

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #913
Executive Office of the President
August 10, 1943 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

Q. Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (just returned from a short vacation in Canada) Well!

MR. GODWIN: What kind of bait do you catch your fish with?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: What kind of bait?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether you are old enough to have used it when you were a boy -- a thing called earthworms.

MR. GODWIN: I was going to say, I had a guide who talked about it last night, and he called them educated worms.

THE PRESIDENT: They are new to me. I always called them earthworms. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Good fishing!

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing I have got -- I have just had a telephone message from Mr. Mackenzie King (Prime Minister of Canada), saying that the Prime Minister of Great Britain (Winston Churchill) has just arrived in Canada, with members of his staff; and I think you can assume that I will probably see him. It will probably be a staff meeting. I can't tell you the time, date, or anything else.

(then to a reporter, who was apparently talking to himself) What did you say? (laughter)

Q. Is there anything more?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, I don't think I have got anything to say.

Q. Mr. President, we continue to hear talk of a second front in Europe. Is it a third front that remains to be opened?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, my boy. You have never been a columnist. You talk like a columnist. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: A fellow over here called it a third front.

THE PRESIDENT: No. He's a radio "transmitter," aren't you? (more laughter)

Q. Will there be any Russian participation in these talks in Canada, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Will what?

Q. Will there be any Russian participation in these talks in Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: Any what?

Q. Russian participation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. That doesn't mean that we wouldn't be awfully glad to have them. It's just British and American, that's all.

Q. What?

THE PRESIDENT: British and American, that's all.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything that you

can say about the development of a program to lower the cost of food to consumers?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is anything on that yet. We are all working toward it ---

Q. (interposing) In that connection, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the anti-inflation fight.

Q. (continuing) --- in that connection, can you say anything about Representatives (Jesse P.) Wolcott (Republican of Michigan) and (Henry B.) Steagall (Democrat of Alabama) being called back for conferences in connection with food?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it. What's that about, food?

Q. I don't know. I heard they were coming.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- it must have been a committee.

Q. Mr. President, has the White House received any confirmation of reports emanating from Madrid that Adolf Hitler's regime has been supplanted by a military junta?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a thing, except what I read in the papers. Neither has the Secretary of State. At least he hadn't up to half-past twelve today.

Q. Mr. President, the committee you appointed to study revision of the Puerto Rican constitution has finished its work. Have you heard what they did?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't. I have only been back since yesterday morning. They came in to see me -- what was it? -- about a week ago Friday, and they hadn't

finished their work then. Now, if they are still here, I suppose they will come in to see me before they disband.

Q. I believe they just disbanded a day or two ago, before you got back.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. Better ask -- who is it? -- Mr. Ickes (Secretary of the Interior) is the Chairman of it, I think.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

Q. (interposing) Do you have any indications ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I haven't had a word since a week ago Friday.

Q. Anything on this conference today, Mr. President, with the -- Secretary Hull, and Dr. (Isaiah) Bowman, and Dr. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Just ---

Q. (continuing) --- (Leo) Pasvolsky?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- continuing.

Q. Is that post-war planning?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Would that relate to post-war planning?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q. Anything on railroad wages, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) As ---

Q. (continuing) --- while you were away, a fellow named (John) Bovingdon was fired from the Government. It

seems that (Martin) Dies (Chairman of the Special Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities) said he was a ballet dancer with Communist tendencies. (laughter) It has been suggested, Mr. President, that you set up some sort of committee to pass on such cases. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh! -- I did?

Q. No. It has been suggested.

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't you set up a committee like that, and let me have their names? I think you might do a very good job on it. (much laughter)

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #914
Held on the Terrace at The Citadel in Quebec, Canada
August 24, 1943 -- at 12.15 P.M., E.W.T.

(this is the joint press conference of
the President, the Prime Minister of
Great Britain Winston Churchill, and
the Prime Minister of Canada Mackenzie
King)

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: (coming out onto the
Terrace with the President and Mackenzie King) Oh! I hope
we've got a dry seat. (wet outside, but warm and sunny)

(three chairs were placed at an angle from
the parapet. Mackenzie King was seated in
the middle, Winston Churchill on his left,
and the President on his right. They faced
a battery of motion picture cameras and
still photographers. Anthony Eden, Foreign
Minister, Brendan Bracken, Stephen Early
and Harry Hopkins sat on the parapet behind
them. The newspapermen -- about 170 of
them -- quickly gathered in a semi-circle
around the three chairs)

THE PRESIDENT: (after being seated) Mr. Mackenzie,
you are now the "presiding officer." (laughter) (then

noticing the newspapermen) Who woke you up this morning?

(more laughter)

VOICE: They are not all here.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: Why don't we put a mat or a rug down? (several were kneeling on the wet ground)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Merriman Smith, UP) Didn't you ring a dinner bell or something in the morning? (a story that at an early hour he rang a gong used for announcing press conferences on all the floors at the Clarendon Hotel, getting everybody up)

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: That's libel.

THE PRESIDENT: (facetiously) No. (laughter)

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Gentlemen of the press, before -- before the conference breaks up, the President and Prime Minister hope to have an opportunity, in which I am proud indeed to be able to join them, of interchanging greetings with you, and also of expressing to you all, our thanks for the helpful cooperation which the press has given in the period of the conference.

In order that the matters may be carried out in the best way possible, it has been thought that if the cameras would perform their function, in the first instance, to the duration of four minutes, the gentlemen might then disappear and have the negatives developed, after which the other members of the press would remain, and Mr. Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt, and possibly myself, would have just a word of greeting to exchange with you before the thing breaks up.

(the still and motion picture cameramen took their pictures and left, the newspapermen crowding into the vacated space)

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Churchill says he hopes you won't sit down too long in one of those puddles.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL. Don't go and tumble over. (the parapet)

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Move back -- move back. Can't you crowd back a little, and make this (semi-circle) wider? I think it will be easier for everyone here if you are not too close.

Well, Mr. Churchill, would you like to say a few words to the gentlemen of the press? (then noticing several newspapermen standing on the parapet) Now, are you -- are you going to stay in that position? Watch that parapet.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't tumble over.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: It's a high wall.

THE PRESIDENT: Watch the parapet. (then to Secret Serviceman Hipsley, of tall and husky frame, standing in front of the newspapermen) You had better kneel down, you're too big. (laughter)

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Now I call on Mr. Churchill to say a few words to the gentlemen assembled.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: Well, ladies and gentlemen, until I arrived here I thought that the President was going to follow Mr. Mackenzie King in the proceedings.

I didn't know what I was going to say, and I thought that I would base my remarks in accordance with what he said.

(laughter) And he doesn't -- but now he has arrived ---

VOICE: (interposing) Louder. Louder, please, Mr. Churchill.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: (louder) Now he has arrived, he tells me that he wishes me to begin. Now he is going to listen to what I have got to say, and he is reserving himself not to make any errors I may make. (laughter)

Well, I understand this is a -- is a talk which is not for quotation or attribution, but to enable us to meet -- I am not making a speech -- (much laughter) -- I am not making a speech -- to enable us, as Mr. Mackenzie King in his very happy phrase said, "to interchange greetings," and rather in the same way as we did at Casablanca.

Now I have quite realized that many of you gentlemen, probably the most distinguished body of great representatives that could be gathered together, you have been -- you have felt impatient at the fact that -- well, you were all gathered here, and there was so very little to report and write about.

Well, that was inherent in the -- in the nature of the -- of the task, because these conferences which attract world-wide attention do not themselves yield a matter which can be continually contributive to the -- to the press, or to the world. And one hopes that as a result of the decisions taken here, events will occur weeks and months later which will fully justify all the labor which was expended. And

it is by those results, which are not available in any form that can be even foreshadowed today, that those who take part in these conferences must be judged; and I hope, therefore, that you will appreciate and sympathize with our difficulties, in the same way as I have tried to show I understand yours.

As an old reporter, newspaperman, war correspondent, when most of you were still unborn -- (laughter) -- I know -- I know the feelings of irritation which come when the trouble taken by the press does not seem to reap a proportionate reward.

But we are fighting a great life-and-death struggle, and I must ask for the patriotism, tolerance and indulgence of all those who are here to make allowances for that, criticising anything they think should be criticised, but altogether to make fair allowances for the conditions under which we are doing our work, which are essentially those of secrecy, which are essentially those which the results -- the results of which, when they can be spoken of at all, should be the subject of considered statement. Therefore, I hope that you will be to our faults a little mild, and to our virtues very kind.

This is the sixth conference I have had with the President; and I know there are some people who say, "Why is it necessary to have all these conferences?" But I think a much more reasonable way of looking at it would be to say, "How is it they are able to get on with such long intervals between the conferences?"

When you think that our armies are linked together as no two armies have ever been -- our fleets, air forces and armies linked together as never before in history, not only side by side but intermingled very often -- and that the operations which they are conducting are being achieved with unexampled rapidity ahead of schedule and ahead of program; and when you think of all the difference it makes to the soldiers who are fighting with all the power at their command -- and at which they will have to be kept, at the same time, at the summit and at the center -- and that there will have to be a clear marking out of the course ahead, and a detailed study -- a deliberate study of all the steps that have to be taken -- and what a difference that all makes to the soldier, and how many lives may easily be saved, and what abridgments may be achieved in this long and devastating, desecrating war -- then I feel sure that you will agree with me, and with the President, that we are rightly to come together, and to bring our staffs together, to bring not only the head staffs but all the very large staffs together indispensable to the working of modern operations.

A great advantage is achieved by personal contact. I assure you it would not be possible to carry on the complicated warfare we are waging without -- without close, intimate, friendly, personal contacts, and they have been established at every level in the very large organizations which have been brought together here at Quebec.

I certainly must tell you that I have had --

found the work very hard here -- very hard. I have hardly had a minute to spare, from the continued flow of telegrams from London to the -- to the necessity of dealing with a number of great questions which cannot be hurried in their consideration; and a great many minor decisions, some of which take just as much -- take just as much time and trouble. All this crowding in has certainly not left me any time to go about and see people, and to make all the exterior contacts which I should like to have done, except for an hour yesterday when I saw a few people.

That, I think, has been true also of our staffs. They have worked at tremendous pressure. Not only the combined conferences, which have been daily and twice a day and so forth, but each of the staffs has had to spend long hours in conclave together among themselves; and, of course, the President has had to sit with his officers, and I with those whom I have brought over. We have had to discuss with them, all the movements -- the thoughts -- the decisions which have been taking place.

Well, we have got to the end of the task. We have got to the end of the task. We have reached a very good -- very good -- I hope very good conclusions. I hope they are very good. They are certainly unanimous and agreed, and most extreme cordiality prevails.

Now, you must not suppose that is no small thing, because with the best will in the world differences of view must arise, when two great nations with their immense

military forces, with problems in every quarter of the globe, are working together. They must. And it is astonishing what happens, even if you are separated for as much as three months. The difference -- the difference -- the differences arise not on principle but on emphasis and priority which, if they are allowed to consider, do not hamper operations therefore.

I never felt more sure than -- about anything than I do about the fact that these conferences are an indispensable part of the war -- of the war -- the successful conduct of the war, and of a shortening of the struggle, and of the saving of bloodshed to the troops. The least we can do for them is to make sure that they go into action under the best conditions and the best planning, that our foresight and deliberations have played their part in all those plans.

Well, on the whole, things are very much better than they were when we met at Casablanca.

They are even better than when we met in Washington last.

Now, great operations have been successfully accomplished. All Sicily is prostrate under our authority, and apparently taking to it in a very kindly manner.

The -- the -- and of course, needless to say, the moment one achievement has been made, everyone rightly expects something else to come forward onto the scene; and I have no doubt something else will come, but I am sure you would be the first to silence my lips if you thought I was going to in any way give any indication other than one that would be

misleading to the enemy, as you may always hear something that is coming about future operations. Still, I do look forward to great steps being taken to beating down our antagonists one after -- one after another.

And I should like to point out that the relations between the British and American armies are different to those between any other large forces in the ages, in that they are working together a particular set of operations -- same set of operations.

Now, another reason why we are here only two, instead of three or more, is that of course a very large part of our discussions has naturally and necessarily been concerned with the -- with the war against Japan; and those are subjects of special interest to the powers who are belligerent against Japan. That you can see for yourselves.

We have had Mr. (T. V.) Soong (Foreign Minister of China) here, and we have made plans for pressing forward with the study not only of short-term action but, of course, long-term; and as we hope, final and decisive actions will have to be taken against that -- that greedy and ambitious -- ambitious government and people.

Generally speaking, I can give you -- have every right to give you the groundwork on which you can feel strong and healthy confidence. We are well-armed. We are better armed than before -- better equipped. We, who began so weak and, so in many ways ill-equipped, are now enjoying that superiority in weapons -- in material of all kinds.

The U-boat warfare has rolled over from the debit to the credit side. The great outflow of shipping so magnificently and prodigiously produced by the United States and by Canada, together with the heavy sinkings of U-boats and the safe conduct of convoys, has undoubtedly placed us in a position where we can say without any doubt that Britain and the United States will be able to bring the whole of their weight to bear -- the whole of their weight.

And that, combined with the superb exertions of our Russian ally, far away locked in the great land battles in the heart of Europe, those two combined together should give us the very best means of helping all the toiling millions -- the anxious, suffering millions of the world, thrown out of their houses, taken from their fields -- who through no fault or device of their own have been condemned to toil all these four years.

Thank you very much for listening to what I have had to say. But Mr. Mackenzie King reminds me, quite properly, that four years is from the British point of view, but the Chinese were in for seven years.

Well, let's do our utmost to bring these periods of tribulations to an end; and believe me, the work which we have done here will, I am sure, play a part -- contributory part. It is a satisfactory milestone on the road, and I have no doubt there will be other milestones in the -- in the -- in the future.

But this, I am certain, has been a most successful

conference; and if you will -- while at the same time not hesitating to mingle corrections with approval -- will at the same time give us the best aid you can in making a success of this, and in giving -- spreading wide that feeling of confidence which -- which I feel, and which I am sure you are justified in feeling, then I think you might have found this conference has yielded all that you would have liked from a press point of view, and certainly feel that you have played your part with others in the great groundwork which has ended and steadily progressing.

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Thank you very much.

I invite you, Mr. President, to speak to the ladies and gentlemen of the press.

THE PRESIDENT: I think perhaps that I can give away a secret, by explaining that all during the early hours of this morning -- I was going to say last night -- the three of us were in an apologetic frame of mind to the press. We were honestly trying to give you all some spot news. And we talked for some two hours, trying to devise something along the line of a slogan -- a phrase -- by which this conference might be known in the future, but we failed utterly. And that is why we come here in a spirit of apology.

The Prime Minister has well explained why there are certain things that cannot be talked about or printed, and yet I think there is one thing in which the press can help, as the press well knows, to a very great degree. This war is not being run by conferences, it goes far deeper than that.

We live in democracies. The war effort in the field has gone extremely well. That is in -- in part due to the conferences of our staffs. And yet, what the men carry, what the men eat, the ships they sail in, that all comes from the unanimity of our war effort, down to the average citizen. And I believe that it is due to the magnificent effort in all our countries, but one which must be kept up very clearly and definitely to the high pitch that it has now arrived at. We cannot afford in any way to assume that military and naval or air men can win the war alone. They need the backing of the people back home. And that is why this conference, while of very great value, must be implemented by the people in the factories, and the shipyards, and in the fields.

We have had a success -- a series of successes. When I think to what the Prime Minister said -- think back a little -- little over a year ago -- back of Casablanca -- June 1942, when we were meeting in Washington, things looked pretty dark -- to the days of Tobruk, to the days of a lack of an offensive on our part. We were still on the defensive, clearly, in almost every part of the world.

And we know that it takes time. We can't order things done and have them happen overnight, or over the weekend. And so, what was planned in June of 1942 didn't go into effect until November 1942. And the things that were planned at Casablanca have only just gone into effect, as we realize through the capture of Sicily -- Tunis first, and then Sicily.

I think you can assume that other -- other plans

are about to be developed. But that point about the conference being a -- a detail, if you like, an essential part of winning the war in the shortest possible time ought to be linked with the part that the people of the United Nations must contribute ---

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: (interjecting) Hear -- hear.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- to the earliest and most satisfactory victory.

I think also that there are one or two things that might be assumed. I know the value of controversy making the front page -- (laughter) -- and I think it's an actual fact that we have gone through this series of conferences without controversy. We have a meeting of the minds, and I believe that that is going to last, not only through the war but for many, many long years after the war is over and peace comes.

In the same way, I think we ought to realize that this is a war throughout the world, that we are looking at it as a world war. Yes, we discussed the Atlantic situation, and the operations in the Mediterranean; but we have discussed equally the operations and the problems in the Southwest Pacific, of China, and even of that very important fact that happened during this conference, the throwing out, or shall I say the self-removal of the Japs from the only part of this hemisphere that they had a foot in. Therefore, there is no difference, East and West, and below the Equator or above the Equator. It's all one broad and general operation. That was one of our

problems last night and into the early hours of this morning. We couldn't say anything that would create a controversy, because there was none.

I can tell you also that not once but a dozen times, Mr. Churchill and I have said this spot is the best yet.

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We have come here to Quebec, and we have appreciated the wonderful hospitality of Mr. King ---

PRIME MINISTER CHURCHILL: (interjecting) Hear -- hear.

MR. ANTHONY EDEN: (interjecting) Hear -- hear.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and of the Canadian people, because he speaks for them.

I don't think we could find a more delightful spot than here, with its great historic background. I, like Mr. Churchill, wish we had had more time to get about and see things, and do things. I will say that I shall never forget the very excellent eating qualities of Quebec trout. (laughter) That is something that I shall long remember. All in all, it has been a tremendous success.

We wanted last night to give out some kind of statement that would be -- what shall I call it? -- a bit exciting. Well, a statement has been prepared. I don't believe -- I don't believe there's a "cough in a carload" in it. (laughter) I thought I might read it to you. It's for release at three o'clock this afternoon, but in order to save you the

trouble of reading it yourselves, I thought -- (laughter) -- perhaps it might be easier if I did it. It isn't long. Three o'clock is the time of issuance of this statement.

(reading): "The Anglo-American War Conference, which opened at Quebec on August 11, under the hospitable auspices of the Canadian government, has now concluded its work.

"The whole field of world operations has been surveyed and in the light of the many gratifying events which have taken place since the meeting of the President and the Prime Minister in Washington at the end of May, and the necessary decisions have been taken to provide for the forward action of the Fleets, Armies and Air Forces of the two nations. Considering that these forces are intermingled in continuous action against the enemy in several quarters of the globe, it is indispensable that entire unity of aim and method should be maintained at the summit of the war direction."

And may I say as a sidelight on that, we -- we were compelled, Mr. Churchill and I, to speak of the "Fleets, Armies and Air Forces of the two nations." The reason for that is that this is a staff conference between the British and American staffs; but I want to point out that it is only because of that restriction that we did not speak of the splendid forces of the Dominion of Canada. They are at the front, as we all know, working with the British and -- and the Americans; and I don't want anybody to think, anywhere in the world, that we have forgotten them -- what the Canadians have been doing in this war.

Now to go back to the statement.

(continuing reading): "Further conferences will be needed, probably at shorter intervals than before, as the war effort of the United States and the British Commonwealth and Empire against the enemy spreads and deepens. It will not be helpful to the fighting troops to make any announcement of the decisions that have been reached. These can emerge only in action.

"It may, however, be stated that the military discussions of the Chiefs of Staff turned very largely upon the war against Japan, and the bringing of effective aid to China. Mr. T. V. Soong, representing the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was a party to the discussions. In this field, as in the European, the President and the Prime Minister were able to receive and approve the unanimous recommendations of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Agreement was also reached upon the political issues underlying or arising out of the military operations.

"It was resolved to hold another conference before the end of the year between the British and American authorities, in addition to any tripartite meeting which it may be possible to arrange with Soviet Russia. Full reports of the decisions, as far as they affect the war against Germany and Italy, will be furnished to the Soviet government.

"Consideration has been given to the question of relations with the French Committee of Liberation, and it is understood that an announcement by a number of governments

will be made in the latter part of the week."

Well, I think -- I think that's about all that I can say.

And I merely want once more to thank Mr. King and the people of the Dominion for all that they have done to make this a very busy, but a very happy ten days since we came here.

THE PRESS: Thank you, sir.

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: Gentlemen, just one word before you part.

I would like to say in your presence to the President and to the Prime Minister of Great Britain, how greatly honored the people of Canada have felt that they should have agreed to hold the meeting which they have just been holding in Canada, and particularly in this historic old city of Quebec.

My colleagues and I were very proud indeed when we received word from Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill that they were agreed upon meeting in this city, in our country. I wish to thank them most warmly for having come here and spent the time that they have spent with us. We all wish that it might be longer. We all wish that there might have been a greater opportunity for our people to have the privilege of seeing them more, as they did yesterday in the city for the Prime Minister, and also for the President. But we have realized that this is a very -- very serious conference, and that the matters being discussed here are the most important of any that can be discussed in the world at this time, that every moment and hour has been precious.

It has been my privilege to -- to know something of what has been done behind the scenes, and I would just like to assure all of you ladies and gentlemen of the press that there hasn't been a moment in which the thoughts and the minds of these gentlemen and their military advisers have not been directed to the supreme purpose for which they have met and gathered together here.

I am delighted, Mr. President and Mr. Churchill, that you have both found it possible to not only see each other but to see just a bit of the immediate environs of the city, and to carry away -- we too, as I know you will -- many happy memories of the few days that we have had the privilege of having you in our midst.

May I say to you ladies and gentlemen of the press, on behalf of the government, how deeply we appreciate -- the government of Canada -- how deeply we appreciate the very helpful cooperation that you have given to all of us during the period of the conference. And I want to thank you on behalf of what you have sent out to the world as the picture and background in which the conference is being held, in which you have given the atmosphere in which these deliberations have taken place, and for what you have been able to give of all the proceedings.

You have helped to put our country onto the map of the world, at this time of greatest importance in the history of the world. I thank you for having done it, and for the manner in which you have done it.

THE PRESS: Thank you, sir.

PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING: (to the President)

It turned out all right.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(copy for Prime Minister Churchill)

(copy for Prime Minister Mackenzie
King)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #915
Executive Office of the President
August 31, 1943 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Earl Godwin, passing May Craig on his way to his seat) Well, look at that!

MR. GODWIN: How are you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: May is saying behind your back, "By what right did that big fellow sit in front of me?"

(laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I asked her to sit on my lap.

MAY CRAIG: She said No. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: (of the White House Correspondents' Association) Mr. President, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: (continuing) --- before the press conference starts, we would like to have a bit of an off the record executive session and transact a little business that was left over from the Quebec conference.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Good.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: (continuing) As the senior officer of the White House Correspondents' Association who was at the Quebec conference, Merriman Smith has a Resolution to read. (laughter)

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: (holding up a very long sheet of paper) Don't be frightened by this, Mr. President. (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I was a little worried.

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: It runs right down.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope this is apologetic.

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: -(reading) (as copied from the original) "White House Correspondents' Association, August 31, 1943.

"KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

"That

"WHEREAS: It is WELL KNOWN that the recent QUEBEC CONFERENCE NEARLY was ushered into HISTORY with a ringing SALVO of SILENCE; and

"WHEREAS: It is WELL KNOWN that Monsieur F. ROOSEVELT and Monsieur S. EARLY by EXTRAORDINARY ENDEAVORS AVERTED that CATASTROPHE which would have been conducive to subsequent LEAKAGE and MOREOVER have made JUSTIFICATION of QUEBEC EXPENSE ACCOUNTS extremely DIFFICULT; -- (laughter) -- now therefore be it

"RESOLVED: That the UNDERSIGNED, survivors of the BATTLE OF QUEBEC and members of the WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENTS' ASSOCIATION, do hereby express their APPRECIATION of the CONSPICUOUS SERVICES of the aforesaid M. ROOSEVELT and M. EARLY; and do hereby CITE them for GALLANTRY IN ACTION ABOVE and BEYOND the CALL of DUTY; -- (more laughter) -- and be it further

"RESOLVED: That these RESOLUTIONS be SPREAD upon the record of a WHITE HOUSE PRESS CONFERENCE and the CONTENTS thereof be COMMUNICATED to ALL PARTIES in INTEREST.

"Signed and sealed by a large number of veterans of Quebec." (much laughter)

(those who signed):

Douglas B. Cornell, Associated Press
Merriman Smith, United Press
Chas. O. Gridley, Chicago Sun
Arthur F. Hermann, I.N.S.
Edward T. Folliard, Washington Post
Kirke L. Simpson, A.P.
Merlin F. Stonehouse, Transradio
John A. Reichmann, United Press
John H. Crider, New York Times
David Lu, Central News Agency of China
Flora Lewis, A.P. of Great Britain
Felix Belair, Jr., Time Inc.
Raymond P. Brandt, St. Louis Post-Dispatch
J. F. Sanderson, Canadian Press
Bert Andrews, New York Herald Tribune
Paul R. Leach, Chicago Daily News
Robert T. Elson, Southern Newspapers (Canada)
John M. Hightower, Associated Press
W. C. Murphy, Jr., Philadelphia Inquirer
Bill Henry, Columbia Broadcasting System
Roscoe Drummond, The Christian Science Monitor
Chas. Van Devander, New York Post
W. B. Ragsdale, United States News
Richard L. Harkness, National Broadcasting Company
Dewey L. Fleming, Baltimore Sun
Baukhage, Bluenetwork
Denys Smith, Daily Telegraph (London)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am very glad to have that. Nothing is said, though, about a certain episode. Who was it that woke not only the White House correspondents but all the other correspondents, several hundred of them, by ringing a dinner bell in the middle of the night? (laughter)

Well, if you all only knew to what lengths I had to go to prevent the bell-ringer from being arrested under the old French law, you would be even more appreciative. Steve and I worked on it for -- for two whole days. (laughter)
The Mayor of Quebec -- he got waked up too, and no jury

would have exonerated them; so I had to use all the diplomatic methods possible. I had the State Department at work on it. (laughter) And finally everything was resolved all right, and we got them across the border. I had to get the Treasury Department to state they wouldn't be searched when they went across the border.

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: For the bell? (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I am very grateful for that. It worked out very happily.

(to Mr. Early): And what was -- what was that story? Was it you, or was it Brendan Bracken who appeared on the bench of a courtroom?

MR. EARLY: I didn't. (laughter)

Q. (aside) It was Bracken.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, everybody had a good time, and it was what they call an enjoyable time. I think it's all right.

I have only one or two things. I have got one for Mrs. Craig. Quoddy (Passamaquoddy), which was the N.Y.A. facility up there, yesterday was turned over to the Seabees -- shops, housing facilities, equipment and all. My understanding is they plan to use the existing training unit -- found them to be an up-and-coming outfit, so I feel sure they will make excellent use of it.

There's the correspondence, so that you can write to the Eastport Sentinel about it, May. Let me have it back. (laughter)

There are two things, then ---

MR. EARLY: (aside) Exclusive story.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Steve has got this for you when you go out, designating General (Dwight D.) Eisenhower a permanent Major General in the Army. At the present time he holds the temporary rank of General, and the permanent rank of Colonel. This promotion is in recognition of General Eisenhower's outstanding services as Commander in Chief of the Allied Forces in North Africa. And also, at the same time I am giving him the Distinguished Service Medal; and the Citation for the Medal is written out, so you can use it if you want.

The other thing is that General (George C.) Marshall's four-year term as Chief of Staff today -- it's the last day. He of course will continue in office beyond the usual and customary four-year term. I believe that he is the first Chief of Staff -- No -- with the exception -- that's right.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- he is the first Chief of Staff, with the exception of General (Douglas) MacArthur, ever to be continued in office for longer than the usual four years; and he is the only Chief of Staff, as far as I know, in time of war, to serve beyond the four-year period. Outstanding service is the reason for continuing him in the office as Chief of Staff.

Well, I think that's all I have got.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us whether you

have accepted the resignation of Under Secretary of State (Sumner Welles) ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got any news on that. And when there is news, you will probably be informed.

Q. Then there will be news on it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Then there will be some news on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I said -- if and when, I should have said, --- (laughter) ---

Q. (interjecting) I'm glad to hear you use that word, sir.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- but the when will be decided by me and not by anybody else.

Q. Mr. President, could you confirm or comment in any way upon the reports that Premier (Josef) Stalin has suggested a tri-power conference with you and the Prime Minister (Winston Churchill)?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think the only thing I could say on that -- I might as well be on the record too. I don't often leave things like this on the record, only I was just as much disturbed as the Secretary of State was by a comment by a columnist (Drew Pearson), which was very detrimental not only to the foreign relations of the United States but to the unity of the United Nations, and therefore the winning of the war. It was an act of bad faith towards this man's country.

The Secretary of State was rather polite. He referred to this particular column as containing a large number of falsehoods. I don't hesitate to say that the whole statement from beginning to end was a lie; but there's nothing new in it, because the man is a chronic liar in his columns. Now that might just as well be said once and for all.

And he is not the -- the only one, you all know that. That kind of journalism -- the kind of journalism -- that hurts the press, besides hurting the country; and the quicker the press realizes that, and what it runs, the more influence the press will have.

I think that's enough to say about that. (much laughter)

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

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) It's good.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- you know that Mr. Churchill ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- has made some statement on the subject of the tripartite meeting with Stalin this afternoon ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, I heard it on the radio, Yes.

MR. GODWIN: It went forward ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh sure. We can all say the same thing.

Q. Mr. President, has there been -- have you had

any information that Premier Stalin will attend the tri --
tri -- (laughter) -- tripartite ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, it seems to be coming along pretty well. That's all I can say at the present time.

Q. Sir, the Prime Minister spoke of a possible meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the three countries. I wonder if you could tell us where that might be held?

THE PRESIDENT: O, Lord -- Lord -- don't -- don't be so didactic. We hope -- just -- just exactly in the words as Mr. Churchill used them -- they are all right.

Now, who is going to a -- a thing like that, and -- and where will it be held? Number one -- I don't know where, and if I did I wouldn't tell you. And when? I don't know when. If I did know I wouldn't tell you. (laughter)

So that's perfectly clear.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about your Army and Navy, State Department, O.W.I. conference today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it was about general information for the press. (laughter)

Q. When are we going to start getting it?

THE PRESIDENT: Really -- really, it's a very good thing for the press. The object of it was to try to loosen up a bit.

Q. Good.

Q. Mr. President, have you anything to say about

a letter -- a report that General (Charles) De Gaulle sent a political letter to one of your (political opponents) ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Only what I read in the paper last night and this morning. I know nothing else whatsoever, and I haven't even inquired.

VOICES: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #916
Executive Office of the President
September 7, 1943 -- 4.06 P.M., E.W.T.

VOICES: How do you do, sir!

THE PRESIDENT: What's the news today, all quiet?

Q. Pretty quiet.

Q. We're counting on you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. We're counting on you today.

THE PRESIDENT: I've got very little.

Q. It looks rather formidable.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. It looks rather formidable.

THE PRESIDENT: It isn't formidable, though. It's a mistake! (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have very little. Steve (Early) will give you, after the meeting, the letter of Aubrey Williams resigning as head of the N.Y.A. (National Youth Administration), and my reply, as he wants to resign on the tenth of September, and the terminal period for liquidating N.Y.A. is the first of January next.

He -- I make it very clear that I am awfully sorry that the Government is losing his services, but that I fully expect to call on him for some other services, because he did a very remarkable job. He will be out for a little while.

He -- the main point of it is that he was

training -- N.Y.A. was training 30 thousand workers a month -- young people thoroughly trained in some skill for essential places in the production program -- 30 thousand a month. So I think you can assume that his services I consider so valuable that he will be back in the Government some day, somewhere.

The other thing is a mistake, for which I apologize. I will tell you the whole story.

When I was up in Quebec, it came the time for the Lend-Lease report. (to Mr. Early): What is it, every month or so, ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- something like that, to Congress? And there were several suggested drafts for my "Forward" that I always send, and on one of the drafts somebody said I had approved it. As a matter of fact, I hadn't seen any of the drafts, and the verbal statement that I had approved it -- which I hadn't -- went into type, and in type as "Franklin D. Roosevelt," not a signature.

Q. (interjecting) Oh.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And as such it was sent to the Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of the House, and released.

Now there were -- there were two sentences, when I did see it after I got back from Quebec -- but a little late. I didn't like the two sentences, because -- not that they haven't got a very large element of truth, but it's a

condensation of the truth, and it might be very widely misconstrued. So all I have done is to take the two sentences out.

They read: "The Congress, in passing and extending the Lend-Lease Act, made it plain that the United States wants no new war debts to jeopardize the coming peace. Victory and a secure peace are the only coin in which we can be repaid."

Well, that is only about a quarter of the truth. For instance, "new war debts to jeopardize the coming peace." What is a debt? Is it money, or is it goods, or is it some other benefit? And the way it's put here, it doesn't do justice to the whole situation. It is perfectly true that in the -- in the narrow technical sense we want no new war debts, but at the same time the element of the Lend-Lease Act does mean that other nations operating with us in its administration will repay us as far as they possibly can. Now that doesn't mean necessarily dollars, because there are all kinds of other repayments which can be made. Therefore, the sentence is not -- is not clear.

The same way, "Victory and a secure peace are the only coin in which we can be repaid." Well, a great many people in this country think of a coin as something that you will jangle in your -- in your pocket, and of course in the large sense there are all kinds of coins. I wouldn't have put it that way if I had had a chance to see it before it was printed.

Now, that's -- that's literally all that happened.

That's the whole story. They thought I had approved it -- I never saw it -- so it was printed. And now the -- the real copy is going up next Monday to Congress.

I think that's all I have got.

Q. Mr. President, on Saturday afternoon we received some rather authoritative guidance (from Prime Minister Winston Churchill) -- (laughter) -- about the war in general, and some details about your conferences with the Prime Minister. I wonder, in that same general direction, could you tell us whether there has been any progress toward a meeting with Premier (Josef) Stalin since Quebec?

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't that at the luncheon on Saturday?

Q. The luncheon, Yes sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't it wholly off the record?

VOICES: No sir -- No sir.

Q. Not for attribution.

Q. Background.

THE PRESIDENT: Background. (laughter) Well, what was your question? Are there any more details on the meeting

Q. (interposing) Has there been any progress ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, yes.

Q. (continuing) --- toward such a meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you exactly. I couldn't tell you the details of it, but there has been progress, that is, since Saturday; and we hope for more within 24 hours,

or 48 hours.

Q. Is that -- does that apply, sir, to the meeting with Stalin rather than the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now you are getting into details. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, could you say anything about Mr. Churchill's allusion in his speech at Boston to possible continuance of the Combined Chiefs of Staff after the war?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let me -- let me talk on that, not for attribution -- the same way.

People are awfully -- I think awfully -- what will I say? -- immature when they talk about "after the war," the idea, because of certain precedents, that when the last shot is -- is fired in one area, let us say, there will be an immediate peace conference, or if all the areas stop shooting that there will be immediately a peace conference -- there will be a great treaty signed between all the nations of the world. Mind you, this is just for guidance, but not attribution.

I think that it is a pretty fair guess to say that there will be a period -- a transition period. You have to remember certain things, and you have to remember that most of the world is pretty well shell-shocked now. Many of you are somewhat shell-shocked. (laughter) Occasionally, I think that I am a bit shell-shocked. (more laughter) And I think that for the good of humanity perhaps it might be a good thing to -- before we start writing the fair copy of what is going to happen later on, that we should catch our breaths,

our handwriting will be better, and what we say will be better if we read it over a good many times, and perhaps for a good many months.

And so I rather look forward to a period of transition between the firing of the last shot and the signing of a formal agreement or treaty. Obviously, there are certain things that will happen during that transition period. One of them is the -- the maintenance of peace. Well, who by? The victors. The victors will maintain the peace during that transition period, and they will try out things. They will keep their Combined Staffs working, meeting, watching, ready to maintain peace by force if necessary. And the Prime Minister was absolutely right.

Now, that may develop into such a good working plan from a military point of view that the United Nations may say, "Well, that's -- that's pretty good" -- the United States and Britain, of course, and other nations which contribute in a military way to the maintenance of peace. And that, I think, is the way the Prime Minister put it yesterday when he was getting his Degree.

Q. Sir, during that transition period, do you think there will have to be prolonged occupation of some of the Occupied territories or enemy territories?

THE PRESIDENT: I have just about the same idea as you have. I don't know, and neither do you. Every case differs from every other.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You can't tell, and I think -- I don't see that it's worth while guessing.

Q. (continuing) --- at the luncheon Saturday, the Prime Minister spoke of a Mediterranean Commission, and said that Russia had been given representation on it. While that was -- it was printed or attributed to him, I wonder if you could elaborate a little on that? He made no more reference to it.

THE PRESIDENT: Did he call it the Mediterranean Commission?

Q. Yes.

Q. (Those were) the words he used.

THE PRESIDENT: Probably -- probably I had better not enlarge on it. It's all right. What he said is perfectly true. At this time I guess I had better not enlarge on it.

Q. Could you give us any idea at all of its purposes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Getting the Mediterranean out of the war.

Q. Mr. President, there have been obvious feelers from the Rome radio lately -- peace terms. Assuming that the United Nations hang on to the unconditional surrender statement, what can Italy expect in territories or re-acquisition of territories that they have had?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you see, the trouble is that you started with the word "assuming," which is the Latin way of saying "if." (laughter)

Q. I didn't say "if."

THE PRESIDENT: I caught you on that. Well, as a matter of fact, of course, I couldn't talk about it anyway, that's about the real answer..

Q. Mr. President, the other day you said something about "if and when" there is any news ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I should have used the old Stock Exchange expression, "when, as and if."

(laughter)

Q. (continuing) You were speaking with reference to Sumner Welles. Is there any news on his status today?

THE PRESIDENT: Not -- No, no.

Q. Mr. President, does the appointment of Mr. (Nelson) Rockefeller to the Joint Mexican-United States Industrial Commission indicate that similar steps might be taken in cooperation with other Latin American republics?

THE PRESIDENT: I would hate to say Yes or No. As a matter of fact, I am not answering it, because there may be something in the fire in relation to other nations. I don't see why it shouldn't be extended, but I don't know whether -- whether there are any negotiations being talked about yet. It's -- it's a good idea.

Q. Mr. President, there were published reports yesterday that General (George C.) Marshall has been given a new post. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the foggiest idea.

(laughter)

Q. Mr. President, have you been advised of the action taken today by the Republicans out in Mackinac Island (in Michigan)?

THE PRESIDENT: No. What happened today? I saw a hotel in Houston burnt down. (much laughter)

Q. Are those two related?

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe -- I don't know.

Q. Why -- (more laughter) -- that's sort of incriminating.

They (the Republican Post War Advisory Council) adopted what they call a compromise proposal favoring qualified American participation in a cooperative organization among sovereign nations to keep peace after the war.

Would you care to hear some more of it? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes -- love to.

Q. They said that this foreign policy declaration is restricted, that where American participation in any peace organization might clash with the vital interests of the nation, this country should adhere to its constitutionalism. (more laughter)

Those seem to be the immediate highlights of it that came out. Would you care to say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Do you -- do you think I could say more about it if I studied it for a week than I could say now? (continued laughter)

Q. I shouldn't care to answer that, sir. (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I always have my Thesaurus
handy on my desk. I have no objections to things like that.

(again more laughter)

Q. What do you mean by "things," sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Anything like what?

Q. Like Dewey's speech? (more laughter)

Q. (aside) Let's quit now.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #917
Executive Office of the President
September 14, 1943 -- 4.17 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got anything of very much importance.

The head of the War Shipping Administration, Admiral (Emory S.) Land, has signed an agreement with Dr. (T. V.) Soong (Foreign Minister of China), assigning two Liberty ships to the Chinese government for operation during the war.

That will put the Chinese flag on the sea.

The vessels are the CHUNG SHAN and the CHUNG CHENG, named for Dr. Sun Yat Sen and the Generalissimo (Chiang Kai-shek). They will fly the Chinese flag, and carry Chinese unlicensed crews. Because the Chinese have no officers at the present time, the officers will be Americans but will be replaced with Chinese officers when the latter become available. The two ships will be delivered at the end of this month; and the American President Lines will act as agents to handle the vessels.

They will be used, in great part, for helping to get supplies to China, that is to say, to the nearest point to China that goods can be flown over the mountains.

Then I am sending a Message to Congress on Friday, chiefly about the war.

And Sam Rosenman is coming down here, resigning from the Supreme Court of New York, to act as special counsel to

the President.

I am getting a great deal of quasi-legal stuff at the present time. For instance, one of the new duties assigned to me was that I have been made the final court of appeal on draft deferments of Federal employees and other draftees. They come to me. And I am getting a lot of court-martial cases, which I want to have reviewed just like the -- the normal cases -- criminal cases that came to me as Governor when I was in Albany, which Sam Rosenman handled.

I don't think there's anything else.

Q. Has Judge Rosenman's salary been fixed, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I suppose it will be ten or twelve (thousand dollars), whatever it is.

Q. Are you going to make ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) By the way, he is resigning a salary of, I think, 25 thousand ---

Q. (interjecting) 25 thousand.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- 25 thousand, Yes.

Q. Mr. President, is it possible that he is resigning for more important reasons than merely to handle draft matters?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. This has nothing to do with politics at all.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the announcement from Canada that she is going to disband two and a half divisions?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think it's anything that should be treated except as strict truth. I suppose it relates to certain, what might be called almost "home guard" -- I don't know what they call them -- but they are divisions or regiments that have been put into service, created because of the feeling that as long as the Japanese occupied any islands in the Aleutians, that we had to guard against them -- not that we thought that they would strike, but we had to be ready in case they did.

Incidentally, I think it would be rather interesting for you to check up and see the percentage of the Canadian population which is in -- in service, or in factories, the amount -- what is it? -- of output for the war on a per capita basis, compared with ours. It would be rather interesting. You see, they have -- what is it? -- about ten million people in Canada, ten or eleven?

Q. Eleven.

Q. Eleven.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we have a hundred and thirty millions plus.

Q. Can you give us those percentages, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't, out of my head.

Q. Well, Mr. President, was this entire outfit to be used solely in Canada, as you understood it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q. Mr. President, did you discuss the draft of fathers with your Congressional leaders?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think you are a little premature on that. Yes, I did. (laughter) I think they are going to ask General (George C.) Marshall and Admiral (Ernest J.) King to go before them -- talk about the necessities of the case.

Q. Have you any views of your own that you could give us on that question?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there's only one thing that you might make clear, that this is -- that the Manpower Commission -- draft board -- if a married man with a child is in an essential industry in this war, he would not be drafted, but there are a good many fathers laying around who are -- a good way of putting it -- who are neither in the Army -- (laughter) -- nor performing any essential service. (more laughter) We all know that type of father. (still more laughter)

Q. Grammar, Mr. President? (it sounded like "Grand-ma")

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. The grammar. (still sounding like "Grand-ma")

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. (aside) Grand-ma?

Q. The grammar?

THE PRESIDENT: The grammar?

Q. "Laying" around.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh! -- Oh! That's all right. I prefer the ungrammatical way of doing it. (much laughter)

Q. Mr. President, would you call them "chronic layers"?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Are they "chronic layers"? (more laughter)

Q. Do you think men that fit into that category, sir, could well go into the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: I know a great many right here in Washington. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, General Marshall on another occasion, not discussing fathers, but discussing the draft of young -- young men, sort of "put the bee" on the older men, including fathers, as not being good soldiers. That is not exactly what he said, but he covered considerable area.

THE PRESIDENT: Those are the people over 38 ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes, I think that's it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- over 38 -- the early ones; and they didn't have the -- they didn't have the -- the strength -- stamina -- for tough operations, that was true. Some of them did.

Q. Mr. President, do you know whether there is any move to draft them by age groups rather than by draft numbers?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q. Mr. President, any discussion on taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, talking about -- talking about it. Going along all right.

Q. Mr. President, has any further progress been made toward a three-way meeting with the Russians?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say Yes. Yes. In fulfillment of what I told you the other day.

Q. 48 hours you said then.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. 48 hours you said then.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and it came in just about 48 hours.

Q. What, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that's different. You want me to tell dates and places and things like that? I don't think so.

VOICES: Yes. (laughter)

Q. If we might go back to the fathers, Mr. President, do you approve of the distinction between pre-Pearl Harbor and post-Pearl Harbor fathers?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, "ain't" it sort of hypothetical now?

Q. No.

THE PRESIDENT: Now? I mean, it's -- it's hypothetical now, in one sense; but I think most of those distinctions arose soon after Pearl Harbor.

Q. Well, they are all fathers.

THE PRESIDENT: No use discussing that.

Q. No.

Q. Mr. President, could you discuss the resolution on foreign policy?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to make any comment on the situation in Italy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got anything this afternoon, unless something has come in. Press coverage is pretty good in Italy.

Q. Is there anything you can say -- (laughter) -- is there anything you can say about the Italian fleet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. Of course, it does present certain problems. One thing ---

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that we don't always realize, and that is that an Italian -- Oh, what? -- cruiser has got to have -- if you want to use that cruiser -- got to have ammunition that will fit the guns. You have got to have spare parts that will fit the machinery. And they are on one system and we are on the other. Now, how much -- how much ammunition -- you see, this is all highly speculative -- how much ammunition we were able to get at Taranto, which is one of their naval bases, we don't know yet.

Q. Mr. President, were any decisions made on taxes at the conference today?

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

Q. Were any decisions made on tax policy at the conference today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. Oh No. There probably won't be for some time.

Q. Mr. President, regarding this Message to Congress, are you going to have any recommendations for them, or specific proposals, or is it just going to be largely a review of

the war?

THE PRESIDENT: Largely a review of the war.

Q. Mr. President, have you got anything to say about the whereabouts of Benito Mussolini?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what we got from London. We have never had our hands on him.

Q. Does that mean you would like to have your hands on him? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well now, now you are raising another difficult question. (more laughter)

Q. (aside) Let's go.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, sir.