

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #826  
Executive Office of the President  
May 19, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

(as Mr. Early sat down on the edge of the side table, the sword of a Japanese general, recently presented to the President by Francis B. Sayre, U. S. High Commissioner of the Philippines, on his return from there, fell to the floor)

MR. EARLY: Just the Mikado, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Hari-kari.

THE PRESIDENT: Is the blood still on it?

MR. EARLY: (picking up the sword) May (Craig) says it's a good omen, sir.  
(more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Is the blood still on it?

(Mr. Early endeavored to pull the sword out of the scabbard, without success)

Q (aside) No wonder he (the Japanese general) got killed. (laughter)

(Mr. Early finally unsheathed the sword)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is (any blood).

MR. EARLY: I think it has been cleaned.

THE PRESIDENT: A little brown spot.

MR. EARLY: Shall I sheath it?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Don't monkey with it. You're not old enough. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (speaking softly) I don't think I have anything. I have been very much saddened by two deaths in the last 36 hours. One was --

Oh -- Patty Boland (Democratic Whip in the House), who was a very old friend of mine. I am asking Frank Walker (Postmaster General) to represent me at the funeral tomorrow. And the other one was another even older friend, in the Tariff Commission -- Ray Stevens ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Stevens.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- who has been with me in Washington not only all this time but about seven or eight years before in the old days.

I don't think I have got any news whatsoever.

Q Mr. President, Joe Louis (the prizefighter) has suggested we call this "God's War." How do you like the suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I can say I hope it is.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, the landing of those American troops in Ireland attracted a great deal of enthusiastic and favorable attention, as you may know. I wondered whether you would add to it, or say anything more about it?

THE PRESIDENT: More? You mean more troops?

MR. GODWIN: No.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh.

MR. GODWIN: I mean anything about that particular landing?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It was successfully carried out, and I hope that that success will continue in the future.

Q Does that mean, sir, we are going to send more?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Sort -- sort of an implication in there, isn't there? (laughter)

Q That's what I thought, but I would rather you would say, sir.

Q Mr. President, do you expect any specific development out of the renewed consideration of the oil supply on the Eastern Seaboard -- consideration

of pipelines, etcetera?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. The -- of course, we are looking at it from every angle. The one angle, of course, is to resurrect the old proposal of a pipeline which we had -- Oh, what was it? -- a long time ago -- six or eight months -- which would have been successful at that time before we got into the war, if it hadn't been blocked in the State of Georgia. It was so late, that blocking of it -- we needed the steel -- we didn't go ahead with it. Otherwise it would have been -- it would have been built today.

And then the other proposal was a pipeline across the north part of Florida, by which we would bring oil in barges through the inter-coastal canal to the west side of Florida and pump it out into barges -- pump it across to other barges on the east coast of Florida, and then bring it up through the inter-coastal canal, which we can do, as far as -- as far as Philadelphia, without going outside.

And we are looking at all angles of it. We want to get more oil to the Eastern seaboard. Of course there is plenty of oil in the country. It is entirely a question of transportation of it.

Q Do you believe, sir, that any -- that the use of any considerable amount of steel is barred?

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Do you believe, sir, that the use of any considerable amount of steel is barred for the further construction of pipelines into the East over land pipelines, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It will take a lot of steel if we build it all the way through, at the present time, to the Eastern seaboard.

Q Do you believe, sir, that the situation would be helped by providing a

smaller amount of steel that would be useful in making inter-connections and things of that sort to the present system?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite get it.

Q I mean, sir, that there are now short disconnected pieces of pipeline in several ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know, frankly, what they are doing on digging up that steel. They were at it, but I don't think there is nearly enough that could be dug up to build a pipeline. That's the last I heard -- that was a couple of weeks ago.

Q In that connection, Mr. President, there have been reports that small wooden tankers that used to ply along the Eastern seaboard are now being diverted, or are being needed to supply various other purposes elsewhere in the world, and therefore that almost all the tankers are off, from the standpoint of coming up and down along the coast. Is that so?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes and No. 50-50. That's all I can tell you on that without disclosing ship movements.

Q Mr. President, does the building of any of these pipelines or a barge system depend on legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Do you think, Mr. President, that it will be necessary to extend rationing to other parts of the country -- gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's a thing that is being talked about. Of course the -- what I have felt about it is that parts of the country that can use oil or gas out of a pipeline directly, without transporting it either in tank cars or -- or trucks, in view of the fact that there is plenty -- plenty of it where it can be used, directly out of a pipeline, I think that's all right. I don't know why we should restrict use, except

in connection with the general over-use of tires.

On the other hand, there are certain portions of the country that get their supply from a pipeline, and then haul it a -- relatively a short distance, but still do use tank cars and trucks for that haulage. And I am inclined to think that there should be some -- what will I call it? -- a process of equalization there, so that some of those tank cars or trucks could be diverted -- not all of them, but some of them -- to portions of the country that are wholly dependent on trucks and tank cars.

Q Mr. President, according to the A.E.F. landings in Ireland there has been a great deal of feeling in Australia, particularly in the last 24 hours, that perhaps the Southwest Pacific is being ignored?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard anything about it. New one on me.

Q Mr. President, getting back to this pipeline and the barges, is that for gasoline or for oil?

THE PRESIDENT: Both.

Q Both.

Q Sir, pursuing that a little farther, Mr. President, could you speak of it with specific regard to the Middle West?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There are some places, for instance, in the Middle West, that have, although it is a pipeline area -- there are a good many places that have to get their gas and oil through tank cars or trucks.

In other words, my general thought is that the problem of shortage should be treated as a national problem, with what might be called a pooling of all tank cars and trucks where the locality depends on them to get the oil and gas. That is perfectly simple.

Now, for example, you wouldn't -- I wouldn't restrict the supply of gas and oil in -- what? -- Los Angeles, because they have got the

wells and the refineries right there. The same thing is true in those portions of Texas, or other States, that are right in the oilwell territory. Nor would I restrict it where they get the stuff right out of the land pipeline.

I don't think it is something to be terribly excited about. I think it is a question of the rule of reason.

Q Mr. President, do you expect any steel to be allocated for the building of barges to haul gasoline?

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

Q Coordinator Ickes said at his last Press Conference that that was one of the difficulties, that there were no steel barges.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is a very great difficulty, of course. You can build inter-coastal canal barges out of wood for oil. You can't put gas into a wooden barge. It eats through. And you can't build concrete barges without the use of much steel. I don't think we have got enough steel to build a whole fleet of steel barges.

MR. GODWIN: Is it a question of barrels ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- barrels in these barges from which the oil seeps through?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. But if you put gasoline into a wooden receptacle of any kind, you find that you don't have as much when you open it up.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, That's right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Notebook VIII-PC - page 174 - JR)

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #827  
Executive Office of the President  
May 22, 1942 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a couple of things, both of which are aimed at the simplification of ordinary Government procedure under war conditions. The first relates to the adjustment of railway labor disputes. I signed an Executive Order this morning. Hitherto, before the -- I guess Steve (Early) has this for you ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) I will have it, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Before the President has appointed an emergency fact-finding Board as a result of a labor railway dispute, it has been necessary for the employees involved to take a formal -- take a formal vote, declaring a strike and fixing a date for the vote. In view of the fact that American labor generally is agreed that during the war there shall be no strikes, it has become advisable and necessary to adopt a procedure which would obviate this necessity for a strike vote. The Executive Order provides that if a dispute is not settled by mediation or arbitration under the provisions of the Railway Labor Act -- which still remains the first step -- instead of taking a strike vote the employees may request the creation of an emergency fact-finding board.

For this purpose the Order provides for the creation of a National Railway Labor Panel, consisting of a Chairman and eight members to be appointed by the President. The Chairman of this Panel shall have the power to designate 3 members of the Panel to sit as such an emergency fact-finding board, whenever in his judgment the dispute, if unadjusted,

may interfere with the prosecution of the war, thus obviating the necessity under the old law for a strike vote.

In this way the usual normal processes of adjustment of railway labor disputes may be continued without requiring the employees either to go out on strike or take a strike vote.

It does not amend the Railway Labor Act, which has worked very well for a good many years, but merely sets up for the duration of the war this extra-statutory Panel which will provide a means of adjusting disputes without actual strikes.

I think that is perfectly clear.

Q Mr. President, who makes the request? You said the employees make the request? Do they take a vote, or request ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- their Executive Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q May I ask ---

Q (interposing) Are you ready to nominate the members of the Panel?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Then another one, which is in the form of a couple of agreements -- no Order. In case we get bombed -- any community on either coast -- there have been three agencies of the Government that have been concerned with looking after the civil population: the Federal Security Agency, the O.C.D., Civilian Defense, and the American Red Cross. And they have agreed -- all three of them -- on plans to assist civilian victims of enemy action in case of bombing or shelling.

Immediate responsibility for the care of people who are injured as a result of enemy action is placed on the Emergency Medical Service

of the United States Citizens' Defense Corps. In other words, that is the local organization. The Red Cross, which of course has always had its local organization in those places, will assist in furnishing nurses' aides, stretcher teams, ambulances, supplementary equipment, and will not duplicate the work of the Emergency Medical Service.

The Federal Security Administrator will look to the organization, facilities, and resources -- No -- the Red Cross, F.S. -- Federal Security, and Red Cross, will look to the resources of the Red Cross to provide the food, clothing, temporary shelter for masses of individuals in the emergency period, during and immediately following any enemy attack.

The Red Cross will continue special functions only until the regular Federal, State and local public agencies which have the normal responsibility for meeting the needs of dependent people can make their services available after the emergency. The Red Cross will provide additional services to the appropriate public authorities, on their request, to supplement the normal community facilities.

Emergency feeding and housing, though similarly recognized as the responsibility of the Red Cross, is a function of the over-all emergency services of the local (Citizens') Defense Corps. The service thus operates under the control of the Commander of the Defense Corps, in accordance with the detailed plans that are being worked out by the Defense Corps, the Red Cross Chapter, and the local public welfare agencies.

Well, we will give you one of those. Of course the thing is based on a good deal of experience that we have had, as for instance the Ohio floods of a few years ago, where we got excellent teamwork between the

Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Red Cross, local authorities, etcetera. And the thing clicked pretty well. This merely makes a similar arrangement in case of enemy attack.

MR. GODWIN: Isn't the Army taking charge of the whole business or not, under that sort of business?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: In other words, it -- it is an enemy action, and it has these civilian results?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. But -- put it this way: in the emergency, during the attack, and a whole lot of people are perhaps wounded -- killed ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that is not up to the Army, because they are doing military defense work. It is up to one of these three agencies. Then afterwards we bring in the normal local people to help.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Of course, actually, the over-all in command is the defense area Commander.

Q Mr. President, is this Citizens' Defense Corps a part of the O.C.D. setup?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That's right.

Q Mr. President, is this a Directive or an agreement on what -- just what is it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't either a Directive or an agreement. It is just a way of working the thing out. I wouldn't dignify it.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I go back ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Just a working arrangement.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- to the railroad matter?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You have all the copies of the agreement.

MR. GODWIN: The railroad matter interested me because the railroad law is very clear.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) I think it is about as clear a law as they have. Then you make an Order -- an Executive Order of it. Does that come under the law, or is it extra ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Extra.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- wartime powers?

THE PRESIDENT: Extra wartime powers. Insertion in the regular normal peacetime procedure of one more step.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Does that leave a possible strike step beyond it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. Of course legally I suppose it would be possible, but actually and practically, because they have already said they won't go out on strike during the war, it means that this Panel will settle it.

Q Mr. President, this change was requested, was it not, by the Railway unions?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Oh, Yes.

Q (continuing) This procedural step was requested by the Railway Unions, and agreed to by the A.A.R. (Association of American Railroads)?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, is anything going to be done for the victims of the verbal bombings in New York? (referring to the verbal clash between Mayor LaGuardia and James Landis, O.C.D. head, over civilian defense matters)  
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's rather an important question. Let's think it over.

Q Mr. President, in your cost of living Message to Congress you mentioned steps to encourage payment of debts as part of your policy. In that connection, would you have any comment on proposals that credits on income taxes be allowed for a reasonable amount of the debt retirement payments?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I am not familiar enough with it.

Q Mr. President, on Wednesday the President of Peru (Manuel Prado) came to say goodbye to you, after his visit in the United States. Could you tell us anything about your talk at that time, or about his visit generally here?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that he was just as happy to be here as we were to have him here. He saw a good deal of the defense work, and he was an extremely delightful guest. And it is part, of course, of the hope that we all feel, not only with Peru but with the other Republics, that we will have more and more knowledge of each other at first-hand.

And as you probably know, in 1939, in the spring -- it was a secret then but it came out afterwards -- I had planned to go down the west coast of South America that autumn. But there were certain untoward events that occurred that autumn, so I couldn't leave. I still hope I can do it some day.

Q Mr. President, now that you have had a talk with Governor (Herbert) Lehman, is there anything you could tell us about what part he is going to play in this picture?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q Governor Lehman?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q You had a talk with Governor Lehman the other day. Possibly you could tell us something about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so. I don't believe there is any news.

MR. GODWIN: Is there any further news on the time-and-a-half for overtime for Government employees?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are still working on the actual figures. It is -- it is true that -- I think it is a -- a matter of justice, because they have had very ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- little in the way of increased incomes in the last few years to put them on a basis with the rest of the working people in this country, up to a -- a certain limit. In other words, it really would fall under that phrase of -- the word "adjustment" -- primarily to take care of the people in the lowest brackets.

Q Mr. President, in your Message on controlling the cost of living, one of the steps you set forth was stabilization of wages, which you said would be handled by the War Labor Board.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I said stabilization of wages.

Q Remuneration of ---

Q (interposing) Excuse me. (laughter) You said that this would be handled by the National War Labor Board. There has been talk about the problem of wage increases, or wage disputes, which are settled without reference to that Board, and in more than 95% of cases are settled that way. And they have before them now the problem of some Southern California aircraft companies which have no dispute with their employees but are willing to raise wages. They want to know whether that conflicts with this program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think it probably would. In other words, we can't have one company that -- just because it happens to be able financially to pay -- go ahead and raise wages in one plant, making everybody else unhappy in all the other plants, which is a matter which is being taken into consideration -- probably will be -- by the -- by the method of not recognizing private increases which are contrary to the national -- national policy. We want to get as great a uniformity as we can.

Q Mr. President, do you think that there are some signs of more optimism about the war being expressed now than appears to be justified or wise? Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. In a war public opinion -- and news -- goes up and down with things which look big at the moment that actually are merely a part of a war. And all we can do to prevent those ups and downs the better it will be for the war effort. It is going to be a long war, and there is no reason for being over-optimistic one week and over-pessimistic the next week. It is caused largely by an unfortunate tendency of -- I would say almost -- especially the American people -- the tendency to over-statement. And it is a great mistake to over-state things. And I think that the Press can help very much on that.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, do you think that some bad news should be passed by the Censor's office ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, if it doesn't ---

Q (continuing) --- on ship sinkings?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, sure. Bad news should be passed out obviously just as much as good news, just as soon as it doesn't affect military operations. There is only one reason for withholding bad news and that is that it might affect military operations and cause more bad news.

Q Mr. President, do you think that this joint Army-Navy communique might contribute to some of this super-optimism?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. To be perfectly honest and truthful, I didn't read it.

Q You didn't miss much. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you explain what you mean by not recognizing pay increases granted by private companies?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose it is better -- it is better to say too on that that -- to do everything we could to prevent unwarranted increases by individual companies, in order to keep them in line with the general policy. Now what steps should be taken, I don't know. There are half a dozen different steps.

Q Is the -- is there a possibility, sir, that there may be a growing use of the -- of the type of agreement which has been used so successfully in shipbuilding ---

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

Q (continuing) --- industry stabilization?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is too categoric. There are so many ways of doing it, you know.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, may I ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, isn't this ship-sinking situation still pretty serious?

THE PRESIDENT: This what?

Q This ship-sinking situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I revert ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There is no news in that. We all know it.

MR. GODWIN: That -- that joint communication or communique yesterday, if you will pardon me for being personal, I based all the optimism I had on that statement, which I thought was a splendid statement -- factual, and well presented. It hadn't -- didn't have very much bad news in it, and it was official ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- highly official.

THE PRESIDENT: As I say, I didn't read it.

MR. GODWIN: You didn't read it?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you.

MR. GODWIN: As a member of the promulgating forces of the Press and radio, I would hate to give -- I would hate to give full support either one way or the other ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- and there is no better place to lay back on than the War and Navy Departments.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but really I don't think -- well, in other words, I think we should rely on them as a general rule ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- but again not over-emphasize what one reads into the report personally.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There are no two of us in this room who would read a report and get exactly the same slant from it. The individual mind does work in there.

Q Yet yesterday, Mr. President, one of the heads of the war-making departments warned people against being too optimistic ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- following this statement.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Did you read Mr. Early's speech at Toledo? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Did you read Mr. Early's speech at Toledo?

THE PRESIDENT: I learned from the headlines that Mr. Early said we are going to win this war, and it's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Can we rely on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Rely on him. When he tells you that, he is telling the truth. It might take an awful long time, but he's right.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #828  
Executive Office of the President  
May 26, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M., E.W.T.

Q Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir?

Q The news editor of the Tampa, (Fla.) Tribune received a letter and asked me to transmit the sense of it. (handing a small typewritten sheet to the President, who laughed heartily after reading it)

Q (aside) Something from Shangri, La. (the State of Louisiana)

THE PRESIDENT: That's rather nice.

Q (aside) He received a question from a reader.

THE PRESIDENT: Has that been circulated?

Q No, it hasn't.

THE PRESIDENT: Got to tell them about it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: The -- there is only one thing I have, in regard to our old lesson in geography, which we get twice a week. This comes from Louisiana. A Southern newspaper editor was asked in a letter to the editor where Shangri La was, and he said that he had examined carefully the maps of every parish in the State of Louisiana and been unable to find Shangri, (spelling) L-A.

(loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Very nice.

Steve (Early) says I have nothing -- looked all over.

Q When is the ambassador of Shangri La going to present his credentials?

(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's right too.

Q Mr. President, have you any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Will look into that.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, I understood that was an American possession.

(more laughter)

Q Have you any Shangri La stamps for cancellation? (again more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have a special album sent me by the "Lama." (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, in regard to proposals to register all youths 18 and 19

are there any plans at present to effect changes in the Draft law?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I expect to talk to (Major) General (Lewis B.) Hershey about it in the course of the next day or so. I haven't done anything about it.

MR. GODWIN: May I continue that subject, sir? Is there any -- has it been recommended to you at all so far, the 18 and 19 year old classes?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: No.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got a letter -- I don't see why I shouldn't tell you about it. (turning to Mr. Early) Is it all right, Steve, to tell them about the lovely idea of Russ Young's?

MR. EARLY: Yes, it's a local. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it's a good local story.

Russ sent me a letter to ask what my thought was about having fireworks on the Fourth of July. And everybody wants to celebrate the Fourth in some way, but they are a little worried because the population of this city has got so big that there might be danger to life and limb, and these new temporary buildings down here, if they had them at the

Washington Monument. So I talked to Steve -- and I haven't talked to Russ yet -- he will read it in the (Evening) Star when he gets ready -- (laughter) -- he suggested that this year, if there are any fireworks left over and they don't interfere with priorities -- they tell me there are quite a lot left over -- to have the fireworks the way they shoot off those abroad -- set off from a barge set out in the middle of the river, so that you can see them from both sides, and then anchor the Marine band or the Navy band -- (laughter) -- on some neighboring barge to dispense patriotic music to the crowds on both banks, in between the rockets. I don't think it's a bad idea at all.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: The rest is up to Russ.

MR. EARLY: It will be easy to clean the grounds too. (laughter) It will flow out with the tide.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's what I told him.

Q Mr. President, if you can go back to this Draft business a minute, General Hershey last night, in his talk at Harvard, made some reference to the possibility of setting up categories, or for a more uniform system of classification. Have you discussed that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Have you any ideas on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't talked to anybody about it.

Q Mr. President, have you reached any decision on the barge -- pipelines?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I ought to get a report from that committee, I should think, within certainly a day or two.

Q Which pipeline, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Which one?

THE PRESIDENT: The one across North Florida.

Q North Florida.

Q Mr. President, you don't need any additional legislation to designate that line or to get the right-of-way, do you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there -- I think an appropriation for it is contained in one of the bills which is now either in committee or out on the Floor, but if I had reasonable assurance that it would go through, I can save time by giving them a little money out of the Emergency Fund and get the engineering started.

Q Does that run at about 3 million dollars -- three million plus?

THE PRESIDENT: Over it. I think it runs to about 9, my recollection of it.

Q Mr. President, it has been stated from some sources that wooden barges, which might be cleared right from Florida from the terminus of that pipeline, do not hold gasoline satisfactorily, but would hold oil.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

Q Have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: That is perfectly true. Gasoline in a wooden barge seeps through, but would carry oil, thereby releasing certain other oil vehicles for the use of gasoline. Of course they can carry gasoline in drums.

Q Mr. President, speaking of gasoline, you said at your Tuesday (Press) Conference that such cities as Los Angeles, and States such as Texas might be exempt. Now, down at the O.D.T. (Office of Defense Transportation) and the O.P.A. (Office of Price Administration) and so forth, they are talking about uniform rationing -- rationing to save rubber.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Have you changed your ideas on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know what the method would be.

Q You said if they were near a pipeline or oil well ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and they are talking in terms of rationing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. Well, we do have to save rubber, and frankly I don't know what the method will be. I think (Leon) Henderson is coming in to talk to me about it.

Q Who is coming in?

THE PRESIDENT: Henderson.

Q Mr. President ---  
(interposing)

Q /Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, are any plans being made for synthetic rubber production beyond the actual military needs? That is, take care of probable civilian needs after present tires wear out?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we have got -- for instance, busses. How do people get to business in Washington? We have got to have busses, because we do hope we will get certain tire substitutes before it becomes necessary -- before the present tires all wear out. I -- I don't -- I don't attach very much over-excitement to this thing. I think we are going to work it out all right.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We are working on -- I don't know, what? -- two or three different kinds of tires that don't contain any rubber. Well, if you go 25, or certainly keep under 35 -- 30 miles an hour on a good road on a tire, I guess you will get to town all right.

Q Mr. President, how about the wooden barges for coal? Is that linked in

the report you are expecting?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The whole barge program?

THE PRESIDENT: They carry most anything.

Q Mr. President, the Soviet Ambassador (Maxim Litvinoff) was handed by the Secretary of State today a document concerning Lend-Lease. Could you shed any further light on that document for us?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it's just -- does the same thing we are doing with them as everybody else.

Q Is that specifically in line with what we are doing in the case of the master agreement with Great Britain, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: General -- the same general idea.

Q This -- as I understand it, to this point it is strictly a rough -- rough proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Didn't yet get to the point where theirs ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- could be used?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

MR. P. BRANDT: They are still using their credit rather than Lend-Lease, I think, aren't they?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I think they are using Lend-Lease, but, Pete, I wouldn't swear to it. I think so.

MR. P. BRANDT: You think they are using it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but you had better check with the Lend-Lease Office first.

Q Mr. President, to get back a moment to this pipeline across Florida, I

think that appropriation is in a bill which calls for 145 million dollars for improvement of waterways from the Mexican border to Trenton, New Jersey. Do you have any opinions on the whole project?

THE PRESIDENT: I think those -- as it is about that amount -- what I imagine is that it is the list of waterways that were considered essential to defense. Remember, they had a list of 400 and something million, and I think the War Department engineers have listed those that were really necessary for defense. And it would be around that figure.

Q Mr. President, on this matter of the Lend-Lease agreement with Russia, that would cover business relations with Russia for a number of years after the war, wouldn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Cover Lend-Lease operations.

Q That is what I mean. I mean it would provide a sort of general -- a general system of -- of business relationships ---

THE PRESIDENT: Not any more than any other Lend-Lease agreement does.

Q I thought perhaps ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is just exactly on the same basis as all the others.

Q I thought perhaps it was the whole system in Russia -- government business?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think it just does with Russia what we have done with all the other nations.

Q Mr. President, (Lieut.) General (Henry H.) Arnold is reported to be over in England at the head of a mission. Do you have any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think it speaks for itself. Another link toward the winning of the war.

Q A lot of news speculates about a second front, Mr. President. Do those two things fit together?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. Maybe Yes, maybe No. (laughter)

Q It might depend upon what General Arnold concluded after talks with the British?

THE PRESIDENT: That I -- I -- now you are pressing me a little too close.

Q Mr. President, is there any reasonable deduction to be drawn from the fact that they were all air men there?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so, any more than the next time they may all be Navy men. They are all in the same -- in the same general pool at the present time.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #829  
Executive Office of the President  
May 29, 1942 -- 10.55 A.M., E.W.T.

(Lowell Mellett conversed with the President for a few moments)

THE PRESIDENT: Lowell says that his sales are increasing every day.

Q That's that good location you gave him.

THE PRESIDENT: Good location, Yes, yes. He has got to the point now where he will probably take a full page pretty soon. It's good advertising for the papers. Even the Congressmen are patronizing.

I don't think I have got a thing today. (turning to Mr. Early)

Steve, you have got nothing to tell them?

MR. EARLY: Sorry, sir, but we have had nothing for a week.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Nothing since your last Press Conference.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got absolutely nothing that I can tell you. I have to amend it nowadays -- it wouldn't be strictly true that I have got nothing, because I have lots of things, but I can't tell you.

Q Lot of good things, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Some good, some bad. Run of the mine.

Q Mr. President, a proposal has been made for a conference between Members of Congress and Members of Parliament, to discuss present and future cooperation. Do you think such a conference might be wise or beneficial?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think that the Legislative branch of the Government was quite able to determine that.

Q That is putting a terrible responsibility on them, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Constitutional responsibility.

Q Mr. President, have you consulted with (Major) General (Lewis B.) Hershey about lowering the military age limits?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't. He was in the other day on something else, and I asked him to come in, as soon as he was able to get around to it, to talk about it. We haven't talked about it yet.

MR. P. BRANDT: Have you been able to talk to Mr. (Leon) Henderson and the other people on the gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, Pete. Not at all.

Q Have you any ideas on these "unreasonable" payments in the war industries that Secretary Morgenthau and the Ways and Means Committee are seeing if they can find some way to go in the income tax -- these so called "unreasonable" bonuses and salaries?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, maybe it's a loophole that ought to be stopped. But just to show -- to show you how people sometimes forget: old Stevie was in this morning -- Steve Early -- and we were talking about that very thing. And he said, "Why, you know, last time when we were talking about loopholes, and had those seven or eight bad instances of loopholes," he said, "you told the Press the names of the people." (laughter)

And I offered to bet him 5 dollars, and he wouldn't take it.

MR. EARLY: I took it, sir. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He said that I gave them out, that was it.

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if he -- if he took it he owes me 5 dollars. Because, of course, what happened was this: that (Secretary of the Treasury) Morgenthau gave me instances, and said, "I am not going to tell you the names," which he didn't. And then he went up before the Committee

and gave the examples of what had been done. He said to the Committee, "I am not going to tell you the names." The Committee insisted. And the story came out by all you people upon the Hill through the Committee, which insisted on the names being given out. Now that was the simple fact.

Then afterwards, at the next Press Conference down here, it being completely public property which had been brought out by the Committee on the Hill, we people did, in one of our Conferences -- we discussed the people themselves who have been guilty of it.

So Steve owes me 5 dollars. (laughter)

And the same way with this thing. I haven't got the foggiest idea who these groups were, or who the individuals were. And they were not disclosed, as I understand it, to the Committee yesterday. And that's all there is to the story. And I am not disclosing them, because I don't know. And in the second place, I am not going to ask who they were.

Q Did you have any objections to the Committee disclosing them?

THE PRESIDENT: That is again a Legislative function.

Q Do you think as a matter of principle these fellows ought to get three or four times what the President of the United States gets?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any relationship between the two.

(laughter)

Q Mr. President, in connection with your stabilization of remuneration program ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- you spoke last week about the problem of voluntary pay increases which might be out of line with national policy. It has been reported since then that an inter-departmental committee has recommended

to you that you set up a four-member group, to sort of determine a Federal policy on the subject of voluntary increases, and that you would probably issue a directive dealing with that problem?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. There have been -- I don't know -- people that are studying it -- there have been four or five different recommendations. I couldn't even tell you what they are. It hasn't come into my jurisdiction yet. I have no idea.

Q Mr. President, in your conference with (Major) General Hershey did you take up any matters of aiding any colleges ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which would what?

Q (continuing) --- that might be hurt by the draft?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Which would what?

Q (continuing) Did you take up any question of aiding any of the colleges or educational institutions that may be hurt by the draft, or may have students taken out?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Not that. What we -- what we talked about was the problem of illiteracy in this country. In the -- in the broad sense of the word "illiteracy," not just reading and writing, but a -- a lack of education. They brought in some rather startling figures applying to citizens, and applying to aliens in this country -- both aliens and citizens -- on the question, for instance, of the turning down of a whole lot of people from -- for military service on the ground that their -- what is it? -- I.Q.s?---

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I don't know what they call it, something like that ---

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- were not sufficient to serve in the Army and Navy. And we are turning down an awful lot of people -- aliens and citizens -- on that ground. And they are studying the question as to whether -- mind you, these people otherwise, except for an I.Q. which is too low under the present standards (are all right) -- as to whether the Government shouldn't do something to make their services available in the Army and Navy, by giving them the kind of instruction which would raise their I.Q. to the passing point.

And it is a very broad subject. It is merely under study at the present time. There is no plan. But those -- these figures startled me -- the number of people in this country. They are not morons -- most of them due mostly to a lack of chance, a lack of education. And as to whether the Government should try to do something about raising the educational standards of these people that are too low, I don't know. That is the thing that is being studied at the present time.

Q Mr. President, when you speak of education, do you mean an academic education ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- the ability to read and write, or ability ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, reading and writing would seem to be fairly important, but it is only one factor.

Q What sort of training do they need to make them eligible for military service? They don't need any particular education, do they, to know how to shoot a gun, for instance?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, outside of -- outside of reading and writing they need to have their wits sharpened. It might be (done) through a manual vocational training process. There are various component parts of it

to raise the mental level. You can raise a fellow's mental level in lots of different ways.

Q In some cases you can feed them better?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can't you in some cases feed them better, and raise the mental level?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (continuing) You can feed them better and raise their mental level?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Under-nourishment is one of the factors, that is quite right.

Q Mr. President, how about the barge report -- the barge-pipeline report?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The barge and pipeline report?

THE PRESIDENT: I have nothing on it at all.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #830  
Executive Office of the President  
June 5, 1942 -- at 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: "Pa" (Watson) is getting a degree. (honorary degree of  
doctor of laws, from George Washington University)

MR. GODWIN: Who?

THE PRESIDENT: "Pa" Watson.

MR. GODWIN: Oh.

THE PRESIDENT: He has got a degree.

Q Third?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Third?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, more than that.

MR. GODWIN: You ought to get Russ(ell) Young (District Commissioner) one.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

MR. GODWIN: He is doing such a superb job.

THE PRESIDENT: He has done a good job.

MR. GODWIN: A little bit extra. You ought to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I only have just one thing. It's a statement that  
the various departments concerned have concurred in. It relates to the  
use of poison gas in the Far East. I guess, Steve -- better have it  
mimeographed.

MR. EARLY: Would you read it first?

THE PRESIDENT: I will read it, Yes. It isn't very long.

(reading) "Authoritative reports are reaching this Government of the use by Japanese armed forces in various localities of China of poisonous and noxious gasses. I desire to make it unmistakably clear that if Japan persists in this inhuman form of warfare against China, or against any other of the United Nations, such action will be regarded by this Government as though it were against the United States, and retaliation in kind and in full measure will be meted out. We shall be prepared to enforce complete retribution. Upon Japan will rest the responsibility."

MR. GODWIN: Is that a statement from you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. EARLY: Statement by the President.

Q How detailed are the reports of Japan's use of gas in China? Have there been several instances?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Over how long a period has that been?

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- several instances, because if I told you how long then you would say, "Where was it?".

Q Have there been any reports of the same nature on the other side, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you had any reports of poison gas used in Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say we have had reports, but not yet authoritative reports.

Q Mr. President, if authoritative, we would take the same position?

THE PRESIDENT: "If"? Is that the way you start the question?

Q Yes. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He has been here long enough to know better than to do that.

MR. GODWIN: Suppose we said this: the policy with respect to the Axis will be uniform?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, you ought to be in the State Department. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: You make no reply to that do you?

(the President just laughed again)

Q The British government has taken that stand with respect to Germany, hasn't it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, Yes.

Q Yes.

Q Yes.

Q Well, Mr. President, will we retaliate with poison gas wherever used?

THE PRESIDENT: You ought to be ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Why don't you say so? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't I say so? They were very careful to write that statement out for me. That's all they want me to say. I mustn't say any more.

Q Who is "they," Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The State Department.

MR. GODWIN: But you would divert the attention of the American people from the gas that is close at home -- "X" cards, and so forth. We understand from the news that you may discuss gasoline rationing, rubber, and so forth, with the Cabinet, or that you may have something to say on it sometime?

Q I have got a whole bunch of people coming in at twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: When?

THE PRESIDENT: Twelve o'clock.

MR. GODWIN: Today?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, have you had any reports on mistreatment of American prisoners by the Japanese?

THE PRESIDENT: Again, nothing authoritative.

Q (continuing) The reason I ask, some chap writing in The Saturday Evening Post said he told you his story about the torturing of British prisoners, and you told him to tell it with the bark off.

THE PRESIDENT: I did. A Dutchman, I think. (Jan Henrik Marsman)

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, are any joint production committees to be set up here and in London as a result of Mr. (Oliver) Lyttelton's visit?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't seen Mr. Lyttelton yet.

Q Mr. President, are you ordering nation-wide gasoline rationing by July 15?

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to begin talking about gas today at twelve o'clock.

Q Any Members of Congress, Mr. President, coming up at Noon?

THE PRESIDENT: Wait -- I am trying to look on the (engagement) list. No -- not at the twelve o'clock conference. Of course, I expect to talk with Members of Congress about the whole situation.

Q Is there anything you could say, Mr. President, to clarify this gas situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. I may not even be clarified myself at twelve o'clock.

(laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is Senator (Tom) Connally (of Texas) one of the Congressmen who is going to talk to you about this gasoline?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. "Mac" (M. H. McIntyre) has got a whole lot of

people I am requested to see, and I don't know who is on the list.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you expressed any view, or will you, on the matter of the C.C.C. camps which are left out of the current appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't taken it up. I have only read what I saw in the paper.

MR. GODWIN: Haven't said anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q Mr. President, have you signed as yet the declarations of war against the three Balkan countries? (Bulgaria, Hungary, and Rumania)

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, do you think that nation-wide collection of scrap rubber is necessary, or would be desirable?

THE PRESIDENT: That is another thing that I am going to take up at twelve o'clock. I think -- I will tell you frankly: I think there is a lot more scrap rubber right around the country that hasn't all been collected yet.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the progress of this anti-inflation program so far?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The anti-inflation program -- seven-point program?

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

Q Some of the points haven't been carried out as well as some of the others.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Really, frankly, I haven't got any answer to the question. I haven't thought about it.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the action in the House which appears to have killed the pipeline and barge line across North Florida?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about that. As I understand it, that was for a pipeline and a barge line, wasn't it? I don't think that I recommended a barge line, did I? I don't think ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) No. You weren't very strong for the barge line, and the objection to the whole business in the House seems to be based on the fact that -- or at least on the assumption that there is already enough authority in your hands to -- to build a barge line, without an Act of Congress. Are you aware of such authority?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

MR. GODWIN: They quote -- Don Darrow of Michigan quoted one of these recent laws.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think the pipeline was sent up from here as a recommendation.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, can you make any comment on the speculation now current on the second front?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

MR. G. DURNO: Mr. President, I have been requested to ask whether -- what you think about the proposal in Chicago to name the outer drive, which you dedicated ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Did what in Chicago?

MR. G. DURNO: Naming the outer drive -- which you dedicated -- MacArthur Boulevard?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it, George.

Q Mr. President, a number of aircraft companies on the West Coast report that uncertainty as to the plans of the Manpower Commission is encouraging

many to -- including engineers and executives -- to accept offers from other companies at higher incomes, before their jobs are frozen. Do you believe it would be necessary to freeze engineers and executives in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You have got me cold. Never heard of it. Ask (Paul) McNutt.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, a few days ago you told us that you might have soon an Executive Order on the over-all propaganda setup. Could you tell us whether there is anything on that now?

THE PRESIDENT: What? I don't think I said over-all propaganda. (laughter)  
I don't think I used that horrid word.

Q Well, ---

Q (interposing) Coordinator of information.

THE PRESIDENT: Information.

Q Is there anything new on it?

THE PRESIDENT: As wide apart as the poles -- propaganda and information.  
I haven't got it yet.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press Conference #831  
Executive Office of the President  
June 9, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: There is a release that Steve (Early) will give you at the end -- it has been mimeographed -- being given out simultaneously in London. The American version is that: (reading not literally): "The President announced today, on behalf of himself and the Prime Minister of Great Britain, the creation of a Combined Production and Resources Board, and the creation of a Combined Food Board. The general purpose of the two Boards was announced in the release of memoranda addressed by the President to Mr. Donald Nelson, who will act as the American representative on the Combined Production and Resources Board, and to Secretary Claude Wickard, who will act as the American representative on the Combined Food Board."

And then there are two things. First, the memorandum to Mr. Nelson which reads -- I won't read the whole thing, it's pretty long -- (reading not literally): "In order to complete the organization needed for the most effective use of the combined resources of the United States and the United Kingdom for the prosecution of the war, there is hereby established a Combined Production and Resources Board, to consist of himself (Donald Nelson), and the Minister of Production representing the United Kingdom."

And then the duties of it -- well, you can imagine what they are -- (reading not literally): "The Board shall combine the production programs of the United States and the United Kingdom into a single integrated program, adjusted to the strategic requirements of the war"

-- the whole of the production programs of both countries. And it takes account of military needs, and so forth and so on.

The Food Board is -- the letter -- memorandum to Wickard is along the same line. It coordinates the prosecution of the war effort by obtaining a planned and expeditious utilization of the food resources of the United Nations. And the Secretary of Agriculture represents the United States, and the head of the British Food Mission represents the United Kingdom acting under the instructions of the Minister of Food. And then the rest of it takes it up in more or less detail. I think they speak for themselves.

Q Are these just two men -- are they just two men?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but they are authorized to appoint deputies.

Q Who is the head of the British Food Mission?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't ask me embarrassing questions. (laughter) That is off the record. Don't display my ignorance.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, I would like to understand what you said there. In one place you spoke of the United Nations, and then United Kingdom. Is that correct? Two different ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) "The food resources of the United Kingdom." Is that what you said about food?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: United Nations?

THE PRESIDENT: United Nations.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: In the case of the food order ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In the case of the other one, the (Combined) Production and Resources Board, you might say practically that outside of Canada -- to a certain extent Australia -- the United Kingdom and the United States are the only producing ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- countries -- (having the) machinery.

Q Mr. President, are the reports correct that this Board standardizes equipment so that there can be an interchange of equipment?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, we have been doing that, and I suppose we will keep on doing it under the Board.

Q Will there be allocations of orders, say something we can do better ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- and they can do better?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q That is the function of this Board, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Right. Yes.

Q (continuing) --- as well as some of the other functions -- any more functions?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Anything besides ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. (There is a) lot of general language in there that you can put almost anything under.

Q Mr. President, is there anything that you can say about the general progress of war production?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I might have something to say about it if I had time to work it up for you. I mean it's all right. I can say that on the whole it is getting on very well, but that is not terribly

exciting.

Q I was wondering, sir, if it might have reached the point where information would not be so helpful to the enemy -- so hurtful to the enemy?

THE PRESIDENT: I would think that period is coming, and that we are getting to the point where probably we can give a few more details.

Q Could we have a few figures some time?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (turning to Mr. Early) Work that up, Steve, ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) All right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- get something.

Q Mr. President, this doesn't take account of the position of Canada in the production setup, does it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have -- almost ---

Q (interposing) Does that line up with the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Lines up with the United States and England Board.

Q Yes. For practical purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: For practical purposes they are in this thing.

Q Yes, it's North America, roughly?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, is there anything you could say or add to the picture possibly of the (Combined) Food Board, such as you gave -- when you spoke of the Lend-Lease you spoke of the next door -- the man next door with the (garden) hose. This might be -- this -- this piling up of food in the United Kingdom, and each outfit take what was required, or that we shift it back and forth? Is there anything you could explain about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I would say that on the question of food that that will take in production of all of the United Nations, and see where

there are certain shortages. Well, those shortages, of course, will have an effect on the other side of the food problem, which is the -- the going without -- the rationing of food, or the sending of surpluses from one place to another. It will take up the problems of transportation practically all over the world. And by pooling all of our information, and getting totals for all our needs, I am inclined to think that it will give a more correct picture on -- on the assignment -- allocation of food, thereby perhaps in some cases -- many cases avoiding unnecessary hardships and rationing.

MR. GODWIN: Think we could break some of our own surpluses, for instances?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes.

I always think of a story a great many years ago, in 1918. I was staying at a country house in England, to which a number -- a number of the British cabinet had been invited. And they spent all Saturday evening indoctrinating me on all of the terrible hardships that people in England had gone through. They hadn't had this to eat or that to drink, and so forth, for a long, long time. They hadn't had any butter, and they hadn't had any bacon, and so forth. They had to really tighten their belts enormously. And I was being indoctrinated because I was the first "near" Cabinet member to go to the other side in the war.

And the next morning I was late for breakfast, and sat down, and suddenly realized that all the food was on the sideboard, like most British breakfasts. And I went over to it, and the first hot dish I took the cover off was just piled high with bacon. (laughter). So I filled my plate with bacon and sat down. And the hostess said, "What! Only -- only bacon?" I said, "Yes." I said, "You know, at home I have gone without bacon for a year and a half, in order that you good

people might have it." (laughter)

There are all kinds of things of that kind where we can get, I think, a more even distribution. We may have to give up some things to other United Nations, and by -- by a general process of distribution on a fair basis with everybody that is concerned in this war. I think everybody will be happier. I think this thing is going to help.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox and Admiral (Ernest J.) King just left your office. Did they give you any kind of progress on the war in the Pacific you could pass on to us?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid not that I could pass on to you.

Q Mr. President, have you reached any decision on the calling of boys 18 and 19 for active military service?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Calling boys of 18 and 19 for active military service?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Any decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there will be a story on that for quite a long time. I think all I can say is that it is under study. And I don't know what -- wait for a few months before you ask me again.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is there anything on the rubber situation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there anything on the rubber situation, or shall we wait for a few months on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am trying to get facts on that.

MR. P. BRANDT: Are you making a fireside chat on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea, Pete.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Is that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I suppose -- I suppose there are four or five ways in which I can get certain things to the American public: through the Press, through the radio, somebody else's voice, or my own voice. I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: The rubber situation ties in with gasoline rationing, of course, does it not, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, let -- let me -- in order that there won't be any more pure guess work -- things said -- the reason I am asking for a little time to turn around is that no two accounts are identical.

And I think there is one thing that can be said for background, if you like, and that is that the -- the principal problem that is national in its scope -- every part of the country -- is the rubber problem. That is a problem that involves the whole country.

And one of the first things that I am trying to get hold of -- I think we may get something on it in a few days -- is the question about how much scrap rubber there is in the United States. And there no two people agree.

Well, it makes an awful lot of difference in the long run as to whether this country has got, in the form of old tires and old rubber lying around the lower -- not the lower, the lowest estimate of the experts, in which case the situation is very serious, or whether the country has got lying around the highest of the experts' estimates, in which case the situation confronting the country, for military purposes, is not so grave.

Now I suppose I have had as much information on what that scrap rubber is as anybody in the world -- anybody -- in Congress or out --

in a column or out. (laughter) And I don't know. I don't know who is right. (then pointing to himself) Now here is the greatest expert on it in the United States, and he doesn't know! (more laughter)

And I want to find out. And the only way I think that I can find out is to start a "Pick-Up-The-Rubber" campaign. And that is what I am working on now: a short, quick, snappy campaign to bring in all the scrap rubber that there is in the United States. And when you get through with it, we will all know. And I can't hazard a guess. Now when that thing is over, we will have one -- we will have complete and answered one of the statistical figures that nobody knows what is right and what is wrong.

Q How long will that take, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I would like to do it in two weeks.

Q Will it be compulsory?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will it be compulsory or voluntary?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it will be -- I don't know. I suppose it will be voluntary, in the sense that if you don't do it -- (and here the President paused) -- in effect it will be compulsory. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you were -- you were off -- you were background when you started. You ended up with a good story. How much of this story ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Well now, the other part of the story is this. The use of gasoline is, at the present time, only -- taken in itself, and only in itself -- a problem of the Eastern seaboard, because there isn't enough gasoline to go around. That's all. Plenty of gasoline in nearly every other

part of the country. So I don't think that we should confuse the rubber problem with the gasoline problem at this time. We know we have to ration gasoline East of the Alleghenies, because there isn't enough to go around.

And then the third thing I think that we can say is that no matter what the circumstance is, no matter whether this "Pick-Up-The-Rubber" campaign brings in the highest estimated amount or not, even then we are going to have a rubber shortage which all over the country is going to be so serious that there won't be enough tires to go around.

(And here is) just a little piece of advice from the President, and that is: if you have got just four tires on your car, try to make them last just as long as you possibly can, no matter whether you live next to an oil well or not. And there are two ways of doing that, and that is to cut your mileage -- I don't mean essential mileage to get you to work -- cut out the rest of your mileage at least in half. And secondly, don't drive fast. That is just a bit of advice. Now I hope we won't have to implement that any other way. That is a hope.

Q Mr. President, can't we use that? You stated it for background ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q You stated that originally for background. Couldn't we use that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It isn't off the record. You can put that into your own words.

Q Can we attribute it to you?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can we attribute it to you?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think it's all right.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Sure. That's a good story.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President -- Mr. President, I was wondering, do you mean physically to bring in all of this scrap rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q Do you mean physically to bring in all of this scrap rubber at a certain time -- within a two weeks period?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why not.

Q Won't we have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Or get it weighed. The main point is to get it weighed.

Q Won't we have the same complication we had, only multiplied many times, in the aluminum drive -- inability to move it once you get it in a certain place in a town or city?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. There is a lot of land. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, if you get a lot of scrap rubber, will there be enough crude to mix with this scrap rubber to afford any hope of civilian tires next year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. You are getting technical.

Q Mr. President, is there an implication that if this voluntary campaign produces enough rubber there will not be nation-wide gas rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is an "if" question. It depends on a lot of things -- just one factor, but it is to try to get to the bottom of a very much disputed factor.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you mean that the scrap rubber will go to civilian use, or will the Army take it?

THE PRESIDENT: The Government will take it.

Q Well, it won't help the civilians any if the Army takes it.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the foggiest idea. I will take it right there --  
(pointing to his heart) -- this dreadful person here, sitting here --  
dictator, all those other things. I don't know where it is going.

Q Mr. President, as you said not to confuse the gas and rubber situation,  
isn't it pretty hard to disassociate those things, in view of the fact  
that some of your advisers are recommending that gas be rationed to  
save rubber? Isn't it rather difficult?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on how this information that I am trying to get  
works out.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how soon do you think this "Pick-Up-The-  
Rubber" campaign might get under way?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Pretty soon, I think. I think it is a pretty  
good idea to strike while the iron's hot, and the Lord knows it's hot  
now.

Q Mr. President, are we justified in assuming, based on your plea for sav-  
ing rubber and tires, that there will be no compulsion in that respect  
until ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I wouldn't -- I wouldn't assume. I haven't got  
quite to that point. I am still -- I am still reading "Chapter One."

Q (interposing) I was just thinking ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't know how the detective story ends.

Q (continuing) I was just thinking of the reassuring effect that would have  
on the people down in Texas. (laughter)

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

THE PRESIDENT: You did get a story, didn't you?

MISS MAY CRAIG: The girls named your cottage Shangri La.

THE PRESIDENT: Lovely.

MISS MAY CRAIG: You wouldn't tell us where it was.

THE PRESIDENT: I might have several. One might be called "Shangri," and the other might be called "La."

(after this Press Conference, Mr. Early told the Press that the gasoline shortage applied not only to the Atlantic Coast but also to the Pacific Northwest, and certain other geographical areas in the country)