

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #832
Executive Office of the President
June 12, 1942 -- at 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

(the President waved his hand in acknowledgment to the newspapermen as they filed in)

Q Good morning.

MR. GODWIN: You ought to have a laugh. (handing him The New Yorker for June 13, 1942)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: I think you deserve a smile after all your hard work.

(this was a cartoon showing a young mother in bed with her new born son, and the proud father standing dutifully at the bedside. The caption says: "No, no, darling! First get his ration card, then enter him at Groton.")

THE PRESIDENT: I love it.

MR. GODWIN: Isn't that wonderful?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's grand.

MR. GODWIN: That shows the evolution ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think that's grand. That ought to be tacked up on the schoolroom (wall) for all to see.

(Mr. Godwin handed the magazine to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: Inverse ratio. That ought to be Groton.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

(a pause here)

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to move the Capital. (because of the hot weather)

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Where will we go?

THE PRESIDENT: Muggy weather.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Pike's Peak would look good.

MR. GODWIN: Wonderful.

Q A mile high.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (to Mr. Early) Steve, is it mimeographed? (referring to some typewritten sheets in front of the President)

MR. EARLY: Will be. Hasn't been.

MR. GODWIN: The King of Greece pulls ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: The King of Greece had the nerve to pull a Press Conference this morning too.

THE PRESIDENT: Good. Good. Got you up.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve will give you a mimeographed copy of what I am about to say.

(reading not literally): "President Roosevelt has ordered an intensive two weeks' drive throughout the nation to bring in from homes, offices, factories and farms all articles of rubber which have been or can be discarded. All the rubber collected will be reclaimed, and added to the nation's war supply.

"The campaign will begin at twelve point 01 (12.01) on Monday, June 15 -- that is hurrying it up ---

MR. GODWIN: (aside) It's all right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and will end at Midnight, Tuesday, June 30th.

Through arrangements with the oil industry, 400 thousand gasoline filling

stations throughout the country will serve as collection depots. That is practical. All rubber turned in will be weighed, and will be paid for at one cent a pound by the gasoline dealers. The President will inaugurate the campaign with a 5-minute radio talk Friday evening -- I guess that is tonight, isn't it?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't say so -- at 6.45 p.m., Eastern War Time.

"The campaign will be handled by the Bureau of Industrial Conservation and the War Production Board. It will be conducted in cooperation with the petroleum industry through the Office of the Petroleum Coordinator. The nation's oil companies have volunteered personnel and facilities, including their filling stations, to aid in making the collection. Oil company trucks will pick up the rubber. The filling stations will transport it to central collection points, after which it will be sold to the Rubber Recovery Corporation, which, however, won't make any money out of it -- nobody will make any money out of it.

"State and local salvage committees will aid in stimulating efforts to bring in all the rubber possible. People will be urged to make an active search of attics, closets, basements, and backyards for rubber articles no longer of use. Anything partly or entirely made of rubber will be acceptable. Stores, offices, factories, will also be asked to turn in discarded rubber items.

"In rural areas the Department of Agriculture County War Boards will organize intensive searches of farmlands for discarded rubber items and rubber scrap. Oil delivery trucks on rural routes will pick up and pay for rubber from farms.

"The drive to collect rubber represents one important step in ef-

forts to deal with the rubber shortage. Despite stock piles of crude rubber accumulated before the outbreak of war, the nation still faces a serious shortage. Japanese successes in the Southwestern Pacific have cut us off from 92% of our normal rubber supply, a deficiency not made up from other sources.

"Many persons have estimated that a large potential supply exists in the accumulation of discarded rubber which can be reclaimed. Others say that rubber from this source will not be sufficient to meet the shortage. In attempting to deal with the rubber problem, the Government must count on the scrap rubber which has been collected, or which plainly can be collected. And this is to find out how much there is.

"The Army and Navy have already been forced to cut their use of rubber by 25%." Now there is -- there is something that almost ought to go into a lead -- sublead anyway. We have actually had to cut the use of rubber on -- principally on Army items, as for example, use solid tires in many vehicles where we ought to use rubber tires. It slows them down. It is much more difficult on the personnel. We are having to do it because of the shortage of rubber.

MR. GODWIN: Solids? You mean something other than rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Solids? By solid tires you mean something other than rubber?

Solid ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Iron.

MR. GODWIN: Iron.

Q Mr. President, Under Secretary Patterson told a Senate Committee yesterday that he estimated the military need for rubber at least 800 thousand tons. Is that before or after this 25%?

THE PRESIDENT: Now wait a minute. I am trying to proceed in an orderly way.

Q (interjecting) I'm sorry.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I haven't yet got to the totaling of military needs, or civilian needs. The first step is to find out how much rubber we can get, and I will take up the other one. It may not be for a week or two.

(continuing reading): "If the collection campaign yields a large amount of rubber, it may be possible to protect the country's military use of rubber as well as help meet the essential civilian needs. It is hoped the campaign will recover most of the nation's hidden stocks of used, outworn or discarded rubber items."

Then the next paragraph isn't quite the way I put it. I thought you would be interested in what they handed me, as rubber that -- we always think of rubber as being only on tires. I wonder where that is? (picking up his workbasket and looking through it) Steve, see if you can -- see if it's here. I hadn't thought of these things until I -- (still looking) -- Steve's official thing hasn't got all the list of things in it. I don't know. I can't find it. (still looking) No. I can't find it. It's around here somewhere. No, I can't find it for you after all.

Well, anyway --- (laughter) -- (reading not literally): "The drive is aimed not only at collecting worn-out tires and tubes, but also such items as rubber mats, rubber-soled shoes, old hot-water bottles, jar rings, raincoats, rubber ashtrays and hundreds of other articles made in whole or in part of rubber.

"All persons are urged to make an active search for such articles, and to take them to the nearest gasoline station. Rubber items too

bulky to be taken to a filling station will be picked up by oil company trucks on request of the gasoline dealer."

There is just one thing I want to add again -- because I think if it is printed every day by the papers in one form or another and talked about over the radio, it will help -- what I said the other day.

In places that are not rationed on gas, which means the great majority of the area of the country, I hope that people will use their cars for pleasure just as little as they possibly can, in order to save wearing out the tires. Slow driving is excellent, but it is even more effective to cut the mileage. That is perfectly obvious. You cut your mileage in half and save more wear on your own tires than if you merely drive very slowly. You should do both.

And I don't like to put it quite in the way that this is a warning -- it isn't a warning, it's a simple statement: I haven't got any idea yet as to when the owner of four tires can get any new tires. I don't know yet. It may be a very, very long time. So as a matter of common sense on the part of the owner of the four tires, I suggest that he wear them out as little as possible.

Q Mr. President, you referred to four tires. Does that mean people who have five might not have five very long?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I am sure about four.

Q Mr. President, this Rubber Recovery Corporation, is that just a new ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. It's just a new agency, under Secretary of Commerce.

Q Mr. President, that starting time, is it 12.01 A.M., Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The minute after Midnight, Sunday night.

Q Mr. President, returning to the Rubber Recovery Corporation, will that be

set up in time to reimburse the small oil dealers for the money that he puts out?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, I don't want to set up an enormous Government machinery for sending checks to everybody who brings in a little rubber.

Q My point was it would be done immediately?

THE PRESIDENT: The little fellow -- the gasoline station will pay him, and we will pay the gasoline station.

Q At the same rate, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q At the same rate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. And the oil companies are donating all of those services free.

Q Mr. President, as a result of your talks with various Democrats from New York lately, do you anticipate that there will be any fight for the nomination for Governor?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no news on that whatsoever.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) I have endorsed nobody.

Q Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I have endorsed nobody.

Q Well, after Mr. (James) Farley was here, it was said that you had no objections to Bennett (Attorney General John J. Bennett, Jr.), and it was said pretty generally.

THE PRESIDENT: I have endorsed nobody, and I will have to stand on that.

Q I didn't hear?

THE PRESIDENT: Endorse nobody.

Q Mr. President, do you think the Navy Department set a good example for other Government agencies in its action last week, I believe, in eliminating a lot of red tape and paper work, and particularly in promising promotion to those civil executives -- civilian executives who decrease rather than increase ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, and I think -- I think that the Director of the Budget is putting that -- something similar in effect in all the Departments -- a check up on paper work, because as you know the Government ought to check up on paper work about every two or three years, peace or war, and it is done from time to time.

Q On that New York governorship ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The what?

Q On that New York governorship, do you intend to endorse somebody from another ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think I have anything further on that at this time.

Q What about your Congressman, Mr. President?

Q About what?

Q What about your Congressman?

THE PRESIDENT: Well -- well -- might be some news some day. Might be something on it some day, from Dutchess County, and Orange County, or Putnam County. Not from here, probably. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you plan to sign the bill to make tomorrow MacArthur Day?

THE PRESIDENT: It's all signed. I signed it yesterday.

Q It was signed yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Anything you care to say about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. It speaks for itself -- approved by the President.

Q Would you care to say anything about the general practice of setting aside a day to honor a living hero?

Q (interjecting softly) Let's go. Let's go.

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. It went through duly transmitted with my full approval, and that's all there is. I think it is a good thing occasionally to recognize a living hero. I think it's rather a nice thing. About 15 of them are coming in tomorrow morning to see me. I would hate to wait until they were "daid." (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (turning to the front row newspapermen) How about this?

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

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"No, no, darling! First get his ration card,
then enter him at Groton."

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #833
Executive Office of the President
June 16, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

CAPTAIN MCCREA: Mr. President, while you are on the subject of rubber.

(handing the President a penciled memorandum: "A naval officer told me today that he was turning in the rubber mat on the floor of his car. He thinks these mats a fine source of supply.")

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. EARLY: Boss, stills were made of Fala yesterday. They are making newsreels today.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't give anybody any rights to do regular movies.

MR. EARLY: No. I am protecting that.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, as long as it's straight daily newspaper news. What's the matter?

MR. EARLY: The movies have been after it for some time, and I have referred them to the author of the book to get the rights.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right.

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. (for the newspapermen to come in)

MR. GODWIN: See what Clifford Berryman has got on rubber? Did you see Cliff Berryman's suggestion about the rubber -- rubber stamp? (handing to the President The Evening Star for June 16, showing a cartoon of Senator Barkley and Speaker Rayburn bringing in a large basketful of rubber stamps, and saying: Mr. President, we won't need these rubber stamps any more. They're all worn out. The President replies: Thanks, boys. If you find you do need more, we'll find a way.)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. All right.

MISS MAY CRAIG: (who had noticed two pictures missing from the wall on the President's right) Where are the pictures going?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Pictures. The pictures.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. They took them down. I hadn't noticed it. That (pointing to his left on the wall) I sent up to Hyde Park. But those -- those, somebody stole them. (laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: You have been robbed.

THE PRESIDENT: They weren't rubber. I don't know what ---

MISS MAY CRAIG: (interposing) You have been robbed.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve, will you find out who stole my pictures from the wall? (laughter)

MR. EARLY: From the condition of the wall it looks like they might have been removed for cleaning purposes.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q (aside) What about rubber checks?

Q (to Mr. Early) What's that on his desk -- something of rubber?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news, except that the rubber campaign got off to a big start yesterday. Miss Diana Hopkins turned in a basket full of rubber toys, and this afternoon Fala turned in two rubber bones. (laughter) And I have been getting things. I have got a doll's hot-water bottle here that a lady sent me from Rocky Mount, North Carolina. And one of my ingenious naval officers is going around collecting rubber mats out of people's cars. Getting on pretty well, chiefly with real ingenuity.

I don't think there is any news.

Q Mr. President, there has been a suggestion that everybody give their rubber mats from the bottom of the car, and from the rear compartment. Estimates go up into the many thousands of tons. What do you think of that, sir -- suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: Grand.

Q Grand, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think if I can ride in a car without a rubber mat in it, I guess everybody else can.

Q It won't pass the District regulations.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I had a torn rubber one this time, and they said buy a new one because it's worn.

THE PRESIDENT: Who made you?

Q The District Inspection that we have to go through.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask Mr. Young about that.

Q Yes. I asked Russ about that. I have, several times. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, Congress today finished the legislative process on this bill that permits you to reclassify or allow reclassification of married men -- almost an automatic deferment, and I wondered if you were going to bring that into effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. Approved by the War Department?

Q This is known as the Allotment and Allowance bill. It says the President is also authorized to provide for the deferment of any or all categories of those men who have wives or children, or wives and children with whom they maintain a bona fide family relationship in their homes.

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- wasn't that on executive authority beforehand? I don't know.

Q No.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't it?

Q The conference report was just adopted on it today.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it yet.

MR. GODWIN: The Draft can defer them ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I thought ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- They can defer them. This puts it into a little clearer shape.

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh. Uh huh. That's what I thought.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conference (today) with Mr. (Oliver) Lyttelton and Mr. (Harry) Hopkins?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we talked about a whole lot of production matters -- working out very well.

Q Have you received yet, sir, the figures which you thought you might be able to give us which would hurt rather than help the enemy?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. There is quite -- quite a divergence of opinion, from the military angle, as to what should be or what should not be given out.

Q That is the reason, sir, that we appealed to the Commander in Chief.
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Well, they are working on it.

Q Mr. President, there are a lot of unanswered questions about this War Information (Executive) Order. One of them involves our friend Lowell Mellett (who was present). Is he going to be anonymous, or does he remain conspicuous?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't imagine his being anonymous, can you? /

Q Can you clarify specifically, sir, the status of Lowell, and Mr. (Archibald)

MacLeish?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask Mr. (Elmer) Davis.

It has been suggested, you know, by a few people who always try to pick flaws, that if only we let Mr. Davis operate, things will be all right, but the whole thing would fall down if he was subjected to Presidential interference. Well, I think you had better let Mr. Davis operate.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, in that Order you mention the Psychological Warfare Joint Board.

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The Psychological Warfare Joint Board. That's the first time I have seen that in print.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how it got in. It must be hush-hush. (laughter)

Q Who is on that?

Q No cooperation with the Censor, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I guess that's another anonymous one.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference today with Messrs. (Luigi) Antonini and (Alex) Rose? (American Labor Party representatives)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there is any more to be said on it. There really isn't any news at this time of the year. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about your conference (today) with the Secretary of the Treasury?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's another -- another Bond issue.

Q Nothing to do with the sales tax, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Could you give any details as to that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: They have got to announce that. I think it is going to be announced this afternoon or tomorrow morning. We are all set to go.

Q Mr. President, now that the House Committee has virtually killed the 25 thousand dollar income limitation provision, would you rather have a sales tax than suffer a 2 billion dollar lag in revenue?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, the process of a -- of a tax bill is very long. It started about the first of December, 1941, and they are all in the middle of it. And when it gets to the Committee it has to go out on the Floor. And then when it gets through the House, it has to go over to the Senate. And then they have to have some more hearings, and it goes through the Senate in a different form, in many different ways. And then it will go to conference. And eventually -- I hope this year -- (laughter) -- it will reach me. But I don't think it's time for me to express an opinion on it at all at this time.

Q Mr. President, would you care to say whether or not you think, so far, the tax part of your anti-inflation program is running along according to schedule, as you would like to have it?

THE PRESIDENT: I am perfectly willing to say that it is slightly behind schedule.

Q Could you say anything about the additional points in the anti-inflation program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there is anything to say.

Of course I think it is perfectly fair, and I hope the Committee won't -- won't -- on Ways and Means, won't take it amiss -- a good portion of this bill, you know, is going into effect the day it is signed, and every day that goes by means a loss of a great deal of money

to the Federal treasury. That is just -- not by way of criticism, but as a mere statement of fact.

Q Are you speaking of the excise tax?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In that connection, sir, it has been reported on the Hill that you may have suggested to your Legislative Leaders the possibility of splitting the bill ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of what?

Q (continuing) --- Of dividing the bill, enacting immediately the excise tax?

THE PRESIDENT: I did that the early part of this year, just as a mere effort to get a portion into effect as a Statute, and begin to get some more money in.

Q (interposing) Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nothing new in that, but ---

Q (interposing) Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that still your view?

THE PRESIDENT: It is still my view: that I want to get some money into the Treasury as soon as possible by one way or another. I am not trying to dictate the method.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you may have noticed that (Lieut.) General (Henry H.) Arnold of the Air Corps issued -- publicized a letter, or it was publicized for him -- a letter congratulating an airplane manufacturer, which brought out an action at sea. A little later the Navy had a communication which had to do with certain actions at sea, and had no reference to the Arnold action. I understand that the General has written -- written a letter, or sent another telegram to another air-

plane manufacturer today along the same line, and I wondered if anything is going on between the Army and Navy, or is there anything that we might know about?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you off the record, that after I read the paper this morning I asked the same question. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes? You have found out, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I asked them to look into it though.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about American operations in the Middle East, that question being prompted by these planes coming down in Turkey?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think that is a really very vital military secret.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.