

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #897
Executive Office of the President
May 18, 1943 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything of any importance.

I have just had -- in the past hour -- a very satisfactory conference with the Duke of Windsor. And as you probably know, we are bringing a large number -- several thousand -- of laborers from the Bahamas, and others from Jamaica, to help out the farm labor this summer and autumn. And I think it's progressing very well.

The talks of the Prime Minister are going along very satisfactorily. They are not finished yet.

I think that's about all.

Q. Is the Prime Minister going to be subjected to the tender mercies of a Press Conference, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think so. He doesn't worry about it any more than I do. (laughter)

Q. Would Friday be a good guess, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea about it.

Q. Mr. President, this morning Secretary Knox gave us very sudden and very interesting information on Attu (in the Aleutians). Do you have anything to add to that, at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I saw the

dispatches this morning, about ten o'clock. I haven't seen any more than that.

Q. Mr. President, some of us have been investigating the figures relating to our production of atabrine, which is an anti-malarial and synthetic substitute for quinine. And in the course of our delving, we found that production seems to be almost woefully inadequate, and that the production figures are going to fall even twenty to twenty-five percent short of the goal set for the end of this year. Do you know what measures are being taken to increase production of this anti-malarial ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. No. I would like to know -- I would like to know. I haven't heard of any Army figures. I talked to the Surgeon General of the Navy, but that was -- Oh, what? -- a month to a month and a half ago. And there we seemed to have plenty of quinine -- or qui-neen, whatever you call it -- and atabrine. It wasn't an alarming situation, in regard to the Navy. And I would like to check on the Army.

Q. And for Lend-Lease, and so forth?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q. Mr. President, has Prime Minister Mackenzie King (of Canada) joined the conferences yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He -- I understand that he just got into town this afternoon, and he is coming to the White House in the morning, to spend the night.

Q. Mr. President, Senator (Albert B.) Chandler of Kentucky made a speech in the Senate yesterday, asking that

the United -- United States concentrate its efforts against the Japanese, and fight a holding war in Europe. Would you care to comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am afraid I am too familiar with the figures to comment on it.

Q. Mr. President, the House seems to have rejected the Ruml Plan again.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Have they?

Q. (continuing) Have you any -- could you tell us, sir, which if any of the various proposals that are up there in Congress would suit your ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) My dear fellow, you haven't read what I said to them.

Q. I read all that was printed about it, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What -- if you will read the letter I sent up, that answers the question that I am not drawing tax legislation.

MR. W. L. LAWRENCE: Mr. President, have you any dispatches, secret or otherwise, on the Hot Springs front?
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No. Bill, that's very well put. That's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, was your answer to that question about Senator Chandler's speech, that you were too familiar with the figures to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) To comment.

MR. GODWIN: Is that what you said?

Q. Mr. President, do you have any comment at all on some of the reports that the restrictions on the press coverage at Hot Springs constitute restrictions on freedom of the press?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had anything, except the suggestion from -- he is not a member of The White House Correspondents' Association, but he is a very reputable and experienced newspaperman. He intimated to me that he thought it would be awfully nice if we could have in the Cabinet Room there -- (indicating) -- a nice little tier of benches put up so that there would always be twenty or thirty of the press in attendance at Cabinet meetings.

And I -- going him one better -- I suggested, as I see -- Oh, ten or fifteen people in here every day -- all kinds -- Government, civilian, and otherwise -- Army and Navy -- and we would, right in the back of the room -- (indicating) -- have another little tier of benches put up, so that they would all be present, you see, when ---

Q. (interposing) What's wrong with that? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) A good idea. I'm all for it.

Q. When may we expect that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: You will be asking to come in next to watch me take my bath. (more laughter) After all, there are certain limits!

Q. That wasn't Mr. Davis?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. That wasn't Mr. (Elmer?) Davis?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not Davis.

Q. Mr. President, do you support the position of the War Labor Board in the coal case, that collective bargaining cannot proceed unless Mr. (John L.) Lewis comes before it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that we would have to go into everything that was said. A very difficult thing to cover with a Yes or No answer. You would have to get the original phraseology, and the things that led up to it, and the things that succeeded it. It isn't as easy as that.

Q. Mr. President, have you appointed a new Chairman of the Committee on Fair Employment Practices?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think something is going to happen, though. Very soon. It was to have happened today, but was unavoidably delayed.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us what you talked to Dan Tobin about, both Friday and today?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q. Can you tell us what you talked to Dan Tobin about, both Friday and today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you know old Dan. We always talk about the weather. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, I didn't understand you a moment ago to say that the Prime Minister met the Duke of Windsor?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I did.

Q. He did?

Q. The Prime Minister did not meet him.

THE PRESIDENT: The Prime Minister -- I don't know,

this is society column -- (laughter) -- the Prime Minister lunched up at the British Embassy. The Duke and Duchess were there, I think. And afterwards, the Prime Minister brought the Duke of Windsor down, and the Duke and I talked for about an hour; and we would be talking longer if I hadn't noticed that it was four o'clock.

Q. Mr. President, Senator Jim Mead (of New York) made the suggestion the other day that there might be a committee -- something like the Baruch committee that reported to you on rubber -- to discover what might be done between the Government and sports, so far as providing entertainment for the soldiers abroad and on the home front are concerned.

THE PRESIDENT: Sports?

Q. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have ---

Q. (interposing) (Secretary M. H.) McIntyre was up at the meeting that Senator Mead had. Do you have anything on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got anything, except the fact that we have been seriously considering the questions in a very large number of letters that come in from the proponents of the many kinds of sports, asking what the White House thinks about this, and shall we have night games, and shall we have this sport that takes a good deal of transportation to get to, and so forth.

And we have considered putting in a little committee of three people who, say, know a good deal about all kinds

of sports, to try to help those who have doubts in their minds as to whether organized athletics of all kinds should go on or not. Well, we haven't -- we haven't got to a final decision on it, but I think that we will appoint three people, without power -- merely to recommend. People love to have somewhere to go.

Q. Do you know whom you are going to appoint, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Do you know whom you are going to appoint, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q. Mr. President, you talked with Mayor (Edward J.) Kelly the other day, or he talked with you about the diversion difficulties about Chicago. Have you had any report of any sort on that yet?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't. I sent it to -- I think the Army Engineers. I have got no answer yet. But -- South Chicago, wasn't it?

Q. Yes, sir.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I covered a lot of ground today!

Q. Certainly did.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #898
Executive Office of the President
May 21, 1943 -- 10.50 A.M., E.W.T.

(the President had a new work-basket of wood
on his desk)

Q. I see you have a new work-basket.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- carved at the White House.

Q. That can stand a lot of overflow.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Yes, that can stand a lot of
overflow.

MR. GODWIN: Looks like a crib.

Q. (to Mr. Early) Nice new basket, isn't it, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Yes, that's nice.

Q. The sides won't scratch.

MR. EARLY: A double-decker.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Earl Godwin) Nothing very
exciting ---

MR. DONALDSON: (interposing) All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- today.

You remember last year on Maritime Day, which this
year falls on tomorrow, we devoted most of the celebration in the
country -- and statements -- to the men and women in the nation's
shipyards. And Steve (Early) will have for you when you go out
another statement as of this year -- paying special tribute to
the men this year who sail the ships. Last year it was the
people who build the ships.

I think I might -- it isn't in the -- in the

statement of Steve's -- I think we ought to call attention to the fact that on the whole our Maritime construction work is ahead of schedule -- going along extremely well.

And we are graduating slowly from the Liberty Ship, which is our first type, into a better and faster ship that we call the Victory Ship.

The construction program, I should say, is not only up to date, but -- because of the fact that we raised our sights and provided for a greater tonnage -- it is a good deal ahead of what we expected the total tonnage production to be a year ago.

This statement shows that this year we are devoting the celebration of Maritime -- National Maritime Day in special tribute to the men who sail the ships, showing our everlasting gratitude as a people to the -- not merely to the men on the battle front but also to the people who get the things to the battle front and enable the war to go on at top speed.

The -- the -- well, the thing explains itself. On the whole, we are ahead and -- and getting ahead on our construction program, because we have to -- while our tonnage is infinitely larger than last year, and has exceeded the losses very greatly, especially in the last six months, we have to remember that with every additional military or naval operation it requires additional tonnage, the -- the maintenance of the -- of the troops in Africa, not merely the original landing and taking of the first supplies, for example. Same thing in the Southwest Pacific, and Alaska. But a larger number of ships have to be provided, in order to maintain the ring which is slowly but

surely being closed around the Axis powers.

I think Steve has the message, which is mimeographed. And it's a special -- going to celebrate it in special tribute tomorrow to the men who -- of the Merchant Marine who sail these ships.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, for us landlubbers there's always a -- a confusion about tonnage. Is this the carrying capacity this time? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: They are working on it -- I told you that. We still haven't got a -- a uniform figure. In fact, there are no figures in this (release) at all.

Q. Mr. President, you have had a number of recent conferences with Dr. (T. V.) Soong. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There isn't any particular news, one way or another.

Q. I wondered if there was anything special you had up between you?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I suppose the -- the principal thing relates to getting war materials of all kinds into China.

Q. Did you say more materials?

THE PRESIDENT: War materials -- and medical things -- things of that kind. That is going along pretty well.

Q. Mr. President, we got off the ships a little too quick for me. Would you elaborate a little on the transition to the Victory Ship?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can say that -- of

course, the -- the Liberty Ship, the first one that was designed, was the kind of thing that we could build quickly in the initial stages of stepping up the shipbuilding program in this country many hundred percent. I can't give you the exact figure, but you can work that out very easily by seeing what all the merchant companies were building, let us say three years ago, and what we are building today -- it's a very enormous increase. Well, the Liberty Ship was an efficient design both from the point of view of hull and machinery -- especially machinery -- and the steel production, the easiest thing to do first.

One trouble with the Victory Ship -- with the Liberty Ship was that in time of peace it was pretty slow. And what we have been trying in the last six months, in turning to the Victory Ship, is to get a ship which would last for commerce all through the years during its whole life. And the Victory Ship that we are gradually substituting in large part for the Liberty Ship is a much better ship, especially so far as speed is concerned, for all world commerce, probably, in the future will be carried -- through competition -- by faster ships than in the past.

Q. Does that mean, Mr. President, that the Liberty Ships will be discontinued eventually?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't believe entirely, because there are some yards that are primarily fitted for the -- for the Liberty Ship. That will be an evolutionary process, but where we can put in a faster ship we are going to do it.

Q. Are some of the Victory Ships in use now?

THE PRESIDENT: Are they what?

Q. Are they in use?

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

Better ask Jerry Land.

Q. Well, Mr. President, that's the reason I asked the original question. I understood that although they had actually allotted contracts for them, they hadn't yet decided on the design.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes. That's all done.

Q. That's -- that's done?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. The only question was on two different types of engine, and that has been worked out.

Q. That has been worked out?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, now that some other people beside yourself and Grace Tully know about the contents of the letter you sent abroad, is there anything further that can be said on that score today?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. All I have read is in the papers this morning.

Q. Mr. President, a dispatch just came in saying that the letter was evidently a great success, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Good.

Q. (continuing) --- and I wondered whether it was due to the contents or to the postman (Joseph E. Davies)?
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I hope I got a perfect combination

of the two.

Q. Mr. President, the Vichy radio announced that the Japanese were beginning to evacuate Attu. Do you have any last-minute information on that for us?

THE PRESIDENT: There was nothing last night, and I -- I haven't heard. I haven't seen the dispatches this morning.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to comment on the death of the Japanese admiral (Isoroku Yamamoto), who forecast he would write the peace in the White House?

THE PRESIDENT: He's dead?

Q. The Japanese radio announced it.

Q. Yamamoto.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) That's good!

Q. Killed in action while directing operations in an airplane.

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh! (loud laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) In quotes!

Q. Can -- may we quote that, sir?

Q. Can we quote that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, there was a Japanese -- or Chinese -- military spokesman -- it is quoted from over there -- saying that a large force of Japanese -- Japanese, well equipped, are marching toward Chungking, about 186 miles away. Do you know anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Did it say from what direction?

MR. GODWIN: Marching westward, that was one ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, it's all westward.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The Japanese in the north would be marching ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) The only thing that I had was 186 miles from Chungking.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That's about right.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) There was no authority ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- except some unknown spokesman.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the Japanese in the northeast of Chungking are around 200 miles away, and in the southeast of Chungking they are about 200 miles away, and due east down the river -- Hankow -- Ichang -- they are about 200 miles away.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) 186 miles ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Not much difference.

MR. GODWIN: Not very significant.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the visit of Prime Minister Mackenzie King (of Canada) here?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. He is just -- just down here on the same -- same thing that everybody else is here -- furtherance of the war. I am seeing him again this morning.

Q. Mr. President, has your opinion of armchair strategists improved lately?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, is anything ---

Q. (interposing) Will you elaborate on that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Would you care to elaborate?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because I would get personal, and I don't like to do that.

Q. Mr. President, there was one line in the Prime Minister's speech (Churchill's) the other day that struck me as new, and that was that we have a majority of United States forces in the Pacific.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's true.

Q. That is Army as well as Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I should say very definitely true as to the Army and Navy, and very close to being equal numbers on the air end, so that on the Army, Navy and Air, it is absolutely true that the large majority of our forces are in the Pacific.

Q. Mr. President, back to Dr. Soong, we have noticed that he has been in here, particularly since Prime Minister Churchill arrived. Could you say if your talks with the Prime Minister concerned something about China?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, sure. We talked about China. It isn't the only place we have been talking about.

Q. Mr. President, when you referred to the majority of our forces, you were speaking then of a majority of these forces which are outside the continental United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

Q. Mr. President, any sort of progress report you can give us on your talks with the Prime Minister (Churchill)?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose the best way to put it is this: that, so far, most of the work has been done by the Combined Staffs. And they have been at it, and we expect to get some preliminary recommendations from the Combined Staffs -- you might call them tentative recommendations -- probably in tonight's meeting. Then those will be gone over -- and I might say the Combined Staffs have been getting along extremely well -- and then over the weekend we will be going over them, and take up the preliminary recommendations next week and iron out any kinks that are in them and make them final.

Q. Mr. President, has any consideration been given to the political future of Italy?

MR. GODWIN: (aside) What?

THE PRESIDENT: Unconditional surrender. I think that

Q. (interposing) Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- speaks for itself.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Italy?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Italy?

THE PRESIDENT: Italy.

MR. GODWIN: He asked about Italy?

THE PRESIDENT: Unconditional surrender.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #899
Executive Office of the President
May 25, 1943 -- 4.03 P.M., E.W.T.

(this is the joint Press Conference of the
President and Prime Minister Winston
Churchill of Great Britain)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) If you don't
mind, I will make these three little announcements first.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Yes.

(a long wait here as newspapermen continue
to file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think, if our old-time friend will
pardon me for about five minutes or less, I will give you one
or two things that really ought to be said.

The first relates to this question of the floods in
the Middle West, which of course have been very serious this
year, but not nearly so bad as one or two other floods we have
had in the last ten years.

The Red Cross is in general charge, as you know, and
is doing wonderful work in distributing clothing and food, and
medicine and shelter.

The Army is taking care of the physical safety. And
the -- and the spread of the flood has employed thus far

38 thousand troops, which is a task force bigger than two divisions, and is daily throwing more troops into the job. It is doing a great deal of dirt-moving, using amphibious Jeeps -- for the first time, I think, that they have ever been used for this particular purpose -- assault boats, motorized pontons -- I suppose that's what we used to call pontoons -- and numerous other pieces of floating equipment in the fight to protect the levees, the war plants and other installations, and also to evacuate civilians.

Then -- and incidentally, it might be said that these activities are providing tactical training that no simulated conditions could provide -- a total of more than 50 thousand people have been moved, evacuated primarily by troops alone, with additional thousands being evacuated by the Coast Guard, the Red Cross itself, and other agencies.

About -- the Army estimates that about 25 thousand evacuated persons that they have rescued from dangerous points in the flood area would probably have been lost if we hadn't got on the job immediately. The troops represent, of course, every section of the nation. They are working a strenuous 12-hour shift, and want to work more.

Right in that line, you probably will wonder whether we are going to lose a certain amount of our food supplies. And I think that obviously there will be a certain proportion of food supplies destroyed by the flood, although being fairly early in the year many of the -- much of the damage can be repaired through replanting. The -- part of the farm equipment will

have been lost, and they are making preparations for the salvage of it, repair of it, and removing the rust.

Then, some of the livestock has been drowned -- not a very large number, because most of the livestock they have been able to drive to higher land, temporary refuges on the -- on the higher ground.

The War Food Administration -- Mr. Chester Davis -- has a committee which is meeting in St. Louis, consisting of Chairman Mr. P. V. Kepner -- K-E-P-N-E-R -- of the Extension Service, and Clifford Townsend of the Food Administration Officer -- Office. They are meeting in St. Louis with the Governors and Commissioners of Agriculture in the -- in the six States most seriously affected. The Extension Directors of all those States, the Chairmen of the State War Boards, the Farm Security regional representatives from places like Indianapolis and Little Rock, and members of the Red Cross, will all be here -- at that place, and coordinate the work of obtaining the seed and the materials and labor, and the machinery essential to repairing the -- the crop production lost through flood.

And tying in with that is the third item, a letter from Mr. Donald Nelson, telling me that they have -- the W.P.B. (War Production Board) has allotted steel for an additional 18 thousand, 690 harvesting machines, and that those will -- we believe that the overall total of 55 thousand harvesting machines will be delivered in time for the 1943 harvest.

Within the next week we will have a new order ready for farm machinery and equipment recommended by the Food

Administrator, to be made available for the 1944 season; in other words, next spring's planting. This order will allow the manufacturers to make about 80 percent of their 1940 production of new equipment. And all of this in the farm machinery program has been given a Double-A-2 rating, and has had the steel allotted to it by directive.

The -- well, they have had a number of meetings. Senator (Scott W.) Lucas (Democrat of Illinois) is satisfied, because he was the chief person who was pushing the production of farm machinery; and he expresses himself as being satisfied with what we are doing -- to make every effort to see to it that the farmers have the necessary machinery to put in and harvest this crop, and the planting of next year's crop.

Now that's all that I have.

And at this point I think I had better go off the record, and turn the meeting over to my distinguished colleague.

We are awfully glad to have Mr. Churchill back here. I don't have -- I don't have to tell him that. All he has to do is to read the papers, and look into the faces of any American. He is very welcome.

I don't think we have very much to tell you, except that we are making exceedingly good progress, and taking up a -- a matter which I spoke of the other day, the total war -- the global war, which considering the -- the size of our problems, these discussions have been done in practically record time.

And so I am going to turn the meeting over to Mr. Churchill, and I -- I think that he will be willing to answer

almost -- with stress on the almost -- any question. (laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, in Australia there is a very great fear as to the Japanese threat in that area. What is your feeling about the matter?

THE PRIME MINISTER: The threat is certainly, in our opinion, less serious than it was when I saw you last in this room (December 23, 1941).

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, what can you tell us generally about the plans for the future, probably beginning with Europe?

THE PRIME MINISTER: A very expansive topic, -- (laughter) ---

Q. (interjecting) Yes, sir.

Q. (aside) Expansive?

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) --- and one which leads very early to difficult country; but our plans for the future are to wage this war until unconditional surrender is procured from all those who have molested us, and -- and this applies equally to Asia and to Europe. It used to apply to -- quite recently -- to Africa.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that word "molestation," or "molesting" is one of the best examples of your habitual understatement that I know. (laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, could you say anything about how well satisfied you are with the way things are going on the fighting fronts?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I am very much more satisfied than I was when I was here last (June 18, 1942). (laughter)

It was within this -- this -- not in this room -- that the President handed me the telegram of the surrender of Tobruk. And as I have mentioned to him, I don't think there was anybody -- any Englishman in the United States so unhappy, as I was that day, since Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga.

(loud laughter)

But the situation is very different now. The -- the plans which were made then in June, and before June, and the movements of troops which were set in motion before June last, enabled us to alter the balance of the affairs in Africa entirely. And we opened our offensive in Alamein on the 23rd of October. The United States and British descent upon North Africa began on the eighth of November, and since then we have already had a very great measure of -- of success, culminating in decisive victory of proportions equal to any of the great victories that have been -- that have been won: complete obliteration of the enemy.

And too, while this has been going on, our Russian Ally who this time last year was subject to very -- well, who in June last year was subject to the beginning of a very heavy and possibly deadly offensive by the Germans, and it seemed that they might well lose the Caucasus, has gained another series of successes, culminating in Stalingrad.

And Hitler has been struck with two -- two immense blows, tremendous shattering blows: in Tunisia, and at Stalingrad. And from every point of view we must regard the last ten or eleven months as examples of highly successful war -- a

perfectly indisputable turning of the tide.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, on this question of Russia. After you spoke to Congress, Senator (Albert B.) Chandler (Democrat of Kentucky), who is from my State, issued a statement saying that while you had promised Great Britain would stay to fight Japan to the end, you could not promise Russia would. Of course, there are reasons for this, but do you care to say anything? In your opinion of Russia's self-interest, would it lead her to fight Japan after the European war?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Oh well, it's one of those oversights that I haven't been placed in the position to give directions to Russia, as he mentions. (laughter)

And I have this feeling, that those people have been doing such a tremendous job facing this enormous mass -- they have done what nobody else was in a position to do: torn a large part of the guts out of the German army. And they have suffered very grievous losses. They are battling with, as I said to the Congress, 190 German divisions -- not up to strength, of course -- and 28 satellite divisions from the different countries that Hitler gathered around him in his attack on Russia. They are bearing all that weight, and I certainly have not felt that I ought to suggest to my government asking more of them.

But their strength may grow as time goes on. They must know that Japan has watched them with a purely opportunist eye. But it isn't for me at all to make any suggestions to them at all.

They have been grand Allies; and of course they have shown it in heroic fashion. They have struck blows that no one else could strike, and they have endured losses that no one power has ever been capable of enduring, and continuing an effective and even a growing factor in the field.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, what do you think of the dissolution of the Comintern?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I like it -- (laughter) -- I like it.

Q. To get back to Russia, sir, are you confident that the Russians will be able to hold out this year, as they have in past years?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I certainly think that they have a much better prospect of holding out this year than they had the previous time. Indeed, I must express my full confidence that they will hurl back any attack which is made upon them.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, in the light of developments since your speech to Congress, would you care to make any general statement concerning the experiment of bombing Germany into submission?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I haven't had very much time to go on with the experiment since I spoke to Congress.
(laughter)

We have had the heaviest raid we have ever had, the -- the raid on Dortmund (Germany), where 2 thousand tons were cast down upon them with, I believe, highly satisfactory results.

And also, it has been an extremely good week for the

United States air forces in Great Britain -- in the United Kingdom. They -- they made, I think, four heavy daylight attacks, which are judged to be extremely successful. Precision bombing in the daylight, of course, in proportion to the weight of bombs dropped, produces a more decisive effect -- more than the night bombing, because it goes to more specific targets precise and accurate.

THE PRESIDENT: You know, I think that's something that hasn't been brought out, and that is that the night bombing over Europe carries more weight of explosives; but of course being night-time the precision of the actual bombing can't be so great as the day bombing, which carries less explosives but with more precision because it's daylight. On the whole, the combination of the two, day and night, is achieving a more and more satisfactory result.

THE PRIME MINISTER: It's like running a twenty-four hour service. (laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, have you any comment to make upon relations between General (Henri Honore) Giraud and General (Charles) De Gaulle?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I have -- I am very glad to see that apparently it's improved, and that there is to be a meeting, judging only from what I read in the -- in the organs which you gentlemen sustain -- (laughter) -- and serve.

But certainly it is -- it will be very satisfactory if all this backchat comes to an end, and Frenchmen who are fighting to relieve and liberate their country get together and

look forward to the future instead of backward on the past, and think of the great duty they owe to France rather than to any factional interest.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. Prime Minister, the last time you spoke to us you used a term that I have remembered, because you said that you were not going to rely on an internal collapse of Germany, rather would you rely on an external knockout, at that time. Well, since then you have worked on Germany and the Occupied countries a good deal, and there are constantly recurring evidences that the German people may be getting close to "had enough." We still are working for this knockout, but have you any further light on that for us -- on the internal collapse?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I stand pat on the knockout. (laughter) But, of course, any windfall will be gratefully accepted. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, some quarters interpret your remarks to Congress on bombing to mean that other methods, which you said should not be excluded, should be postponed until the termination of the experiment.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Oh, No. That would be a most -- a most distorted deduction to draw. I said -- I said there is no reason why the experiment should not be continued, provided other methods are not excluded -- I mean other simultaneous methods, or current methods, are not excluded.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, whenever you and the President confer, the rumor always goes around that you are about to

pick an Allied commander in the European theatre. Could you tell us whether you have done that?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Done what?

Q. Picked an Allied commander for the European theatre?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, we have -- we have an Allied commander in the theatre that is at present in force in Northwest Africa.

Q. I was thinking of the next one, sir? (laughter)

THE PRIME MINISTER: No step of that kind has been taken at the present moment, because the great preparations that are going forward ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, back to Australia ---

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) --- haven't got to the point where the executive commander has to be chosen.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, ---

MISS MAY CRAIG: (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, this may be an oversight, or you might not have been informed of this either, but I am curious to know what you think is going on in Hitler's mind now? (much laughter)

THE PRIME MINISTER: I have very little doubt that if he could have the past back he would probably play his hand a little differently. I think he would have hesitated long, before he rejected all the repeated peace efforts that were made by Great Britain, which even brought the name of our government into disrepute, so far did we go on the path of trying to

placate and appease.

But he then got out of the period where he was restoring his country to its place among the countries of Europe. He had achieved that, but that wasn't what he was after at all. Appetite unbridled, ambition unmeasured -- all the world! There was no end to the appetite of this -- of this wicked man. I should say he repents now that he did not curb his passion before he brought such a great portion of the world against him and his country.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you think it's a sound assumption that he still has a mind? (laughter)

THE PRIME MINISTER: Do I think what?

Q. Do you think it's a sound assumption that he still has a mind?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I have no reason to suppose that he isn't in control of his faculties, and of the resources of his country. But, of course, I haven't the same facilities of acquainting myself with what is going on there, as I fortunately have on what is going on in the United States. (laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you care to say anything about Mussolini, and Italy? Is there any hint or news that you can bring us on that?

THE PRIME MINISTER: You know as much as I do about that. I think they are a softer proposition than Germany ---

Q. (interposing) What kind of proposition?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Softer.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Softer -- but I wouldn't count

on anything but the force of arms. It may be aided at any time by a change of heart on the part of the enemy's country -- countries, a weakening of morale.

Italy -- nobody proposes to take the native soil of Italy away from the Italian people. They will have their life. They will have their life in the new Europe. They have sinned -- erred -- by allowing themselves to be led by the nose by a very elaborate tyranny which was imposed upon them so that it gripped every part of their life. The one-party totalitarian system, plus the secret police applied over a number of years is capable of completely obliterating the sense of personal liberty.

And thus they were led by intriguing leaders -- who thought they had got the chance of five thousand years in aggrandizing themselves by the misfortunes of their neighbors who had not offended them in any way -- into this terrible plight in which they find themselves.

I think they would be very well advised to dismiss those leaders, and -- and throw themselves upon the -- upon the justice of those they have so grievously offended. We -- we should not stain our names before posterity by cruel and inhuman acts. We have our own reputation to consider. But after all it really is a matter for them to settle among themselves, and settle with their leaders.

All we can do is to apply those physical stimuli -- (laughter) -- which in default of moral sanctions are -- are sometimes capable of inducing a better state of mind in recalcitrant individuals and recalcitrant nations. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, there has been a lot of interest in the experts from India you brought with you. Would you care to comment about the situation in India, or China?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I am very anxious to increase the intensity of the war effort against Japan, and therefore brought these commanders-in-chief in order that they could meet with the United States officers, and particularly with those who have been serving with such effect in China, like General (Claire) Chennault and General (Joseph W.) Stilwell, and the high officers here, because it is evident that the war in that theatre must be prosecuted with the very greatest vigor, and on the best lines. And we have been talking a great deal about that, and thinking a great deal, and have arrived at conclusions which I believe are sound -- are good.

When I was here -- when I saw you last in -- in December 1941, or January 1942 -- I forget which it was -- when I did, of course, this question of priority -- which was first and which was second of the two great theatres and antagonists -- assumed a much more sharp form than at the present time. Our resources have greatly expanded. If the war continues on both fronts the war will be waged with equal force as our resources grow. Instead of being consecutive our efforts will be concurrent, and that great degree of effort will be capable of being applied at the same time in both directions. They have been already applied.

The forces that we have are becoming very respectable in munitions, and in men trained to war of all kinds; but as I

pointed out to Congress, the problem is one of application, and that problem of application is limited by distance, and the U-boat war, the amount of shipping, the character of the communications, the vast distances of the ocean. Our forces are growing and gathering their ambition, but to apply it is a matter of time, and it is exceedingly difficult to apply.

But we follow out this principle, that all soldiers must be engaged, and ships and airplanes must be engaged on the widest possible fronts, the broadest possible superficies, and maintain the fighting with the utmost intensity, because we are the stronger animal; we are the stronger combination; we are shaking the life out of the enemy; and as we are able to continue, we will not give him a moment's surcease.

This is particularly true of the air, where they are already beginning to fail to keep up at all to the necessary strength on the various fronts. Neither Japan nor Germany is able to maintain equality with Britain, the United States and Russia on all the fronts.

Still less are they able to do so in the field of production. Immense plurality -- the superiority of production -- is on our side. And although it takes a certain number of months after planes are made before they come into action -- perhaps a good many months, having regard to all the distances to be covered, and to the large ground staffs that have to be transported -- but in spite of that, at the end of certain periods, the great superiority in numbers of our manufacture and of our trading is bound to have effect, which so far as the air war

is concerned will be decisive.

Whether the ending of the air war -- the deciding of the air war will entail a similar ending of the other forms of warfare has yet to be seen. But the air was the weapon these people chose to subjugate the world.

Q. (interjecting) That's right.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) This was the weapon they struck at Pearl Harbor with. This was the weapon with which they boasted -- the Germans boasted they would terrorize all the countries of the world. And it is an example of poetic justice that this should be the weapon in which they should find themselves most out-matched and first out-matched in the ensuing struggle.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, have you anything to say about the submarine side of the situation?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I am very much encouraged by all that has happened there since the turn of the year. Really, it has been -- it has been very encouraging. The -- the output from the United States' shipyards is prodigious and has fulfilled all hopes, hopes which, when the -- the plans were first made and published, seemed to be excessive. But they have been made good. The movement of supplies across the ocean has been on an increasing scale. The surplus of -- of new building over sinkings over the last six months has been substantial, especially in the later months; and the killings of U-boats have improved and reached a very high pitch -- never better than in the last month.

MR. GODWIN: What was that word, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Killings.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Killings ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) --- of U-boats. I mean the killings of U-boats by our forces.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) That is due, of course, to the increasing numbers of U-boats, ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) --- but it is also due to the improved methods, and some wonderful things -- wonderful things that have been thought of on both sides of the Atlantic. And, of course, we interchange everything immediately. Anything we have we share and bring into action. A lot of clever people are thinking a lot about these things.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, there is -- there is a great deal more confidence in the Allied commanders in the field than there was a year ago. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, they have had a chance to come into action on reasonable terms. Indeed, on advantageous terms, because we -- we struck with superior forces at the right spot. We -- as your Confederate general (Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Cavalry commander in the Civil War) used to say, "We got there firstest with the mostest." (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) That's right.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) And also, because

our troops have -- since I was here last -- been equipped with all the best weapons. You have only got to turn the industry of the United States and Britain over from peace to war. It undoubtedly takes a couple of years or more to get it running, but when it does run it gives you a flow of weapons which certainly neither Germany nor Japan possibly can beat us.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, would you undertake to make a prediction on the progress of the war for the rest of this year? I have in mind your -- this statement you and the President made at Casablanca, on new and heavier blows against all of the Axis members in 1943?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I think -- I think that seems to be a very sound prediction, and couched in terms which are unexceptionable from the point of view of military security.
(laughter)

Q. Thank you very much, sir.

Q. Thank you.

THE PRIME MINISTER: Thank you very much.

(the newspapermen started to leave rather slowly, and the Prime Minister climbed onto his chair and gave the "V" for Victory sign with his fingers, which was accompanied by much applause)

THE PRESIDENT: May I say one word, please? Don't get the idea that the conferences are concluded. They are not.

They are continuing. (laughter)

THE PRIME MINISTER: We have a lot of ground to cover.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you.

(extra copy of this Press Conference
for the Prime Minister)

(Notebook PC-XIV -- Page 52 -- JR)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #900
Executive Office of the President
June 4, 1943 -- 10.55 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. EARLY: (to the President, after talking with May Craig): May is a grandmother.

THE PRESIDENT: May! No! Don't advertise it, nobody would know it. (she smiled back)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't ---

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: (President of The White House Correspondents' Association) (interposing) Mr. President, we are what you call reversing things this time. We have something for you to start a Press Conference.

You will recall that last February most of us here, including yourself, and excluding the ladies, attended a dinner up at the Statler Hotel. The White House Correspondents are trying for the first time to raise some money for the infantile paralysis campaign. Well, the hotel was new, and their auditing department was a little green -- (laughter) -- and we had a little trouble getting things squared away, but finally we have.

So it is a great pleasure to be able to tell you, sir, that we have a check for you for a thousand dollars ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Gosh!

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: (continuing) --- for the infantile paralysis campaign, which Mr. Wootton -- Paul Wootton will present to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Paul, that's perfectly fine. You and Doug very greatly surprised me.

MR. PAUL WOOTTON: Well, Mr. President, The White House Correspondents' Association feels very happy that we have had the opportunity to help such a worthy organization as the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. And we also think that it is fitting for us to do a little something toward a cause that we have seen you do so much for.

THE PRESIDENT: I am very, very grateful. That is a real surprise. It makes me think that -- after this -- speech-making on my part pays. (laughter)

Q. It always has. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) Pays and pays.

That is very, very welcome; and of course, on this infantile paralysis work, one of the things -- I always rap on wood -- we have been extremely fortunate in, is not having any serious epidemic among the armed forces yet. Of course, we hope we will go through with that fine record. There are always a certain number of cases of infantile paralysis at all times, because it is endemic rather than epidemic; and we are taking steps -- the Foundation -- all the time, to prepare for the eventualities of -- of a real epidemic. We hope it won't come, but, in any event, research is going on through the National Foundation.

And every year, I think, we are learning more and more about the treatment of infantile. We haven't got very far yet through science, in discovering the -- the cause and the --

and the spread; but at least the care of it has improved to such a point that a very large percentage of the -- of the infantile paralysis cases -- which incidentally hit grownups just as well as children -- a very large percentage of them are able to recover sufficiently to get about and lead -- lead a useful life.

I am very grateful to The White House Correspondents' Association.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us anything about Mr. (Joseph E.) Davies' mission now?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Yes. I think I can tell you that he brought back a letter to me from Marshal Stalin, and that the understanding and accord between us are excellent. I think that's all.

Q. Thank you, sir.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us whether troop protection will be extended to the miners who wish to return to work Monday?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think on -- on that question, it's better not to say anything, because in a sense it's a bit "iffy." I hope they will go back to work on Monday.

I think I can -- I can say this: that there has been a good deal written about the induction of miners into the armed services. Now there is nothing startling or new about that. The rule is a very, very simple one. And I hope you will make it clear that it doesn't apply just to miners, but it applies to everybody else. If anybody is deferred because of an occupation which is essential to the war, normally you will

remain deferred as long as you work at that occupation. When you cease to work at that occupation -- as I say, this is not just miners, it's everybody -- every essential work that is necessary to the war -- as soon as you stop that work for the nation, then you are liable to be inducted into the armed forces. I think that's -- that's a very simple explanation of what a great deal has been unnecessarily made of it (sic).

Q. Mr. President, is there any prospect that you might extend that rule to miners who are not specifically deferred for that reason, but have been deferred perhaps, or haven't yet been called, or for some other reason?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's just like everybody else, if they haven't got something the matter with them physically and have been deferred because of that.

Q. I didn't mean that. I thought some of them there will be 3-A, because they were -- for dependency reasons?

THE PRESIDENT: They would just be like everybody else on the dependents' rule -- no distinction.

Q. Sir, there has been some indication that certain alien laws might be invoked in the case of the aliens working in the mines, who had struck. It wasn't exactly clear just exactly what they might be. Do you care to say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite understand.

Q. I didn't, either.

THE PRESIDENT: No aliens --- (laughter). Aliens are inducted. I think it's just the same rule; there wouldn't be

any change.

Q. Would the aliens law -- the law against aliens be invoked against aliens who struck?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so. Just treat them like anybody else.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us if you received any advice as to whether or not the parties might be disposed to settle ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The what?

Q. Could you tell us if you have received advice as to whether the parties might be disposed to settle the railway wage question, on the basis of these Emergency Board's reports?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't had any official advice yet, but I think the only -- on the Railway Labor Board report, the only question, frankly, is something that wasn't taken up by the mediators; and that relates to quite a large number of railway workers who are not paid on the mileage basis. Locomotive engineers and conductors and trainmen, and so forth and so on, are paid on the -- on the mileage basis, not -- not a per hour or a per diem rate of mileage. There are a large number of other people -- for instance, trackwalkers and white-collar people in the offices, and under rulings up to date they have not been getting time-and-a-half for overtime. In other words, they are more on the industrial end -- the clerical end, than the people who run the trains.

And the question I have -- I have written a letter to Mr. (George M.) Harrison (Grand President of Railway and

Steamship Clerks), I think, and Mr. (J. J.) Pelley (President, Association of American Railroads), to ask them to confer as to the exemption from the time-and-a-half law in respect to the people who are not on a mileage basis. So it seems -- that is a question as to whether, just because they happen to work in a -- in the Grand Central Depot, for example, in the offices there, as opposed to a department store just around the corner, which does pay time-and-a-half, why they shouldn't get time-and-a-half too.

Q. Mr. President, could we have that letter, sir?
Could you have Steve (Early) give us a copy?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's all right, Steve.

MR. EARLY: All right, sir.

Q. Mr. President, there have been some reports that you might enlarge the Office of War Mobilization to provide for a representative of labor, and I guess agriculture. Any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh Yes, yes. It is generally advanced by the same -- the same newspaper owners that are yelling for a war cabinet of very small size, on the ground that the present people who meet with the Cabinet are about 17, and they want a very small Cabinet. Well, this Mobilization committee is not a -- especially a Cabinet -- I don't know what the word is -- it is a small group with rather over-all powers; and as soon as it is set up, the policy of these same newspaper owners is to demand that it be made just as big as the other one was. It's rather amusing. In fact, it's almost a scream.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us anything about

the report that Admiral (William H.) Standley (our Ambassador to Russia) had submitted his resignation, please?

THE PRESIDENT: I am sure he hasn't. He hasn't to me, and he hasn't to the State Department.

Q. Mr. President, are you giving special attention to commercial fisheries?

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

Q. Commercial fisheries?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not, but a lot of people are.

Q. I understood there was a request that commercial fisheries be given a higher rank in Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say it has just as high a rank as almost anything else. It is very important to get fish. I don't think we grade things according to rank. Only -- only in -- in the drawing rooms of Washington do we do that. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, are there any plans for a radio speech?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #901
Executive Office of the President
June 8, 1943 -- 4.02 P.M., E.W.T.

Q. Good afternoon, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (to May Craig) Any more grandchildren, May, since last Friday?

MAY CRAIG: I'm a wreck. (laughter)

Q. (female) She hasn't as many as I have.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Did they say All In?

MR. ROMAGNA: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I only -- I only have one thing, which I suppose would come up fairly soon, and I thought I might as well reduce it to writing. And Steve (Early) will have it for you when you go out.

(reading): "A Statement by the President.

"From time to time, since the present war began, there have been reports that one or more of the Axis powers was seriously contemplating use of poisonous or noxious gases, or other inhumane devices of warfare.

"I have been loathe to believe that any nation, even our present enemies, could or would be willing to loose upon mankind such terrible and inhumane weapons. However, evidence that the Axis powers are making significant preparations indicative of such an intention is being reported with increasing frequency from a variety of sources.

"Use of such weapons has been outlawed by the

general opinion of civilized mankind. This country has not used them, and I hope we will never be compelled to use them. I state categorically that we shall under no circumstances resort to the use of such weapons, unless they are first used by our enemies.

"As President of the United States, and as Commander-in-Chief of the American Armed Forces, I want to make it clear beyond all doubt to any of our enemies contemplating a resort to such desperate and barbarous methods, that acts of this nature committed against any one of the United Nations will be regarded as having been committed against the United States itself, and will be treated accordingly. We promise to any perpetrators of such crimes full and swift retaliation in kind. And I feel obliged now to warn the Axis armies and the Axis peoples, in Europe and in Asia, that the terrible consequences of any use of these inhumane methods on their part will be brought down swiftly and surely upon their own heads.

"Any use of gas by any Axis power, therefore, will immediately be followed by the fullest possible retaliation upon munitions centers, seaports and other military objectives throughout the whole extent of the territory of such Axis country."

That's strong enough. 7

VOICES: Yes, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there's anything else.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your first meeting with the Office of War Mobilization?

THE PRESIDENT: Had a very successful meeting. We discussed a great many subjects.

Q. Do you want to be a little more specific?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No, because we discussed so many that it wouldn't be fair to single out any one.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us about your luncheon with Sister (Elizabeth) Kenny, and Dr. (Basil) O'Connor?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we talked about this method of treatment of infantile paralysis cases which has been very successful, and the relationship of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis to it, and discussed principally the need of training more people in the method, so that it could be used in a widespread way throughout the country. People are being trained at the present time, but not in sufficient numbers.

Q. Mr. President, would it be proper for us to call the War Mobilization Committee a War Cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: I would call it the War Mobilization Committee. It doesn't cost much more. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, is it to meet regularly on a certain ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q. Is it to meet regularly on a certain day?

THE PRESIDENT: We are going to try to meet on Mondays. We may meet in between, or if some of us can't be there Monday, it might be put off until Tuesday.

Q. By "we," do you mean that you will participate at least once a week?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't promise to.

Q. Is that the general idea, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. And then the Committee might itself meet?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, Yes. They don't have to have me.

Q. Mr. President, was there anyone present besides the Cabinet officers and the original members?

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's all.

Q. Just those?

THE PRESIDENT: Then, of course, they will call in people on special subjects all the time.

Q. Mr. President, have you reached the point where you can name the man who will represent the United States on the United Nations Food Conference Interim Commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q. Fairly soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have had any nominations from the State Department yet.

Q. It will come through State?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us whether an American officer has been selected to be Supreme Commander of the forthcoming invasion of Europe? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a leading question. (more laughter)

Q. Well, I meant it to be, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. That would -- I suppose you will know it a few months after he was chosen.

Q. Mr. President, have you received the resignation of the Auditor of Puerto Rico, Mr. Fitzsimmons?

THE PRESIDENT: Have I, Steve? I think I have.

MR. EARLY: Not to my knowledge.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Not to my knowledge, sir.

Q. (interposing) Would you say anything yet about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I can't -- I can't -- I have an idea that I have received it, and I haven't -- Steve has an idea that I haven't.

MR. EARLY: Not that I know of.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Not that I know of.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I have, but I am not dead sure. (laughter)

MR. EARLY: (aside) Up in the air -- another one of those things I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: Better send for Rudolf (Forster).

Q. Mr. President, is there any word you care to say about current affairs in Argentina?

THE PRESIDENT: I think not.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Mr. Forster says No, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: No? All right. (laughter)

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, the National Committee for the Liberation of France, that newly formed Committee, is that stable enough to be recognized as a government?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think there's any news on that at present, Pete. Better treat it that way.

Q. Any word, sir, on the signing of the Pay-as-you-go tax bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it -- it will be signed very shortly.

Q. (interposing) Are you just ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think the Treasury knows that I am going to sign it, I can say that much. Preparations are being made to carry it into effect.

Q. Mr. President, will that be followed by a request for more taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think -- I don't know what -- whether we can put it in the form of -- as you put it -- as a request, but I think everybody realizes that we have this gap of savings, a gap that causes increase in prices, and that there can't be any economic change in the country except to close that gap -- that is not a change, it's the same thing -- to close that gap one way or another.

Well, there are probably two ways it might be used jointly. One is the compulsory savings, and the other is taxes, probably a combination of the two -- just as much -- just as necessary now as it was last January.

Q. Mr. President, Congress is getting ready to

take a couple of months vacation. Is it likely that there will be any tax recommendation before they depart?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there will be a recommendation before they actually go home.

Q. From you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. From you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Probably.

Q. Mr. President, is it still the ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, is the 16 billion (dollars) to be revised upward in the new taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to tell you that when I know that I am going to say something about it.

Q. Mr. President, can they get -- close that gap as of now, unless you have more excise taxes and more sales taxes, or whatever you want to call them, which couldn't be done by an income tax increase, because it would --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know about the details at all. That is up to Congress. But, of course, at the present time, this -- this gap has not been closed, ---

Q. (interjecting) That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and the quicker it is closed the better.

Q. Do you feel, despite the tremendous success of the last Bond Drive, that compulsory savings may still be necessary to eliminate this inflationary gap?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly possible.

Q. Mr. President, you said you weren't going into details. It would be fair to assume from that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I wouldn't assume it, because that is entirely up to Congress.

Q. Mr. President, are you still mad at a sales tax?

THE PRESIDENT: General sales tax?

Q. Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, because it hits the poorer people in the country, and after all most people belong to that classification. That doesn't mean that every excise tax could be classified as a sales tax.

Well, just for example -- this will probably interest all of you -- in England they have very greatly increased the excise taxes on cigarettes and tobacco and liquor, and they are consuming just as many cigarettes today, and I think probably just as much liquor, as they did before, -- (laughter) -- showing -- showing a very excellent method of closing the gap.

Q. Mr. President, are you disappointed, sir, that the President of Chile (Juan Antonio Rios) has had to postpone his trip a second time?

THE PRESIDENT: I only know what I read in the paper. I am awfully sorry, and I hope he will come very soon. I am seeing the Chilean Ambassador with a message from President Rios, about five o'clock this afternoon. So far, officially, I only know what I have seen in the papers.

Q. Mr. President, to revert to this poison gas state-

ment, are there any indications that the Axis was intending very soon to use poison gas?

THE PRESIDENT: (picking up his copy of the Statement) I don't think I can go any further than what I said here.

(reading): "However, evidence that the Axis powers are making significant preparations indicative of such an intention is being reported with increasing frequency from a variety of sources."

Q. Do you have in mind, sir, what Axis nations, or is there one nation in particular?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think the -- that term is sufficient.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It's plural. I will have you notice that.

Q. Can you elaborate, at least from the American angle, on the plans which the Prime Minister (Winston Churchill) spoke of today?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. I just found it here. (indicating)

Q. (adding) For amphibious operations of a peculiarly complex nature?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think -- I haven't read it. I had better read the whole sentence. (laughter)

Q. One more question about Puerto Rico, if I may. Are you ready to say anything about appointing an Attorney

General down there?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.