

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #834
Executive Office of the President
July 7, 1942 -- 4.20 P.M., E.W.T.

Q Long time no see!

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Long time no see!

THE PRESIDENT: Long time.

Q Three weeks.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I am a bit rusty.

Q So are we.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q So are we.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I think we will manage to get along pretty well.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope that you have all had a "happy holiday" in the last two or three weeks. I have. (laughter) I have no news, because I have been so completely off the record during the short time passed.

Also, I am awfully glad to welcome here to the White House the guests, I think, of the National Press Club -- five distinguished journalists from Sweden. I hope that they will stay here long enough to become used to the manners and customs of the Americans. And perhaps, after they are -- I think it is tomorrow that the Press Club is giving a luncheon to them ---

Q (interposing) Today, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q They have had it today.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you have had it today. Then perhaps they may realize, if the Press Club asked questions, some of the trials and tribulations of a President. (laughter) I hope they will stay with us and go back and report to Sweden that we are working all-out toward the winning of this war.

I don't think I have got any news today at all.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, could you tell us something about the new assignment you have in mind for Admiral (Wm. D.) Leahy?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Not yet.

Q What about Mr. (Wm.) Phillips, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you anything on the new assignment for the -- for former Ambassador Phillips?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose that ought to be announced by somebody else.

(laughter)

Q It has been decided then?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Something has been decided upon then?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better ask the employing source. (more laughter)

Q Could you direct us to that source?

THE PRESIDENT: I can say this: that I am awfully glad, as I know many of you are, that Bill Phillips is back on the job again.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about your talk with Mr. (Michael J.) Kennedy (Congressman for New York State) this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't even know what he said we talked about. (laughter)

Q (interjecting) I can give it to you, if you would like it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) So you see, Jim, I am at a positive disadvantage.

Q I will be glad to give you a fill-in line, Mr. President. "The President says he will support any liberal candidate selected by the leaders of New York State, providing he has supported his war policies one hundred percent before Pearl Harbor."

THE PRESIDENT: Period. (laughter)

Q That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Very good.

Q It isn't "period," but I thought we would stop there and get an answer.

(more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's all right.

Q That's all right. "And he (the President) predicts that if such a man is nominated by the Democratic Party of our State, he will beat Thomas E. Dewey very easily."

THE PRESIDENT: Period.

Q Okay?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Fine.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (continuing) Now, is there anything you can say in your own behalf? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: End of the story.

Q But we can quote that okay?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We can quote that okay?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's all right.

Q To go from New York to Kentucky, Senator A. B. Chandler is opposing John Young Brown. The Truman Committee is sending a man to Kentucky tonight to investigate charges Mr. Brown has made against Chandler. Mr. Brown has said that he has sent these charges to the White House. He also has said that when the President reads these charges he will want Mr. Brown to defeat Senator Chandler.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask Mac. (Secretary Marvin H. McIntyre) He comes from there.

MR. EARLY: He is over there, sir. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the negotiations to get the French warships out of Alexandria?

(the President made no oral reply)

Q Mr. President, can you give us, for the South American papers, a little idea of what you will do tonight -- what your program is with President (Alfonso) Lopez (President-elect of Colombia)?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, he is an old friend of mine. We will have -- have a rather informal dinner of about 18 or 20 men -- stag dinner. And after he gets here we are going to have a good talk before dinner. And afterwards we are seeing the newsreels, and either Donald Duck or Mickey Mouse, I don't know which. And after that I think we are having some production pictures on the war effort.

Q Production pictures?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q War Production?

MR. EARLY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Army -- Navy -- Maritime Commission, and so forth. And then probably talk to one or two o'clock in the morning.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to identify the man who fills your description for a New York candidate, any time in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. We haven't got to the picture-making period.

Q Mr. President, may we have the guest list of that dinner tonight?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q May we have the guest list of that dinner tonight, for South America?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask the Secret Service. They have got some kind of funny rules. (laughter) I would just as soon.

Q Mr. President, would a general wage increase in (Little) Steel interfere -- conflict with your anti-inflation program?

THE PRESIDENT: It will be a factor in increasing the cost of living.

Q Ergo?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. That's obvious. That's copybook stuff.

Q Would you like to see the cost of living increased, sir? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you are getting to the kindergarten stage now. It's all right. Sure. (jokingly)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, would you make any comment on the scrap rubber collection?

THE PRESIDENT: On the what?

Q The scrap rubber collection?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't heard anything for a couple of days. And at a guess I should say it is better than the lowest estimates, and not nearly as high as the highest estimates. And I should say that it is not the cure-all -- shall I say? -- that we are looking for.

Q There seems to be some question, Mr. President, as to how deeply people should dig before they discover how this rubber -- whether doormats that

still are usable should be contributed, or whether ---. For example, in one block on Connecticut Avenue, there are 32 different rubber doormats out in front. Would you recommend that they be turned in, or the fact that they are usable and must be replaced by something else ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, when experts disagree it is a little bit difficult to put it up to me. I would say, off-hand, that rubber in a floormat, or a doormat, can be used for the Army and Navy for a great many useful purposes. Let it go at that. I don't know whether you can make tires out of it, but there are lots of other things we need.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to make any sort of announcement soon on wage policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Would you say there is need for some sort of wage policy, or announcement of it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is pretty -- that is not a very specific question.

Q Would you say there is need, Mr. President, for some sort of standards for the War Labor Board -- specific standards following this decision -- request for wage increases?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is Yes and No.

Q That, Mr. President, is not a very specific answer. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you can write an editorial, or something like that. It's all right.

Q Mr. President, has the rubber collection gone far enough to make any decision on gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Not yet.

Q Won't know until after July 10? Any idea how long it will be after that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Pete (Brandt), the only thing you can say is that we

are beginning to find out better where we stand. We are getting figures of supply in better shape, and figures of need in better shape. And I still cling to the hope that in some way a method -- not yet (having) been determined -- we can get a separation of the tire problem from the gas problem. Now, that is only a hope, because I haven't got the answer to it yet.

Q You said that the doormats might be used for something else?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Absolutely. As far as gas is concerned, you have got to get rubber for tires.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There are various other suggestions that have been made.

Q Do you mean by that, Mr. President, that you hope you can solve the rubber problem without gas rationing on a nation-wide basis?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, things aren't always "nation-wide basis." (pouring himself a glass of water) If I lived next to an oil well, and had a car with perfectly good tires on it, and had -- had some spares in the house for a while, I don't know -- I don't know why I shouldn't use the gas, if I had new tires on my car, that car being necessary to my business.

I don't think there is any particular use in talking about this subject, because you talk -- we can talk all day, and we would all be at "sixes and sevens." We wouldn't understand it, any more than most of us, individually, understand it all today. And very, very few people -- I haven't found anybody yet who did -- not one person. I couldn't write a story on it, and I suppose I have as much information as anybody in the room. We are trying to find ways and means.

As I said before, we separate the problem of gasoline in certain portions of the country, and the problem of the shortage of rubber in all

portions of the country. And it has some of the elements of trying to give a total figure in adding up apples and tomatoes. You can't give a total figure unless you use both those names.

MISS MAY CRAIG: (interposing) Well, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What we are trying to do is separate them.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, do you think that you can restrict the use of cars to business except by gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's a question of how long the tires are going to last in the country. We may have to take all the tires in the country. Suppose -- suppose this war gets worse? Is the country going to go without tires or not? I don't know. How can I tell? You see, a question like yours is very apt to lead to that kind of an answer. I don't know. You don't know. I may have to take every automobile tire in the United States, if things get worse than they are at the present time. I am trying to save this country, not to save tires or save gas.

MISS MAY CRAIG: (interposing) No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I am trying to save the nation, and the nation is perfectly willing to make any sacrifice that it is called on to make in order to save the nation.

MISS MAY CRAIG: My question was directed to an attempt to force the use of cars for business only, and not for pleasure.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that of course -- the whole trend is that way, necessarily. It is what we are working for, and have been for a long time. Nothing new in that.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #835
Executive Office of the President
July 17, 1942 -- 10.45 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. SIMMONS: (to the President) Do you want to turn the flag on, Mr. President? (referring to an American flag on a four-foot staff, which could be made to wave by turning on an electric fan at its base)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, turn the flag on. Very happy thought. (then seeing May Craig) Don't you wish you were in Maine?

MISS MAY CRAIG: May be, next week. Do you?

THE PRESIDENT: (to Earl Godwin) Hello, little stranger. I am glad to see you. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Little stranger! I ain't so little.

(May Craig then showed the President a cartoon in a magazine, the cartoon having no caption, but a sign "Is Your Journey Really Necessary?")

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) That's right.

MR. GODWIN: (who spied the flag waving) Oh, look't there.

Q What makes it go?

Q Air coming up from the fan.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Strange dearth of news this morning. The only thing I have is a report from Mr. (Edward R.) Stettinius (Jr.) -- Lend-Lease -- on the 30th of June, showing that during the month of June the amount of Lend-Lease aid to the United Nations, and other countries eligible, was 708 million dollars. This was the highest monthly total in the

16 months of Lend-Lease operations. Aid in May was 662 million dollars. Total Lend-Lease aid from the beginning of the program, March 11, 1941, to June 30, 1942, was 5 billion, 205 million dollars. Of this total 59% was goods transferred, 24% articles in process, and 17% various services performed here and abroad. I haven't got any other break-down on it. You can give them that, Bill (Hassett), if they want it.

Q Mr. President, there have been stories printed constantly that you are going to say something in behalf of (Senator) Jim Mead. (re the coming New York State gubernatorial election) Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: I have absolutely no news on it. I have read all kinds of fool stories about some contest for leadership, and so forth. I don't know anything about it, Jim. I am too damn busy being President. Leave out the "damn." (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Stories, sir, are also current that you intend to communicate with Congress on the subject of inflation, a possible more rigid control ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That whole thing is under study.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us, sir, about your conversation yesterday with Philip Murray (C.I.O. president)?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we discussed that as part of the study I was just referring to.

Q May we ask you, sir, did you discuss specifically the Little Steel 44¢ wage increase?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Part of it. Yes. I don't think there is any news on it.

Q At your last Press Conference, sir, we asked you if a general wage increase in steel would conflict with your anti-inflation program. You answered that it would be a factor in increasing the cost of living.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Can you tell us your reaction to the (War Labor) Board's ruling?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The -- of course in a case like -- an article like -- this is one of the problems that people ought to understand -- an article like steel, the -- an increase of 5% in wages does not force up the cost of living, obviously, nearly as much as it would in the case of wages in a canning factory, for example, that makes food. The whole thing is relative. Yet the whole thing must be kept as far as possible -- in all industries -- as much in line as possible.

Q Mr. President, in this case, Mr. Davis told us yesterday that the important point here was that a general policy had been worked out as to bring equity to the workers who haven't received any pay increase since the first of last year.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q Now, would you comment on the policy ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is under study too. That is part of the complexity between various industries. Remembering always, and this you have to keep in your head, the most important and essential policies -- in fact it might be called almost the basis of all policies and details, and that is to keep the cost of living from going up. In other words, thinking about what it costs the average worker and the average family to live. That is the one criterion we always have to keep in front of our minds.

Q Mr. President, has your study revealed whether this wage increase can be absorbed without any increase in price?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet. I am looking into things of that kind. Those are details.

Q Mr. President, there have also been reports that you have been studying the Canadian system, which only has a basic budget of 25 dollars a week ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- Is it part of the study?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, can you say something about your talks with President-Elect (Alfonso Lopez) of Colombia?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Except, of course, he was a very old friend of mine, and we talked over many things, not only relations between Colombia and the United States -- which are proceeding in an excellent way -- but also the general relationship among all the 21 Republics. I should say that the outstanding feature is the very great unanimity of thought, not just as illustrated by my talks with him, but as illustrated also with many other talks I have had with other heads of other governments to the south of us.

Q You mean the unanimity of thought on the world situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we talked about that too. Again, unanimity.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the specific assignment of Lauch(lin) Currie in going over to China?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He has been there before. Just another trip.

Q Mr. President, one report was published this morning that you probably would send a Message to Congress sometime next week on boosting the

anti-inflation program?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got -- frankly, I have no idea at all.

Q Mr. President, has any decision been reached on the 18-to-19 year old boys ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. No. And it's unlikely at this time.

Q Mr. President, ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Sir, ---

Q (continuing) Have you ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Go ahead.

Q (continuing) --- decided on a job yet for Admiral Leahy?

THE PRESIDENT: That is under study.

Q I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: That is under study too.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) May I ask you -- I am not quite sure ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You might get something on that soon.

MR. GODWIN: I am not quite sure what you said about the 18 and 19 year old ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think you can expect anything on that soon. I think you can on Admiral Leahy.

Q Thank you, sir.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #836
Executive Office of the President
July 21, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M., E.W.T.

(the President was wearing a short-sleeved shirt, for the first time in Press Conference)

Q (aside) That shirt is an innovation.

Q (aside) What's that, rayon?

(pause here)

(the President began reading some typed sheets before him, on the subject of scrap rubber)

THE PRESIDENT: Mac, I think it had better be given out just the way it is.

MR. McINTYRE: Mr. Hassett has done so already, Mr. President.

MR. HASSETT: It's all ready, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: All right.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got -- actually I have something today.

Number one: Admiral (Wm. D.) Leahy has been ordered to active duty, and to be Chief of Staff of the Commander In Chief. He takes on the duties immediately.

Then Number two: I have here -- Bill (Hassett) has the thing all copied for you -- the report of William R. Boyd, Jr., Chairman of the Petroleum Industry War Council -- two pages -- the gist of which is that they have collected during this scrap rubber drive 454 thousand, 155 tons of scrap rubber, which is a net addition to the Government's stock pile of 454 thousand, 150 tons more. I only just got it this minute. I haven't even finished reading it, but Bill will give it to you as soon as you go out.

Number three: The Secretary of State (Cordell Hull) was in this morning, and I went over with him a statement -- what might be called a speech -- which he is going to deliver on the air, I hope in the next two or three days, on the general subject of the seriousness of the war, what the winning of the war means, what victory will mean to human security, and liberty, and civilization, including the seriousness of all that those things mean to every man, woman and child, not only in this country but throughout the world.

And he showed me the draft of what he is going to say, and all I can say is that it is a very able and conclusive summary of the present world situation. And as I say, that will be delivered in the course of the next two or three days.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what the scope of Admiral Leahy's ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Chief of Staff.

Q (continuing) --- position will be?

THE PRESIDENT: Chief of Staff. I think that's all that's necessary.

Q Will he have the staff of the Army, Navy and Air also under him?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the foggiest idea; and it has nothing to do with the "price of eggs."

Q Well, sir, will he be Chief of Staff of the United Nations strategic command?

THE PRESIDENT: He will be Chief of Staff to the Commander In Chief.

Q Mr. President -- Mr. President, could you throw any light on the stories which are emanating from London today, telling of meetings between (Prime Minister Winston) Churchill and some unnamed American personages, all leading, apparently, to a second front?

THE PRESIDENT: (almost inaudibly) No. No. None at all, No. Haven't even

seen it.

Q (aside) What did he say?

Q (aside) No.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, what can we do to relieve some of this German pressure on Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't tell you if I -- I won't say if I could, because I could. I won't tell you. Obviously, that is -- the question shouldn't be asked or answered. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you plan to freeze wages?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q No?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you plan to ask Congress to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now, wait a minute -- wait a minute.

(laughter) If anything will be said, it will be said in a Message to Congress very soon.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I couldn't tell you ahead of time, but as I say ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, having seen the scrap rubber figures, can you give us any indication now as to whether there will be a need for nation-wide gasoline rationing?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to give you an off-the-record hint on that: Don't talk gas in the same terms as rubber. It's about the third or fourth time I have said that.

Q Mr. President, last Friday, Senator (T. F.) Green (of Rhode Island) said that he had asked you to make a clarifying statement as far as rationing was concerned. Have you any comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think you probably will hear something about rubber in the course of -- what? -- the next couple of weeks.

MR. G. DURNO: From you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. G. DURNO: From you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know yet, George. Maybe.

Q Mr. President, now that they have got this rubber, what are they going to do with it?

THE PRESIDENT: (very promptly) Use it. (laughter)

Q (continuing) There's all kinds of rubber in there, from floor mats to pure rubber. Any plans being made to -- to separate it, to find out what you have got?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Because none of you boys or girls in this room -- nor I -- know enough about the technical side of it to be able to tell.

Q (interposing) Are they going to call in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Write about it, of course, but we don't know. (laughter)

Q Are you going to call in the technical men ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- to find out?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Any idea when we will get a report on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Within a -- within a couple of weeks.

MR. J. M. MINIFIE: Mr. President, does the appointment of Admiral Leahy as

Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief mean that the Commander In Chief will take a more active direction of the strategic conduct of the war -- world war?

THE PRESIDENT: That will be almost impossible. (loud laughter)

Q Could you tell us any more about the Admiral's duties as Commander -- as Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, whatever -- put it this way: whatever's necessary from the point of view of the Commander in Chief. Now, as a matter of fact, I wouldn't go guessing around about things, in assigning more importance to this than it really deserves.

I have -- the reason I asked -- I answered brother Minifie's question that way was that, of course, I do spend an awful lot of time on it, from the American point of view. And at the same time, in so doing, there are all kinds of things that I have to read, all kinds of opinions that I have to get, and do get, and it takes a very long time. It takes a great deal of time, which after a pretty careful survey for 7 months, I should say could -- I should be helped to save, by somebody else doing an awful lot of leg-work, and indexing work, and summarizing work, and at the same time somebody in whose judgment I have got a good deal of real confidence. And it is going to save me a great many hours of work ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and all kinds of tasks -- instead of doing them myself, finding out about things -- if I can get somebody else to do the leg-work.

Q That implies -- does that imply he would have a few people working for him -- on the cards?

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

Q Mr. President, you said he would be called back to active duty. What will be his title, Admiral?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, he is permanently an Admiral.

Q He is permanently an Admiral?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, because, you see, he -- what was it? -- he retired when he was Chief of Operations, and automatically when you retire as such you keep your title.

Q Keep the title.

Q Mr. President, isn't that a rather unprecedented position? Will that require Senate confirmation of the appointment, or is it purely in your executive ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. An order -- an order to duty. Just a naval order, that's all.

Q He will definitely be Chief of Staff ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of the Commander In Chief. (laughter)

Q Yes, sir.

Q Of the Army and Navy, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Of the Commander In Chief. (more laughter)

Q (aside) Getting nowhere fast.

THE PRESIDENT: You see, the Army has got a Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Navy has the equivalent Chief of Operations of the Navy, which is practically the same thing as the Chief of Staff.

Q Mr. President, you attached an "if" a while ago to the remark about -- if anything would be said it will be said in a Message to Congress soon.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Can we definitely count on that Message in the next few days?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. I hope so.

Q Do you expect to see the Congressional Leaders tomorrow on that subject, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet. I haven't worked out the schedule. Some of them, maybe.

Q Mr. President, is this going to be confined to the one subject, or is this going to be a cover-all on the problems involved in the war picture now?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean this Congressional thing?

Q The Message, Yes.

Q The Message.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it will relate to what I described on -- back -- Oh, what was it? -- the 27th of April, domestically -- one of the very great essentials in the war, which was to keep a thumb on the cost of living, because that goes into every home and every club in the country.

Q Well, I meant you aren't going to make this a general discussion of the war picture?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. Oh, No. This is the principal domestic problem in carrying on the war. Of course a lot of other things are dependent on it, that's true. This is the first real essential.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you could tell us about Mr. (Lauchlin) Currie's visit to China?

THE PRESIDENT: The second one. (laughter) That's about all I can say.

Q (aside) Let's go.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I gave them plenty today.

(Notebook IX-PC -- page 103 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #837
Executive Office of the President
July 24, 1942 -- 10.55 A.M., E.W.T.

(Admiral Wm. D. Leahy, newly appointed Chief of Staff to the
Commander In Chief, was present at this Press Conference for the
first time)

Q Good morning, sir.

MR. GODWIN: (sitting down) I am the sheriff. (referring to a policeman's
badge he was wearing)

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing I can dig up today is an Executive
Order, which I am going to sign, but have not yet signed, in relation
to the War Relief Control Board, with the object of giving them some
further powers over the national war relief drives, so as to unify the
work and prevent duplication and cut down the -- it's always a serious
thing with any kind of a war relief drive -- cut down the overhead.

They have accomplished a great deal already. In -- since 1940
the Board tells me that they have -- these foreign war relief agencies
have raised about 96 million dollars. And as a result of the activity
of the Board, the costs of soliciting and administrating these drives
has been materially reduced.

However, we don't want too great a multiplicity of soliciting
all around the country, and that is the objective of this Executive
Order, making it, of course, perfectly clear that they have no authority
in connection with local efforts for local charitable purposes of a
normal character. They -- it confers all jurisdiction as far as possible

to interested activities. In other words, you might almost say regional, or national activities of war relief agencies of all kinds, excepting the Red Cross, and excepting certain religious activities. It is merely in the interest of saving money and cutting down the overhead, and the multiplicity of these things.

Q Who is in charge of it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Davies. (Joseph Davies, former U.S. Ambassador to Russia)

Q Joe Davies?

THE PRESIDENT: Joe Davies, Yes.

I don't think I have got anything else.

Q Can you tell us now about how the inflation situation stands, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any news on that at the present time at all.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, have you any comment on the action of the Senate in taking the synthetic rubber production away from the War Production Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, Pete, at this time. It hasn't passed yet.

MR. P. BRANDT: It has passed the Senate.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) It's later to pass the House.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what I would do. I haven't even read it.

Q Mr. President, have you asked Justice (Harlan F.) Stone to make a rubber survey for you?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I consulted with Justice Stone, but didn't ask him to make a rubber survey.

Q What did you ask him to do, could you tell us, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Consulted him. (laughter)

ACB 5-4-57

Q Could you tell us, sir, if you intend to ask him to make any rubber survey?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt it.

Q Mr. President, are you going to discuss the cancellation of the Higgins' contract with Mr. Higgins? [Andrew?] (Arthur J. Higgins, president of the Higgins Shipbuilding Corporation, New Orleans, La.)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It hasn't come up to me yet.

Q Mr. President, are you going to see Mr. (Henry J.) Kaiser when he comes here next week, about the possibility of his plan to turn (his shipyards into the making of flying boats) ---

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

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: I don't think we know much, either.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: We don't know much either. (laughter) Russ Young made me a cop -- a policeman today.

THE PRESIDENT: (looking at the badge) Say, isn't that -- look at that! -- Metropolitan Police. Does it say "ornery" or "honorary"?

MR. GODWIN: Honorary.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, excuse me! (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #838,
Executive Office of the President,
July 28, 1942 -- 4.05 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to May Craig) May!

MISS MAY CRAIG: Campobello.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you been up on the coast yet?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Campobello. Pretty.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: It's nice there.

THE PRESIDENT: It must be nice.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I wanted to mention in passing that I hope you will give a good word on this national scrap salvage campaign, which is starting this week. And I understand that there is over 2 million dollars worth of advertising promotion that is being put out by private industry, so that everybody in this country can realize the fact that we are in the middle of this -- starting, rather, this scrap salvage campaign.

In other words, the problem of raw materials is in many ways a serious limiting factor on war production and the supply of scrap of all kinds.

(here the President dropped a lighted cigarette he was holding in his left hand, and stooped down to pick it up) I have dropped a cigarette. I am burning up! I have burnt the carpet! (laughter)

Now I am all right.

And the supply of scrap is a tremendous influence on all production. The more scrap the bigger the supply of all kinds of materials,

including planes and guns and tanks. And this is an appeal to the people all through the country -- cities and farms -- to get the average home-owner, or the average small store-keeper -- or big store-keeper -- to dig through the attic and the cellar and the backyard, and every other place, and see if you can find some kind of scrap -- well, metal scrap of all kinds, and rubber scrap. Of course, we know that there is still a lot of rubber scrap in the country that hasn't yet been turned in. It's a very simple thing to find where to turn it in -- locally designated depots, junk dealers, any other place, because those people know that it is needed in the normal channels of manufacturing, and that includes things like waste fats that are -- can be sold to meat markets that are cooperating with this program.

And I think at the present time there are -- while the country realizes we are at war, I am not dead sure how close it has come to the home life of the individual family. And here is a very good test, a chance to have every family in the country search through and find things that they may have said before, "The Government doesn't want that. The Government isn't interested in this," and so forth.

And when in doubt dig it out, and turn it in. The chances are it will be worth something. We all know one -- one, for instance, one simple little thing, an awful lot of rags lying around. We can do a lot of things with rags. Assume, in other words, that the thing is needed now. By the doctrine of chance, it probably is needed. Turn it in.

I don't think Steve -- Steve, got any more for me?

MR. EARLY: Not a thing, sir.

Q Mr. President, after Leon Henderson left you this morning, he spent almost

an hour with Sam Rosenman. He said he left him (Sam Rosenman) some memoranda on wages and prices. Is Mr. --- Judge Rosenman preparing some special ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- report?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q How does he figure in this, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that he is a "collector" of information, and a "boiler-down" of information.

Q Have your plans on the general control of the price situation now progressed to a point where you can say ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am still boiling down information, that's all.

Q Nothing yet?

Q Nothing you can say at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not a thing.

Q Mr. President, there seems to be increasing emphasis -- on the Higgins connection and others -- about a shortage of steel. Can you tell us anything about the steel production and supply situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I can say it's just the way it has been from the beginning for a long, long time. We have had a shortage of steel and most other things for a whole year, and it is continuing, because we are making more all the time. Where we filled up a shortage a year ago we have another shortage caused by more need.

Q Mr. President, did you talk prices and wages with the Vice President too today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Did we or didn't we? We talked about almost everything.

I don't think we did. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, are you endorsing (Congressman) Joe Casey (Joseph E.)
in this Democratic Primary in Massachusetts?

THE PRESIDENT: Not endorsing anybody, in any primary, anywhere.

Q Mr. President, are you going to have any further statement on Senator
(James M.) Mead's candidacy in New York (State)?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't hear. What?

Q Are you going to have any further statement on Senator Mead's candidacy
in New York?

THE PRESIDENT: I have absolutely no information, because I know nothing
more about it than I have known for the last two or three weeks --
not a thing.

I might add -- this is all off the record, this particular part
of it -- nobody can get my goat. (laughter) In other words -- off
the record -- I am much too old a hand to have people try to get my
goat. It doesn't work. It has been tried very often. It doesn't
even get my goat. When cartoons come out in a certain type of paper,
not intimating but saying very definitely that I am spending a lot
of war-time work on New York politics -- well, of course, without
mentioning any type of paper -- (laughter) -- there are not many of
them -- of course, it is pure fabrication, which is a frightfully
polite term to use for that kind of thing.

Q (interjecting) Is that off the record, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Oh, Yes -- all off the record. But it doesn't get
my goat. It will continue just as long as we have a free Press in
this country. They are entitled to fabricate. They are entitled to
use falsehoods. Why, sure, we are all for it, because we are for that

kind of a free Press. (laughter) You see? -- everybody's happy. So that's all there is to that.

I suppose -- this is still off the record -- I suppose that in the past -- what? -- two or three months, I suppose, all told -- and in non-working time -- I suppose I have spent altogether 15 minutes on New York politics. Now that's an amazing thing, because it is perfectly natural and you are perfectly entitled to do it.

I had a fellow come in the other day. He came in to lunch with me -- I always try lunch-time to get away from the job -- I think it happened to be the Governor of New York. And we talked from about a quarter-past one to about two about various things -- national problems and things.

And just as he was getting up, he said, "By the way, what do you think I should do about Charlie Poletti?" And -- I have forgotten what I said, it doesn't make any difference -- neither here nor there -- (loud and prolonged laughter). And I gave him this illustration. I said something -- I have forgotten now what, and he said, "Yes, I agree with you" -- and went out. I think it was one question, one answer, and the statement, "Yes, I agree with you."

Now probably a lot of those people, who are writing under orders -- (laughter) -- would say that I had talked New York State politics with him for three-quarters of an hour because I happened to be lunching for three-quarters of an hour. That is why it's no use saying don't write assumptions, because -- Heavens above! -- you have to write assumptions, true or not true. Now, there's a very good illustration of -- what shall I say? -- not my problems, No -- your problems. (laughter)

MR. J. WRIGHT: Well, Mr. President, there has been one interview of yours that hasn't been confirmed yet, and that is the one that Mr. Mead quoted you on.

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

Now, Jim, there is another illustration. Jim Mead came in and I suppose he was -- what? -- 20 minutes. But of those 20 minutes, 18 minutes was out in Mac's office (M. H. McIntyre), and I don't know what happened out in Mac's office. He spent just two minutes in here, and he said, "I am running. I have announced." I said, "I saw it in the paper." He said, "What have you got to say?" I told him, and he went out and told you. Two minutes out of 18 (20) on New York politics.

Q Mr. President, your confirmation that Senator Mead said what you told him is on the record, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. That's right. That's right.

Q Mr. President, have you decided what you are going to do about this new rubber agency bill -- the setting up of a separate agency ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am working on the thing now. And, I don't know -- I will give you a lead. The lead is: the chances are it will get vetoed. (laughter)

Q Do you plan, sir, any move on your own part, aside from that bill to consolidate control over rubber?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but I am planning a move on my part.

Q In addition to the veto, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: In regard -- in addition to the veto.

Q That's what I mean.

Q Mr. President, may we quote you directly on "The chances are -- the chances are it will get vetoed"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can we quote you directly on planning the additional move?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes.

Q Can you tell us what that move is, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (laughter) You are getting too nosy.

Q Not even a lead, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there were reports that you were going to name a committee, with or without Justice (Harlan F.) Stone. Is that being considered?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't -- I tell you -- this is off the record. I don't know yet. I am working on it -- something like that -- not quite.

Q Mr. President, in regard to the scrap campaign, you said you were not sure how close realization of the war had come to the home and family. Could you elaborate on that a little for us?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think that speaks for itself. I think that's enough.

Q Do you think they realize the seriousness of the situation confronting us?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a different thing. They realize the seriousness of the situation by the way the situation touches the individual in the United States. I don't think that that has gone as far as it is going to go.

And -- what shall I say? -- this is background: let's take, for instance, the question of meat. There are certain areas in the country where there is a -- what is called a shortage of meat. Well, there are three reasons for it. And we are going to have a lot more of it, because when you go to the Press Club for a supper, or lunch, you are going to find a lot of things that you want to eat that are not

there for you to eat. Now that hasn't caught on to people yet. It's going to, without any question. And there are certain reasons for it.

Let's take the illustration of meat, which is short today in some places in the country. The three reasons are: Number one, that this is the off-season for beef. I don't understand why, but that's a -- a technical fact. Go and ask a packer, he can tell you.

The second reason is that people have got a lot more money today, a great deal more on the average. So what do they do? They eat more, and they eat better cuts.

And the third reason is that we have got, I suppose somewhere around 4 million men under arms, and those boys in the Army and Navy and Marine Corps eat more meat in the Service than if they were home. Furthermore, we have to provide their meat by buying it a long time ahead of the time that they consume it. We have got a great many men over-seas. They have to buy the meat when it is killed, maybe six months, eight months, ten months -- we have refrigeration -- before it is consumed. Therefore, during the past year we have not only had the current consumption of meat, but in addition to that we have been buying meat that won't be consumed for another six months for people who will eat more meat than they did before they went into the Services.

And I think that when the country understands these needs, they will realize also that there is going to be a shortage of this, that and the other thing, caused primarily by the war-- trying to win the war -- and that they will be very glad to make the sacrifice that is entailed by a shortage of this, that or the other thing. There is plenty of food to go around. Don't worry about that.

I, for instance, -- I love caviar better than anything in the

world. (laughter) I haven't had any caviar for a very, very long time. Well, it isn't essential to keeping my body and soul together, so I call it a sacrifice. You people have all got some particular pet thing that you love. There may be a shortage of it. Well, you are going to say, "All right. There is a shortage of this, that and the other thing that I love." And you are going to stand for it, and smile and take it.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, have you received a letter from the Governor of Maine (Sumner Sewall, Republican) suggesting that the Civil Air Patrol convoy tankers and colliers up the New England coast?

THE PRESIDENT: May, I did get the letter quite a while ago, and it has gone somewhere to get an answer prepared -- where, the Lord only knows.

Q Mr. President, do you want us to use that "four million men"? We haven't been using numbers of troops. Shall we leave that number in?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: I will check on it, but all those figures have been announced, sir. There was no breakdown on the Services.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean it may be -- it may be half a million, or less than half a million more. I think it's all right.

MR. EARLY: I think it's all right.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's all right. It's a very rough, general figure.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the reports that you may be advocating building the Florida Barge Canal?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of that one.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you could say on the Russian situation at present?

THE PRESIDENT: Which situation?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Russian.

Q The Russian situation?

(the President shook his head slowly in reply)

Q Mr. President, have you had a minute or two to think about the Texas Senatorial election last Saturday?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #839
Executive Office of the President
August 4, 1942 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

Q Mr. President!

THE PRESIDENT: Hello.

MR. GODWIN: Hello.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, how is the judge?

MR. GODWIN: What judge?

THE PRESIDENT: Eh?

MR. GODWIN: What judge?

THE PRESIDENT: Aren't you judicially minded?

Q We all are today.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We all are today.

MR. GODWIN: I am not a bit judicial. You mean Judge Lynch, that's what you mean?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. I have got two or three candidates for you.

MR. GODWIN: Wouldn't we have a good time if we didn't have to buy, buy?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q (aside) Who is that?

Q (aside) Dave Niles (David K. Niles, newly appointed Administrative Assistant to the President, at his first Press Conference)

Q (aside) It was announced Saturday.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: If you want to jot this down, it's just two little -- three little tiny sentences, and you can use it as quotes. It's in regard to the trial.

(reading): Under the order setting up the Military Commission, the President was constituted as the reviewing authority in respect to the verdict of the Commission. I am now in the process of reviewing the evidence, which is voluminous. And I will have finished within two or three days.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask a question?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think on that.

MR. GODWIN: Well, a question of procedure. Who passes the sentence on it, you or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: Does the verdict include a sentence?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can tell you any more about it.

MR. GODWIN: Pardon me?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can tell you any more about it.

Q Mr. President, ---

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

Q (continuing) --- how will the announcement be made?

THE PRESIDENT: It will be made, I think, either by me direct, or through Steve (Early), Yes.

Q Through Steve?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Was that an improper question? It seemed to me to be just a ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, you see, ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- it amazes me -- I don't want to get into something I shouldn't.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- you see, the -- it's awfully difficult to go into a terminology. We've had -- we have had from the Commission a

report and a verdict. Now that's all I can say about it.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: We have had that.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, can you say this much? Are you seeking any legal advice in reviewing this, or are you the sole reviewing authority yourself?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think you can say anything about that at all, for this reason. This has to be kept off the record. There are a good many phases to this. And of course, naturally, I would discuss the matter -- put it that way -- with different people.

Q May we assume that on our own authority, for story purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Yes, if you limit it to -- what? -- we discuss the matter -- discuss the whole thing, or portions thereof, with different people. I think that's all right to say.

Q Mr. President, as you are undoubtedly aware, there has been a lot of comment about the length of time it has taken to go through all these legal processes. Do you care to comment, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think most of the press comment has been awfully good on that, because the press comment has pointed out that this is a nation of laws, and the people carry out the preservation of society through legal means. And that so far this very serious case, happening in a time of war, has been carried out through the processes which we call the American processes of justice. And of course that takes time.

Now, as you know, I am not telling you how many pages there are, but as you know, the actual court sessions lasted for a long time. That seems pretty obvious that what they call the "record" must be a

pretty lengthy record. I got the "record" -- the whole case -- yesterday afternoon, about half-past five. Well, I have been working on it since then. As I say, I think I will have finished my labors within two or three days.

Q Are you more or less, sir, putting everything else aside during that period ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, No ---

Q (continuing) --- concentrating ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Oh My, No.

Q Mr. President, Mahatma (Mohandas K.) Gandhi has held a Press Conference in Bombay, at which he suggests that the American government persuade the British to get out of India. I don't suppose you would care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I -- (laughter interrupting) --- what do they call it? -- I couldn't do it properly.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, when may we expect the veto Message on the rubber ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Pete, I hope to get it done -- I hope to get it up there by Thursday.

Q Will it be an exposition of the rubber situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think any human being in the country could do it ---

Q (interjecting) You are the expert.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- with the present information.

Q (interposing) Will you send with it, sir, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's -- what is the -- what was it? -- brands -- the 57 different varieties -- Mr. Heinz.

MR. GODWIN: Heinz.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there are a great many more different varieties of experts on rubber than there are of Heinz' pickles. (laughter)

Q Sir, will you send with it any of these documents that you are getting from Judge Rosenman?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't got any documents.

Q You haven't had any?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have had a lot of letters from those 557 different varieties of experts, plus a self-appointed 5 thousand 557 more.

Q Mr. President, some people up in New England don't think that they are getting enough tank cars under this order to bring fuel oil and gasoline into the Seaboard.

THE PRESIDENT: Can they find any more? It would be grand if they could. We would use them and take the oil to New England, if they will dig up some, because we can't rob Peter to pay Paul.

Q Well, (Ralph K.) Davies asked for another 5 thousand this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Who did?

Q Mr. Davies.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Davies.

MR. GODWIN: The oil man.

Sir, have you been in on the argument, or the discussions, with respect to the large flying freight cars, as I call them, with respect to their use, or priorities?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Oh, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Have you anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, they have been working on it for quite -- for a long, long time, two or three -- Oh, what? -- No, more than that -- five or six months. There again, the old adage about robbing Peter

to pay Paul.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It's an issue. It's a question on all these things. We would give anything in the world to have more flying freight cars. When it becomes a question, certainly none of us but the military experts can decide which are the most important, if you can't have both.

Q Mr. President, what is the situation on your inflation studies?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we are at it ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- as hard as we can.

Q (aside) What did he say?

Q In that connection, sir, is the Canadian method of controlling, or attempting to control, the cost of living receiving any attention?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. Oh, Yes. Oh My, Yes. It has been from the very beginning of it, ---

Q (interposing) Could you tell us what ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- only in some ways it works pretty well, and in other ways it hasn't worked so well. And you always have to remember that you can't, without sloppy thinking -- you can't take the comparison of a nation that has about 10 million --- 10 or 11 million people, and take it lock, stock and barrel and make it work -- even if it has worked for 10 or 11 million people -- and make it work for 130 million. That is something that is very often forgotten.

Q Are we trying to modify the Canadian plan to make it work?

THE PRESIDENT: It's being studied, with a great many other plans.

Q Mr. President, getting back to the flying box cars, is there any serious

consideration being given to making those large planes of non-critical materials -- plastics?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh -- what?

Q Plywood?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Plywood?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They have been working on plywood, to my knowledge, for the last -- last couple of years. It's good for some purposes -- won't work for others.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Was it the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They have been working on things like balsam wood ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Was it the engines?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- light woods of various kinds.

(to Mr. Godwin) Yes! For instance, there you are. You put your finger right on it. I don't think you can make an airplane engine out of balsam wood. (laughing) Thanks very much for the idea.

Q Is it a choice, Mr. President, between bombers and the cargo plane, or a choice between the cargo plane and perhaps the materials that go into tanks and ships?

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't any of those things. It's all of them put together. Relative priorities, graded according to the essential needs, determined by the people who are supposed to know most about fighting. And then, off the record, neither myself nor editorial desks. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, in New Orleans today Andrew Jackson Higgins (Higgins Shipbuilding Corporation) told a House Committee that he had been buying steel on the "black market," at something like 18 tons at a crack, and

that he had been buying from people who knew in advance what his steel requirements were. I wonder if you think that ought to be investigated?

THE PRESIDENT: I think most surely. I think those people ought to go to jail.

Q Including Mr. Higgins, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because he would be State's evidence. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, if we could go back to the tank cars for New England, New England Congressional delegations say that if the Midwest were rationed, there would be more tank cars for New England.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. You ought to go to somebody that could tell you that. I don't.

Q Everybody tells you different. (laughter)

Q With regard to rubber, Mr. President, is Judge Rosenman making a survey for you?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Judge Lynch!

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #840
Executive Office of the President
August 7, 1942 -- 10.40 A.M., E.W.T.

(Her Majesty Wilhelmina, Queen of The Netherlands was a guest at this Press Conference)

(as the newspapermen came in, the President and the Queen were both standing behind chairs in front of the desk. Mrs. Roosevelt was also present, and stood to the right of the Queen, with other aides of the President)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Queen) I can really see them now. I very rarely see more than the front row.

VOICE IN THE REAR: Step right up, gentlemen, please. Come right in, gentlemen. Move right along, please.

(pause here as newspapermen continued to come in)

(many and varied whispered comments from the newspaper men and women as to what the Queen was wearing)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that you good people have had any advance notice of this, but Her Majesty consented to come here today, not to be asked questions but to have The White House Correspondents' Association presented to her.

I think you all know that The Netherlands and this country have most of their ideals in common. And it is a very interesting, and a very wonderful thing to know that constitutionally in The Netherlands and in this country freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press are a part of the government. They are recognized by the constitutions of both of our nations.

And I can only say that in these past three days, all of us -- the Congress, the Government -- the Executive branch -- and I think the press -- have been made very happy by the presence of this really great head of a government as our guest -- head of an Allied Nation, who is seeing this war through with us.

And so I present all of you gentlemen, and ladies, to Her Majesty, the Queen of The Netherlands. And I have -- (applause) -- and I have asked her, and she has graciously consented, to say a few words to The White House Correspondents' Association.

(applause for the Queen)

HER MAJESTY QUEEN WILHELMINA: I am indebted to the President for inviting to me -- me to his conference -- (press) and radio conference, having thus been given the occasion to voice my admiration of all the work the members of the American press and radio have done, not only in the past and happier years, but especially since the outbreak of the present war. I have had the opportunity to read and listen to reports from men and women who are actually in the many scenes of combat with the enemy, and who with complete disregard of their own safety gather their information for the sake of truth and public enlightenment.

The mission of the press and radio is one of great responsibility, more so now than ever, when the future of the world and civilization is in the balance. Its fulfillment is dependent on freedom of speech and a free press -- two conditions no dictator ever grants.

In this country, like in all parts of my country, both rights are constitutionally guaranteed and deeply ingrained in the life of the nation. Where occupation has temporarily abolished them, defeat of

the enemy will see them restored. At present, wherever freedom of speech and press continue to exist, the contribution which press and radio make to the effort of those upon whose shoulders has been placed the sacred duty to lead Democracy to victory is of immense value, because they share the task of leading mankind toward a brighter morrow.

(applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Now we are going to sit down and proceed with the regular conference. (then to Mr. Early) What's this? Is this to be given out? (a memorandum in front of him)

MR. EARLY: That was phoned to us by Donald Nelson a few moments ago. He wants you to mention it.

THE PRESIDENT: Donald Nelson wants me to mention the following -- it came over the telephone a few minutes ago, so I haven't read it first. I assume it's all right.

(reading): We are engaged in an intensive drive to collect all of the scrap possible. We need steel scrap badly to increase present production. We are keeping ahead of the blast furnaces now, but we want to accumulate 17 million tons of scrap to insure steel production for the year 1943. We want to take all abandoned steel structures, abandoned railroads, plants and buildings, old farm machinery of no further value, and any miscellaneous steel or copper -- or rubber, of course -- scrap that's lying around the home. This is merely another effort to get in a lot of scrap of various kinds that we feel certain is still lying around the country in different places.

I think that's all I have got.

(then turning to Mr. Early) There isn't any more -- there is

nothing more on the (rubber survey) committee that was appointed yesterday?

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: They're at work. That's all I can tell you.

Q Mr. President, have you completed your review of the case of the 8 German agents?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Haven't finished reading it.

Q Do you expect to do so today, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, with respect to Mr. Nelson's memorandum to you, there comes to newspapers and radio people from all over the country the suggestion that possibly you could organize to pick up the cannon, and things of that sort, that are lying around on courthouse squares throughout the country, plus some of the statues of bronze that people -- (laughter interrupting) ---

THE PRESIDENT: I think there are many ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Would you care to say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Taking the last point first, there are a great many statues around the country which would probably look better if they were turned into guns. (laughter) They could perhaps be replaced after the war with something -- what shall I say? -- a little more artistic. (more laughter)

Q Do you have any in mind, sir? (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I think we have Frederick the Great down here who started all this stuff.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, in the -- what's the other one, Earl, that you ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) What was that?

THE PRESIDENT: The other kind?

MR. GODWIN: The other kind was this American Legion ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, Yes. The World War cannon, and some of the Civil War cannon. We have already gone through Navy Yards, and are still going through Navy Yards to use many of those old historic cannon.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It probably is the best use they can be put to,

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Yes, Well, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and I think it should be done.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- you endorse that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I am inclined to think that it wouldn't be a bad idea to get some kind of approval or authorization by Congress which would tell communities that have these cannon out on the village green that after the war is all over we will replace them with something more modern -- (laughter) -- that has a modern history in the winning of the war.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, there are a lot of elegant brass door knobs and mail boxes in this town.

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like the chairmanship of that committee? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, you conferred yesterday with Donald Nelson, (Joseph B.) Eastman, and Leon Henderson. Is there anything you could say about that conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. It was merely a conference of progress, looking toward the necessities of rubber and scrap, and so forth.

Q Mr. President, charges have been made in the New York primary campaign that (Senator) Jim Mead is an Isolationist. Do you think so?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not talking politics. I am not engaging in the New York campaign, but whoever made any charge of that kind, I should say offhand that -- well, if Jim Mead is an Isolationist, so am I.

Q Are you going to vote in the primary, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you expecting to vote in the primary, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am not going up for the primaries, because we have essentially no contest for -- in the Democratic primaries in the District. In other words, I am not permitted to go into the Republican primaries. (laughter)

Q Would you like to, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I would. (loud laughter)

(pause)

Q Mr. President, what is the significance of the subordination of the Fair Employment Practices Committee to the War Manpower Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I just got a memorandum on that last night, and I have got to look into it. I don't know which -- whether they are equal or whether one has been subordinated to the other. I doubt very much if there has been any subordinating of the Fair (Employment) Practices to the other.

(pause)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

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MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Early) says I have nothing.

Q Mr. President, about a month ago a conference on the West Coast to stabilize wages in aircraft plants blew up because of disagreement between various emergency agencies. It was supposed to reconvene in Washington this month. There has been no date set because of the indecision about the Administration's wage policy on wage increases. Can you give us any light as to when we might get some statement on policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I -- I don't -- I haven't heard that story at all. A brand new one. I would have to go into it.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, in view of the obvious necessity for greater war production in your statement Sunday, and so forth, what would you think of a union steward who deliberately told men in a war plant to produce less than a fair day's work? Would you make any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that an "if" question?

Q No, it isn't an "if" question. We have some evidence on it, in Detroit.

THE PRESIDENT: Who was it?

Q Well, there was a plant in Muskegon, one in Flint. If you would like more, I would be glad to give them to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Go and dig up the stuff for me. I will dig into it.

Q Yes, sir.

Q On that line, sir, there are various wildcat strikes appearing almost daily, which are -- don't have the approval of the national officers

of the various unions. Would you care to say anything about them -- about these unauthorized strikes?

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q Well, sir, there was one yesterday in a steel mill in Pittsburgh, and I think if you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You know the name of it?

Q I think it was a unit of Carnegie Illinois.

THE PRESIDENT: (turning to Mr. Early) Will you make a note of it, Steve? We will look it up for you.

Q Would you like to have a complete catalog? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes.

Q I can read them off.

THE PRESIDENT: Go and do your homework first.

Q Seriously, sir, the -- there are a large number of these wildcat strikes which Mr. (Philip) Murray (C.I.O.) and Mr. (Wm.) Green (A.F.L.) disapprove of. Have they come to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't -- I can't answer a perfectly general question of that kind. I have heard of a few. It depends a good deal on what kind of a story you read. About -- Oh, what was it? -- six months ago I think, I had cause one day to say that as an ordinary citizen who read certain types of papers, that I would say that about 75% of all munitions plants were out on strike, and that that didn't happen to be true; and therefore it was what I would call sloppy writing, or wrong kind of orders from the owner of the paper, one or the other; and that actually at that time, as I remember it, the actual figures were one and a half percent, or it may have been half of one percent. But if you read the paper, it sounded like 75. Now I think we will

have to be a little bit more factual first.

Q Mr. President, have you seen a statement put out by the War Labor Board, intimating that the laws of treason might have to be resorted to in the situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. When did that come out?

Q Two weeks ago, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Will you get it for me?

Q Glad to.

THE PRESIDENT: Fine.

Q Mr. President, the French Ambassador was here today. Could you give any comment on his visit?

THE PRESIDENT: He didn't come here.

Q He didn't?

THE PRESIDENT: Did he go to see Mac (M. H. McIntyre)?

Q He went ---

Q (interposing) State Department -- Secretary of State.

Q (interposing) State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh.

Q Will there be any successor to Admiral Leahy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, honestly. I don't think any decision has been made.

Q Does it depend on certain factors ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I guess so.

Q (continuing) --- which are not yet crystallized?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Martinique, for example?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Martinique?

THE PRESIDENT: Now -- now wait a minute. Don't ask what kind of circumstances. Just call it a circumstance.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's a case where on my part I can't get down to brass tacks.

Q Mr. President, the story that one thousand plants might have to curtail their production seems to have been pretty well authenticated. Have you anything to say on that -- because of the lack of basic materials ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. I would have to ask the Army and the Navy and Donald Nelson before I could authenticate it.

Q Mr. President, a few weeks ago you had no comment on the Indian situation. Do you have any today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q (aside) How about this?

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q (aside) (jokingly) What for?