just one spot -- from New York -- to see me in the course of a week about 12 people, who came down to see me on non-Government and non-war business. Nothing to do with the Government. Nothing to do with the war. And out of those 12 people seven came by plane. Well, that was all right. The line was running. Now those 7 people needn't have come by plane. It was just the easiest thing to do, and the plane was running. All right. No kick about their having come by plane.

But suppose we were to cut the service between New York and Washington, or Chicago and Washington? Supposing we had cut it in half? Those people would come, and would come gladly, by train, instead of by plane. And I am inclined to think that that is an increasing necessity in the country. It isn't so very long ago that there wasn't any plane service between New York and Washington, or Chicago and Washington. Everybody got on pretty well.

And in the same way it does affect, and probably will more greatly affect, as time goes on, the Air Mail service. It is only a relatively few number -- small number of years ago that we didn't have any Air Mail. I guess the country could get along without as much Air Mail service as they are getting today.

Q Mr. President, I had in mind particularly whether you were impressed with the idea that transport planes should be built to carry as much as 10 thousand pounds with a plywood chassis, etcetera, as part of this general program of transporting large amounts of freight by air? Is that all part of the same picture?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I couldn't -- I couldn't tell you weight-carrying capacity. I don't know. But we are building a very large number of transport planes for the Army and Navy, and that isn't enough. We need more.

Q Mr. President, can we infer from what you said about the visitors taking the train that there won't be any shortage of coach transportation on the railroads?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You might have to stand up.

Q I didn't mean that. There has been some talk about the possibility of restricting even coach travel on railroads.

THE PRESIDENT: I shouldn't think we had come to that point yet, but we have to remember another thing, that there is natural curtailment in it, because there will be fewer people this summer, because of working, who will go away for summer holidays by coach, as well as by automobile. If it becomes necessary later on it will be done, but I don't see any necessity at the present time.

Q Mr. President, have you accepted the resignation of Judge James B. Allred

of Texas as Federal Judge?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, wasn't that given out? I accepted it -- I don't know, what? -- a couple of days ago. (turning to Mr. Hassett) Will you check on that, Bill?

MR. HASSETT: I will look that up.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment, sir, on the announcement by Governor (Herbert) Lehman that he would not seek renomination, and would not accept renomination?

THE PRESIDENT: (almost silently) No. No.

(pause here while the President read a document in front of him)

THE PRESIDENT: That's not ripe. (laughter)

Q Mr. Roosevelt, in connection with your discussion here on planes you made the remark about our getting into fighting in various parts of the world, when you said we would need more transport planes. Is there anything you could say in elaboration of that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except we are getting into the fight more and more, and in different new places all the time.

Q Mr. President, could you say whether the report is correct that there are American troops in Madagascar?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I could say anything about it.

Q Mr. President, do you believe these gasoline rationing cards should be secret, or a matter of public record?

THE PRESIDENT: A matter of public record. Why not? All I read -- all I know is what I read in the papers. The White House is going -- I am doing the same thing by trying to curtail the gas that is used in the White House cars.

Things like -- well, just for an example, I have got a pretty careful

search going on as to how we can save gasoline in the White House. And of course everybody knows that I expect to go to Hyde Park occasionally in the next six months. But every time I have gone up there I have always sent a White House car up by road, for my own use. And I have sent a Secret Service car, for their use, up there by road. Well, that is a matter of -- up and back -- of about 500 miles, and that wears out a lot of rubber, and it burns a lot of gas.

So I am leaving one White House car up there, thereby saving 500 miles, and leaving one Secret Service car up there -- a total saving of a thousand miles. Of course, that is just an illustration of how we are trying to cut down on the consumption of gas and the use of rubber as much as we possibly can.

Q Mr. President, in connection with making those gas ration cards a matter of public record, it has been suggested that holders of cards be made to carry a sticker on their windshield indicating what kind of ration card they have obtained, should they show up at the ball park or race track ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am awful fond of a lot of details in all kinds of departments, but that is a new one on me, and I don't think that I should even be asked to answer the question.

Q I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know is the answer.

Q Isn't that an invitation to rock-throwing?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Isn't that an invitation to rock-throwing?

(laughter)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC -- page 157 -- JR)