

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #936

Executive Office of the President

February 15, 1944 -- 4.06 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. GODWIN: See that cartoon? (by Berryman, in today's Evening Star)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- grand.

MR. GODWIN: Gives you a ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Well, ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- makes you smile, does it?

THE PRESIDENT: His batting average is fair.

MR. GODWIN: Fair.

THE PRESIDENT: I always have to use the understatement. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a letter from the Postmaster General (Frank Walker) that he has signed today an order for the restoration of civil mail service between the United States and Sicily, Sardinia, and the following ten provinces of Italy -- Bari, Brindisi -- I don't know if I can pronounce all these -- Catanzaro, Cosenza, Lecce, Matera, Potenza, Reggio Calabria, Salerno and Tarranto.

The service is restricted to postcards, and unregistered letters of a purely personal nature not exceeding 40 grams, or two ounces in weight. Financial, business, or commercial correspondence will not be permitted; nor will air

mail, parcel post, insurance or money order services be available at this time.

The United Kingdom is simultaneously resuming mail service to and from the same areas.

I think that will help a great many, probably hundreds of thousands of people in this country -- and over there -- who for many, many months have been unable to communicate with relatives that they have got back there in Sicily and southern Italy. This will enable them to communicate with their families -- so that their families will get some news of them.

Then, I was -- I was reading in the afternoon paper about the shelling of Cassino Abbey by our (Flying) Fortresses. It is very well explained in the story -- (indicating the Evening Star's story by Lynn Heinzerling, Associated Press War Correspondent) -- that the reason it was shelled was because it was being used by the Germans to shell us. It was a German strong point -- had artillery and everything else up there in the Abbey.

But I thought it might interest you to -- no particular reason now -- the time seems to have come -- a couple of orders that were issued last December (29th) in regard to historical monuments. This is by the commander-in-chief, as he was in Italy at that time, General Eisenhower.

(reading): "Today -----

I think Steve (Early) has got copies of these for you outside. I think it's quite interesting.

(continuing reading): "Today we are fighting in a country which has contributed a great deal to our cultural inheritance, a country rich in monuments which by their creation helped and now in their old age illustrate the growth of the civilization which is ours. We are bound to respect those monuments so far as war allows.

"If we have to choose between destroying a famous building and sacrificing our own men, then our men's lives count infinitely more and the buildings must go. But the choice is not always so clear-cut as that. In many cases the monuments can be spared without any detriment to operational needs. Nothing can stand against the argument of military necessity. That is an accepted principle. But the phrase "military necessity" is sometimes used where it would be more truthful to speak of military convenience or even of personal convenience. I do not want it to cloak slackness or indifference.

"It is a responsibility of higher commanders to determine through A.M.G. Officers the locations of historical monuments whether they be immediately ahead of our front lines or in areas occupied by us. This information passed to lower echelons through normal channels places the responsibility on all Commanders of complying with the spirit of this letter."

And the other one was by (Lieutenant General) W. B. Smith, who was his Chief of Staff.

(reading): "Historic Monuments. Buildings.

"A. No building listed in the sections "Works of

Art" in the "Zone Hand-Books" of Italy -- which every Commander has -- issued by the Political Warfare Executive to all Allied Military Government Officers will be used for military purposes without the explicit permission of the Allied Commander-in-Chief or of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, 15th Army Group in each individual case.

"B. Commanders concerned are authorized, as a further measure of security, to close and put out of bounds for troops any of the buildings listed in AMG "Zone Hand-Book" that they deem necessary. Notices to that effect will be affixed to the buildings, and guards provided to enforce them if necessary.

"C. Allied Military Government officers are prepared to furnish Commanders with a list of historical buildings other than those listed in the AMG "Zone Hand-Book." These buildings are of secondary importance and may be used for military purposes when deemed necessary. Commanders are reminded that buildings containing art collections, scientific objects, or those which when used would offend the religious susceptibilities of the people, should not be occupied when alternative accommodations are available.

"2. Looting, Wanton Damage and Sacrilege.

"The prevention of looting, wanton damage and sacrilege of buildings is a command responsibility. The seriousness of such an offense will be explained to all Allied personnel."

Those went out at the beginning of the invasion,

last December.

I don't think I have got anything else.

Q. Mr. President, have you decided whether you will sign the tax bill or not?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing yet.

Q. Mr. President, a substantial number of Members of Congress from the Western States, both parties, sent you a resolution requesting some very sweeping changes in the War Relocation Authority -- this Japanese resettlement program. There have also been some suggestions from time to time that the W.R.A. might be put under the Secretary of the Interior, and some personnel changes. Nothing seems to have happened. Some of these Members of Congress are wondering what the response is to their petition or resolution. Can you comment on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't remember it. I may have got it. Probably referred to the -- I don't know, what? -- Interior or War.

Q. Could you comment on the suggestion that the W.R.A. may be put under the Secretary of the Interior?

THE PRESIDENT: I had better not. I haven't got it, so far as I know. I may have had it, and may have referred it. You would have to check.

Q. Thank you.

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

your conference with Donald Nelson today?

THE PRESIDENT: With who?

Q. Donald Nelson?

THE PRESIDENT: Donald Nelson?

Q. Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I see him from time to time. There wasn't any news in it.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you could say about the importance of Finland getting out of the war before it's too late?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing on that.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to comment on Argentina's proposal for a customs union in Latin America?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask the State Department.

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be a very sizeable trial balloon being floated by some Democrats, who are variously described as influential young Democrats or conservative Democrats, suggesting that they want a new face and a new name on the -- for the second place on the ticket in 1944. I wondered if you happened to be among those young and influential, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Never heard of it.

Q. (continuing) --- or conservative? (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, last Friday morning a story showed up about our printing some currency, some for use in France after the invasion. Is there anything that might be

said about the imminency of such use, or what the possibilities of going ahead in Europe soon ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I shall leave the timing question out. I think the best way to put it is that for a long, long time we have been printing currency for many nations in Europe. Some of them have been occupied since the currency was printed. Others are being occupied. Still others will be occupied. And that list of countries that will be occupied is quite long, and therefore there will be all kinds of currencies. That is a simple -- a -- a simple operation, which I hope will be fully justified by the amount of currency for those nations which we are printing.

Q. Are we printing any German currency, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.
(laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #937

Executive Office of the President

February 18, 1944 -- 10.59 A.M., E.W.T.

Q. Good morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Good morning, May.

MAY CRAIG: Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: There's the "big boy." I was just going to have May sit in your place, ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Pardon me?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- so you just got here in time.

MR. GODWIN: I know it. I only got my coat off -- you ought to join one of those rushes some time.

MAY CRAIG: It wasn't so bad today.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MAY CRAIG: Sometimes it's bad.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have here on my desk -- I just got it yesterday morning -- the release of the Report on War and Post-war Adjustment Policies, for release in regular editions of Saturday morning papers. And I hope that -- somebody suggested, lest there be any misunderstanding regarding the release time -- please make it clear that everything that I say concerning the report and its contents must be held for publication when the report is released, which is tomorrow morning, and nothing is to be printed in advance of the release.

The -- there are five double-spaced pages of a letter to Mr. (James F.) Byrnes, signed by Mr. (Bernard) Baruch and Mr. (John M.) Hancock -- (holding it up) -- that is that part, and you can see from the size of it how much work you have got to do. (much laughter) And Steve will have it for you at the end of the conference.

Now I wouldn't write any stories -- try to -- until you have gone to a party to which you have all been invited. Mr. Baruch and Mr. Hancock will hold a seminar on the report at 2.30 this afternoon, in room 323 of the Washington Building, 15th and New York Avenue. I will repeat it again, so you will find the right place. Room 323, Washington Building, 15th Street and New York Avenue, 2.30.

I don't think I have got anything else, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Nothing, sir.

Q. Have you had ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, Harry Slattery ---
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

Q. Have you had any late reports on the situation at Truk?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q. Mr. President, the Japs say we have gone ashore there.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q. Mr. President, Harry Slattery testified before a Senate committee Tuesday or Wednesday, that last Thursday he

was called to the White House and asked to resign as head of R.E.A. (Rural Electrification Administration). Can you tell us the circumstances?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen him in any way, or heard from him ---

Q. (interposing) Did you ask ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- nor any message to him.

Q. No message to him.

Q. Mr. President, have you had a chance to read the (War and Post-war Adjustment Policies) report, so you can say whether you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I tell you the honest truth, I am about half-way through, that's all.

Q. Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, may I -- if I might revert to Harry Slattery a minute, are you aware of a controversy going on about him and the R.E.A.?

THE PRESIDENT: There was in the R.E.A., but as I remember it -- this is off-hand recollection -- there was some controversy last -- last summer.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes sir, quite a controversy.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I haven't heard anything about it for months.

MR. GODWIN: The reason for asking is that its -- its evident purpose -- definite aim is to involve you and the

White House in the controversy.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will have a good deal of trouble doing that. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your meetings this week with Mr. (Donald) Nelson and Mr. (Charles E.) Wilson (both of W.P.B.)?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't seen them for a long time. And Mr. Wilson has just come back from a fishing trip in the Florida Keys, and pleaded with me to go down because the fish are running very well. Very few human beings down there, and the fish have increased.

Q. Are you going, sir? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I would like to.

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

Q. Mr. President, ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, is there anything to be said about the status of the tax bill, or the subsidy bill at the White House?

THE PRESIDENT: I am sending it up at 12 o'clock, the subsidy bill, and I can't tell you what the action would be because I don't think it's courteous to Congress to -- (laughter) -- say anything about that for news before they get the Message. (more laughter)

Q. What about taxes, sir -- the tax bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Taxes will go up Monday or Tuesday. (more laughter)

Q. Don't you want to tell us what the action there

will be?

THE PRESIDENT: That will be discourteous to the Congress. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, there have been reports that Leo Crowley is trying to step out as Alien Property Custodian. Have you given any consideration to that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That has been on the card for a long time.

Q. Have you decided on a successor, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, sir.

Q. Sir, is there any news on the Finnish situation you could tell us about?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. To go back to Crowley, sir, will he continue as F.E.A. (Foreign Economic Administration) Administrator?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. That has not been under discussion. Oh -- F.E.A. Administrator? Oh sure, that is his main job. I thought you were talking about F.D.I.C.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That hasn't been discussed, but the Alien Property one has.

Q. Mr. President, the Vice President says you will be re-elected President in 1944. Do you think he is a very good prophet? (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: At it again!

MR. GODWIN: At it again.

THE PRESIDENT: At it again! (more laughter)

Q. He is not so sure of himself, Mr. President.
(more laughter)

Q. Mr. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Keep on going. It's all right. (more laughter) It's -- it's good for a laugh any time. (continued laughter)

Q. Mr. President, we didn't quite understand your reference. Who is at it again?

THE PRESIDENT: You fellows. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, you have before you the (Ross T.) McIntire board report about draft requirements?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it's right here -- (indicating his work-basket).

Q. Anything coming soon on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think it's an excellent report, which received very little attention -- not nearly enough. It's quite -- quite a fundamental report. It's worth reading.

Q. When we -- we -- (laughter) -- when may we have the pleasure of reading it?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't you had it yet?

Q. No, sir.

Q. No, sir.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) No.

Q. We have been asking for it.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know.

MR. EARLY: It hasn't been released, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, let me read it, and see if there's anything in it. You are all so young, and it's a medical report. (laughter) I don't know if you are old enough. (more laughter) I will get it for you just as soon as I can.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #938
Executive Office of the President
February 22, 1944 -- 4.15 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. GODWIN: Good evening.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: You look on the inside of that. (a pamphlet about syrup and testimonials) (Mr. Hassett was promoted last Saturday to Secretary to the President, and this pamphlet printed a testimonial by him) They work fast. Don't show it to him.

THE PRESIDENT: Where is he?

MR. GODWIN: I don't believe he's here.

THE PRESIDENT: Show it to him. I think it's grand. Doesn't take them long.

MR. GODWIN: They work fast.

THE PRESIDENT: I notice it isn't dated either.

MR. GODWIN: No, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Early, reading it) Isn't that a joy?

MR. EARLY: It is.

THE PRESIDENT: Fast worker.

MR. EARLY: Yes, but what a drop it is from what it used to be -- the syrup. Remember, Earl?

MR. GODWIN: Yes, I remember.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have very much today.

The -- I asked for some data and suggestions on the Marshall Islands and the Truk activities. I think it is worth calling, first of all, attention to the fact that we are learning as we go along. A great deal of this last operation in the Marshalls showed the most amazing cooperation -- I get word of that from all sources -- in the different arms of the services who were engaged in it. We did the Marshall action without the loss of a single ship. And at Truk, so far as we know -- we haven't had the latest reports, and of course it was an air action -- we did that without the loss of a ship, but we did have one ship torpedoed and she is on her way to be repaired.

And the other thing that I think could be called attention to is the phase of the operations that have been appearing almost every day in the communiques, and that is the number of Jap barges that we are getting. Those Jap barges are all through the islands, all the way down as far as Guadalcanal. And the toll that we have taken, if you add them up, is very large; probably over a thousand barges in the last year. And each one of those barges has been used for transportation by the Japanese, including transportation of a very large number of men from one island to the other; and with the destruction of barges, the toll among the Japanese officers and men on board has been undoubtedly very high, not including the naval personnel that are running the barges. And I suppose on an average they have some ten to twenty Japanese officers and men to the barge, not counting the soldiers

that they are carrying.

But it all adds up to the fact that it has been suggested that the Japanese have been taking a much heavier -- have been getting a much heavier toll and loss of life than would appear on the surface. As somebody suggested, the present operations in that region must be -- using understatement -- rather painful to the Japanese.

And, of course, the further we go into Japanese island territory, it means that the Japanese have got to develop new plans of transportation, new plans of supplies which we hope will be even more damaging to the enemy.

I don't think there's anything else.

Oh, there is one thing that I thought I might mention, because I have been getting a number of letters on it, and suggestions. That relates to the necessary -- necessary from the military point of view -- bombing of certain historic buildings, like the monastery (Benedictine Abbey) of Monte Cassino, which we had to do because the Germans were in it and were using it as a strong point to fire down on our troops that were trying to take the village of Monte Cassino, which is directly underneath -- almost throw a stone and hit it. And I suppose everybody in this country and most parts of the world feel terribly that a really historic building should have been so badly damaged.

Well, suggestions have come that we should start a subscription in this country to rebuild Monte Cassino. But, of course, the trouble is that before the war gets over

there will be a good many other historic monuments that are hit, ecclesiastical and otherwise.

And I have had other suggestions along a somewhat different line, and that is at the end of the war, where this destruction and damage has been in the first instance caused by the German occupation of these buildings, that at the end of the war the United Nations should unite and acquire sufficient labor and materials from Germany and let them do the repairing. Well, the thing is being discussed. There is -- no -- no definite plan has been agreed on.

Those are two of the several methods that have been suggested. I think the latter should be given very serious consideration by all of us. Make the Germans repair the damage (for) which they and they alone were responsible.

Q. Would that apply, sir, only to historic monuments?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Historic and ecclesiastical.

Q. Not general reconstruction work?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Not general reconstruction?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. That's a different subject.

Q. Mr. President, I think Churchill's statement today, that there can be no assurance of victory this year in Europe, comes as somewhat of a surprise to many people in America. Is there anything you can tell us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Just what I have been saying for a couple of years.

Q. Doesn't necessarily mean any slowing up of plans, or anything of that sort?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not a bit. I wish people in this country would sometimes listen to what is said out loud by responsible sources. It is perfectly true what you say, Jim (Wright), that it might be a surprise to people in this country, but it isn't new.

Q. I presume it's that -- the basis of the surprise comes from Eisenhower's statement a few months ago, when he did predict victory this year.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I often wonder just what he did said -- say.

Q. Mr. President, yesterday in the Los Angeles area there were fifty-five plants engaged directly in war production slowed down because of a strike of employees of the municipal power bureau. The Army and Navy and War Production Board have been getting reports from field representatives, and there are indications they have been referred to you, and have been suggesting that you have been urged to order somebody to take over the Los Angeles power bureau.

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you a secret, but you can't use it -- it's off the record -- what you say is the first intimation that I have had of this. (laughter)

Q. (interjecting) I gathered that previously, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have to display my complete ignorance, but don't say so. (more laughter)

Q. May I ask one more question?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Is there any precedent or principle concerning having the Army or Navy take over a municipal operation of that sort? I am told the W.P.B. considers this -- War Labor Board considers this as not one of their "babies," because it does involve a municipal operation, a municipal function.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can only answer it in -- as a supposititious case. You remember about a year and a half ago ---

Q. (interjecting) I know that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the operators of the New York subways threatened to go on strike. Well, suppose they had? Keep all the subways in New York closed? Obviously not. Well, the Mayor hadn't got any Army or Navy, or manpower, or anything else. I guess the Federal authorities would have to run the subways.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, back to Churchill's speech, he said that British policy was to adopt the Curzon line which had been recommended in 1920, and made some suggestions about giving Germany parts of Poland in compensation. Does that conform to our policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't had a chance yet to read the speech.

Q. What can you say about our policy for that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would rather read the speech first. That's all I have got to say about it.

Q. Mr. President, there was one other thing in that speech that I wonder if you could comment on, possibly, and that was Mr. Churchill's statement that this year, owing to elections in the United States, there might be a lot of hard things said about Great Britain.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I guess that's probably true.
(laughter)

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Not -- not -- not meant to be funny. It's true.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) It is.

Q. The Russian Ambassador (Andrei Gromyko) called on you yesterday, sir, and there were reports that he carried a message from -- communication from Marshal Stalin. Is there anything that you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, he did ---

Q. (continuing) Did that -- that communication have any basis ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- period.

Q. (continuing) --- or any connection with the Polish-Russian situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nothing to do with it at all.

Q. Could you tell us, sir, the nature of the communication?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I get them very often. I get them both ways. I get them through Gromyko, and I get them through (Averell) Harriman.

Q. Was it good news, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Was it good news, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No -- he was asking a question, which I am now trying to find out about.

Q. Mr. President, returning to the Churchill speech once more -- (laughter) -- he said that the United States and the Soviet Union were sending missions to Tito. Is there anything you can tell us about our part in that?

THE PRESIDENT: Tito? (Quito)

Q. Tito, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Ecuador?

Q. No, the Yugoslav ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) The Yugoslav guerrilla.

Q. Tito.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that. Tito. No. You will have to ask the State Department. I don't know.

Q. Could you tell us, sir, where you are trying to find out that question from Mr. Stalin?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #939

Executive Office of the President

March 3, 1944 -- 10.58 A.M., E.W.T.

MR. M. SMITH: Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What's this I hear about an election? Is that true?

Q. Meet the president, Mr. President. (the President shook hands with Merriman Smith)

THE PRESIDENT: I hear that they haven't counted the ballots. (laughter)

MR. M. SMITH: They most certainly have.

MR. EARLY: How many?

Q. One. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Grand.

MR. M. SMITH: We established an electoral college this year.

THE PRESIDENT: Let the soldiers vote?

Q. That's right.

MR. M. SMITH: Well, we were thinking of it.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I was made very happy a few minutes ago to learn that Merriman Smith has been made the -- I said made -- (laughter) -- the president -- the chairman of the White House Correspondents' Association, with Mr. (J. A.) Fox as vice president. Steve told me that the votes haven't been counted yet, but they are both elected! (more laughter) Congratulations. It's all right.

MR. M. SMITH: Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I rustled around and I don't think I have got anything at all, except a report from the Treasury Department yesterday afternoon on the figures -- final figures of the last War Loan, which I think were announced by Henry Morgenthau last night. Well, all that is necessary to say is it has been a tremendous success, and the people seem to be responding in increasing numbers to each War Loan Drive that we have, because we are going to have more, we all know that; but the people seem to understand that it is necessary to get this money to carry on the war. And the number of small bonds -- individual bonds went way over what it ever has been before -- goes to nearly, I think over 16 million -- 16 billion.

Q. Mr. President, have you had an opportunity to talk with Senator Barkley yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I believe he has been ill.

Q. Sir, would you give -- give us your reactions as to the new political situation in Argentina?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got enough on it to give you political reactions.

Q. Mr. President, can you say anything about developments in the Far East Asia theatre, in view of General Wedemeyer's being here the other day?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They have been coming over -- General Wheeler has been here, and General -- I don't -- I can't think of his name ---

Q. (interjecting) Boatner.

Q. Boatner.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Boatner. Boatner, and now Wedemeyer. Of course, we are in very close touch with the British about the whole campaign. I don't think there is anything to add to that, except that the material for China is going over the "hump" in a very satisfactory way.

Q. Mr. President, can you comment on a resolution in the Foreign Relations Committee on the -- on the status of Palestine?

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

Q. Sir, is there anything you could tell us about the Finnish situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than what I read in the paper. We have nothing else.

Q. Sir, there also have been published reports that you have been giving personal attention in recent days to some sort of new understanding or agreement with the French Committee, in connection with the part they will play when we go into France. I wonder if you could say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news. It is still under discussion. It has been going around to the State Department and War Department and the British and ourselves for the last -- Oh, what? -- two or three months. Still going around.

Q. Mr. President, are you familiar with the terms of the compromise that has been worked out, apparently by

the conferees, on the soldier vote issue?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I have read. I don't want to comment on it.

Q. As to structure?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any news on it. I haven't seen the actual language of it. I do think it is -- I could say this -- of course the crux of the thing is as to whether our soldiers will be given a chance to vote under existing law, or under the new law -- any language.

Q. Well, does this, as you understand it, repeal the old law about registration and poll tax?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Can't go into any details except that -- which law will let the soldiers vote.

MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, do you -- have you got anything to say on oil? It seems to be pretty hot right now.

THE PRESIDENT: I heard of hot oil before. (laughter)

MAY CRAIG: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so, May. I think it's largely a question -- and, of course, you get all kinds of statistics and figures on it -- as to what the supply of oil for this nation is going to be twenty-five years from now. That is a question primarily of fact, and after you get all the facts from different angles, then there is the question of opinion. As I said before, I am worried about the future supply for this -- for this country. I am not just thinking of five years or ten years from now, I am thinking of fifty years from now.

Q. Mr. President, it is reported that Mr. Stettinius, Under Secretary, is going to London. What -- is he, or if so what is the purpose?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I asked him a little while ago to go over there. There are quite a number of things easier to take up in person than with lengthy cables. And I think he will go sometime after Secretary Hull returns.

Q. Will he be accompanied by any staff, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q. (interposing) Well, does that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) He will probably take two or three people with him, but it isn't a full dress conference affair.

Q. Well, is that in relation to the permanent committee that was established in London following the Moscow conference?

THE PRESIDENT: The permanent what?

Q. Permanent committee of the powers established in London following the Moscow conference? There was some ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That is one of a dozen things, that's all -- only one of a dozen, and probably not at the top.

Q. Could you tell us what the top is?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There isn't any top. A whole lot of things to talk over. There isn't a headline in it.

Q. Mr. President, returning to the oil proposition, the Senate set up a committee composed of representatives of

several standing committees to consider this oil question. Does the construction of this pipeline (in Saudi Arabia) require any Congressional action?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. Probably -- probably, without much question. The Senate knows all the facts and everything else, sees things right -- absolutely open -- nothing secret about it.

Q. Well, I have heard questions in the Capitol as to where you would get the money if they didn't give it to you?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Ask them.

Q. Mr. President, do you have any comment on the outcome of the special election in the 21st District of New York City?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know anything about it until I read about it in the papers afterwards.

Q. Mr. President, there is a report in the morning papers that Britain, and the United States also, are cracking down on Turkey as a result of their failure to cooperate. Is it true that the United States has joined with Britain in cutting off economic aid to Turkey?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the State Department about that. I don't know within the last two or three weeks.

Q. Mr. President, a week or two ago you said you were trying to find the answer to a question that Marshal Stalin had addressed to you. I wondered if you had any luck

yet?

THE PRESIDENT: What was the question? (much laughter)

What? (more laughter) What's it all about? (more laughter)

Q. You said you were looking up the answer to a question that Marshal Stalin asked you.

Q. That the Ambassador brought in.

Q. That the Russian Ambassador had delivered a Message from the Marshal.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that. Well, that is -- that is rather old, and it isn't settled yet, and that is as to what particular ships would go to the Russian navy from the Italian navy, and, if we didn't want to send those identical ships, what Britain and ourselves would send in lieu of them. That was all. And it has been about -- about half decided, that's all.

Q. Go to the Russian navy, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Go to the Russian navy, or aid?

THE PRESIDENT: Russian navy.

Q. Is there going to be a distribution of the Italian navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, we are in a war, and during a war we are going to run everything that floats for the benefit of the war.

Q. This is for war purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's right. Afterwards -- we may do something after the war's over more permanent.

(laughter)

Q. Would those ships, sir, be manned by the Italians?

THE PRESIDENT: Depends on -- on the ships, and the circumstances. Some might, and some might not.

Q. And would those ships also include any now held in the Balearic Islands, which have not been released?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that's a different thing. That's a Spanish problem, and I don't know what's happened there lately, except that they are still talking about it.

Q. Does this exchange, sir, or this transfer, date back to your conferences with Marshal Stalin at Teheran?

THE PRESIDENT: They date back further than that. They date back to the surrender of Italy.

Q. Was the -- was the transfer arranged through the initiation ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No transfer has been arranged.

Q. Well, what would you term it, sir, an assignment of Italian warships?

THE PRESIDENT: The whole point was this -- was this. Get this idea. A certain number of ships that came to the Allies as a result of the surrender, and in that surrender Russia was a part, you remember. Italy surrendered to Russia, Britain and ourselves, and we acquired certain munitions of war. In this case it happened to be ships. Well, out of the acquisition, either those or substitutes, we want to do the

thing in the logical way. Any aid that we can give to Russia out of it, that is what we are doing now, roughly on a -- what? -- a one-third basis, because there were three great nations involved. We are using some already, and the British are using some already, and the Russians will use either some of the Italian ships or the equivalent.

Q. Sir, you speak of -- of certain Italian vessels being acquired as a result of the surrender. Does that apply to the Italian fleet as a whole?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, Yes, ---

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the ones that we have got. We didn't get them all.

Q. Can you tell us roughly how many we did get, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you.

Q. Tonnage, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. In terms of tonnage either?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press and Radio Conference #940
Executive Office of the President
March 7, 1944 -- 4.07 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Earl Godwin) I heard you got stuck in town the other day with the snow?

MR. GODWIN: What?

THE PRESIDENT: You couldn't get back home on account of the snow? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: How did you know?

THE PRESIDENT: I know lots of things that go on.

MR. GODWIN: You have got a spy somewhere. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, I have -- and a lot of them. Some of them get even into the legislative correspondents' dinner. (more laughter) That's what comes of living in a city. That's what comes of living in a city that doesn't know snow when it sees it. Everything stops.

MR. GODWIN: Absolutely.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. M. SMITH: (new president of the White House Correspondents' Association) I gave your message to Fritz Kreisler (world famous violinist).

THE PRESIDENT: Good.

MR. SMITH: I thought he was going to cry, he was so moved.

THE PRESIDENT: Really?

MR. SMITH: He said you had enough on your mind

without sending him a message like that.

THE PRESIDENT: Great old boy. Is he pretty blind?

MR. SMITH: No.

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't he?

MR. SMITH: He was looking around the room. His vision may be impaired, ---

MR. DONALDSON: (interposing) All in.

MR. SMITH: (continuing) --- but it seemed to be getting well.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

I don't think I have much.

Instead of giving you a long report I will try to summarize it for you, a report from the Secretary of the Navy (Frank Knox) on the two years of operation by the United States Coast Guard, especially on what is called the port security end of their work. He calls attention to the fact that during the whole time, the Coast Guard has safeguarded the ports, harbors, vessels, and shore and waterfront establishments in four thousand miles of port areas, without a single important disaster during the whole period.

He calls attention to the fact that these ports are the points at which enemy sabotage could do the biggest damage. For instance, the blowing up of a munitions ship in New York harbor, or the wrecking of a major port would be as great a disaster to the war effort as the destruction of an airfield in the war theatre. Efficient operation of ports is necessary to get the men, the munitions, and the materials of war to

the fighting fronts.

And I want to just add one word on my own part, that I think the boys in the Coast Guard have done a magnificent job, and ought to get due credit for it.

I think that's all I have got.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us something about your talk yesterday with William Green on the I.L.O. (International Labor Organization)? There are stories this morning that you asked him to seek ways and means that would have to be worked out with the C.I.O. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It's just in the preliminary stage. We have got to have three -- four American representatives up there, two from Government, one from industry, and one from labor. And it is a problem as to how we are going to get one man representing labor to represent all of labor, when you have two labor organizations in labor itself. And they are merely having preliminary discussions on that.

Q. Mr. President, there have been some interesting and startling reactions from abroad to the story about the Russian fleet the other day. The Badoglio government sounded a note of alarm, and I wondered if you could say anything further on that problem?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I haven't got any more to be said. It is perfectly clear.

Q. Mr. President, Carroll Beedy of the -- Counsel for the House Agricultural Subcommittee, said that he would

ask you for the R.E.A. (Rural Electrification Administration) report, if Mr. (Jonathan) Daniels found that he could not properly ask you for it.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word about it. Isn't that rather an "iffy" question?

Q. No. He said he was going to ask you for it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we will have to cross that bridge when we come to that discussion.

MAY CRAIG: I didn't hear that.

THE PRESIDENT: Have to cross that bridge when we come to it, -- (laughter) ---

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- May. That doesn't help you at all, now you know what I said. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, the committee also indicated some interest in the political activities of Mr. Eugene Casey with -- inside the R.E.A., and I wondered if you wanted to talk to us about that?

THE PRESIDENT: He is around here. There he is.

Q. Maybe we can hear from him? (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He is probably here about it for the same reason you are.

Q. I was here to get information, not give it. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, has the time come when you could give us any sort of picture of the agenda which Mr. Stettinius will take up when he gets to London?

THE PRESIDENT: Weren't you over there this morning?

Q. The State Department doesn't feel, sir, that they can discuss an agendum, and sometimes the White House does.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think I did last time. I said there "ain't" no agendum, didn't I? I think so. I think I said he was going over with no agenda.

Q. Is there anything, sir, you can tell us about the situation in the Pacific, as a result of your conference with Admiral Nimitz yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I had a good two-hour talk with him. We covered, I was going to say every island, and some of the modern arts of war, and new techniques about reducing islands before landing.

MR. GODWIN: What was that -- technique of what?

THE PRESIDENT: Reducing islands before landing ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- by what we used to call the softening-up process.

Q. Mr. President, last week there was quite a long report, the A.P. I think saying that what was perhaps one of the greatest military training programs in history was beginning -- had been begun in China, and big supplies had reached there at various times, and American officers had begun their training, and I haven't seen anything of it since; and I wondered if there was something in that we didn't know about?

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid it's out of date

really, as news.

You probably know that in northern India, quite a while ago, we undertook to train several Chinese divisions in Assam, and those troops are now in action in Burma. And on the Chinese side of the mountains, General Stilwell with the help of various officers of our Army are, in conjunction with the Chinese commanders, training quite a number of divisions in Yunnan, and that is still going on. Those are the two -- have been the two main centers: Assam on the western side, and Yunnan on the eastern side. It has been going on for several -- good many months.

Q. Is that Yunnan -- H-U-N-N-A-N, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Y. Y-U-N-N-A-N.

MR. EARLY: Y.

Q. Mr. President, from time to time the question of our relations with the French National Committee of Liberation comes up, and each inquiry at the State Department results in the statement that the problem is at the White House. Have there been any further developments in it that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have to -- I have to give you the stock answer, there is no news on that today. I hope there will be soon.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #941

Executive Office of the President

March 10, 1944 -- 11.05 A.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Jonathan Daniels) Well! Congratulations!

MR. DANIELS: Thank you very much. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Can't say that to Gene (Casey) yet.

(more laughter)

MR. DANIELS: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have only got a couple of things, which I won't take time to read -- copies outside. One relates to a joint Army and Navy agreement which I approved yesterday, regarding the participation of members of the armed services in political campaigns. It's practically the same -- is the same as under previous laws. I don't think there's a paragraph in the whole thing, and it isn't directed at any one person. And it's the same thing that we have always done. I don't think you can make a controversy out of it -- just read it.

And the other one is almost in the same category. Lew Douglas has resigned, or is resigning some time around the beginning of April, from his position as Deputy Administrator of the War Shipping Administration, and will remain on as a Deputy of the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board and as Chairman of the Employment and Policy Committee.

And the low-down on it is off the record: it's on account of his health. He has been in this "burg" so long

that he has got a very serious sinus trouble, which is not a slam at Washington, D. C. You all know my feelings about the climate of the Capital of the United States -- (laughter) -- and I am right.

Q. Mr. President, I wonder if you could tell us whether there is anything that Eire might do at the present time to aid the allied cause?

THE PRESIDENT: Good God, what an "if" question! (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: What?

Q. Well, may I put it another way around?

THE PRESIDENT: Try! (more laughter)

Q. There is a story from London this morning, saying that our Minister in Dublin has presented a note to the Irish government, asking them or appealing to them to close the Axis legations in Dublin.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will have to ask the State Department about it, because I really couldn't give you a story.

Q. Mr. President, in your opinion, how complete has the destruction of Berlin been?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) God, we are getting a good collection of "iffy" questions today. (more laughter)

Q. No "if" in that one.

THE PRESIDENT: What? How do you know?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) No "if" in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) How do you know?

How can I tell? How can anybody tell about how much the destruction of Berlin is, except the regular things that are given out by the air force over there? I haven't seen anybody from Berlin for several months. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: There is no "if" in this question, but it's the question which is asked by ordinary newspaper readers, and the -- the wellknown man in the street: why do the air forces continue to bomb Berlin? The public seems to be -- the popular opinion is that there isn't any more Berlin. The folks want to know why?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that up to the press to tell them?

MR. GODWIN: Pardon me?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that up to the press to tell them? They never hesitate -- they don't see anybody from Berlin, but they never hesitate to give an opinion, do they?

MR. GODWIN: Who?

THE PRESIDENT: The press.

MR. GODWIN: The press?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course, the radio does too. I forgot the fact that we had radio here.

MR. GODWIN: That -- that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't -- I don't know at all what the amount is, except as to what we have read in the communiques, and as far as I know we have seen nobody out of Berlin who has been there recently.

I talked last night, for instance, with a very

delightful -- you oughtn't to use it, it's just between us -- a very delightful Swede was over here, a man named Mr. (Hugo) Cedergren; and he and his wife were sent over by the Swedish Red Cross to Germany to report on the treatment of American prisoners in Germany. And he was in Berlin, and his wife was in Berlin, during one of the bombings. Well, that was several months ago, and it was the latest personal version of what has happened in Berlin that I have had; but it was quite a while ago, I think three or four months. And all they could say was that the destruction was pretty bad at that time.

Well, for instance, the Swedish legation was burned -- bombed and burned. And there was one story which you -- I haven't got anybody's permission to -- to use, but I will tell you just off the record. In the Swedish legation, when the bombing came along, a couple of block-busters knocked down two buildings in this long row of buildings that were -- was the legation; and one of them landed on top of the roof and set fire to it. So everybody -- all the Swedes -- rushed to the roof to try to put it out with buckets, but it was quite beyond their control, but probably was still in the position where, if they had had one fire engine they could have stopped the fire.

Well, Gosh! -- along comes a fire engine and stops in the street directly opposite. So the Swedes rushed out and said, "For God's Sake, put out the fire on our top storey."

And the fire engine people said, "That's not our order. We are to put out a fire in the next block."

So they sat there while the Swedish legation burned.

Typical German story. (laughter)

But apparently the -- the air force on -- in England -- our day bombers -- are very well satisfied with the -- with the recent raids. I think they have done very well in hitting targets. But the mere fact that they have continued the raids up to the present time would lead me to believe that -- that there was some reason for doing it, and the reason was -- must have been decided on at a joint conference of the British air force and our air force.

Q. That latter is on the record again, is it not, sir?

MR. GODWIN: You are back on the record?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can put that back on the record. I can't tell (about the raids).

Q. Wouldn't that be to engage the German air force? Wouldn't that be one of the purposes, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no information.

Q. Mr. President, is there any probability that a request will go to Congress for additional taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You had better ask Mr. Morgenthau. He was up there, I think yesterday.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, there has been considerable comment -- controversy or discussion of that one-third of the Italian fleet to the Russians. I suppose you have got up to date with some of it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Have you anything to say about it now, any more information?

THE PRESIDENT: No, except to say that what I said was correct, and what Mr. Churchill said is correct, and you can't get any controversy out of that. And I suggest that you check back and see what I said, because quite a lot of people left out some key words.

Q. Were those key words "or the equivalent"?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right -- that's right.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, the A.P. is carrying a story today, and they say that as a result of continued study, military leaders have concluded that the best results will be had by keeping the Italian fleet intact in the Mediterranean. And the suggestion has been advanced from that point that the Italians then are -- rather the Russians would get the equivalent of their share -- as you said last Friday -- in British-American tonnage. And then comes the next proposition, that because of the United States's increased or better productive capacity, that the most would probably come from this country. Is there anything you might say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because obviously there, if I start to say anything about that, I am violating military secrets, because we don't say what ships and how many are going to this, that and the other place. I am precluded.

Q. Mr. President, will you comment on the action

of the Puerto Rican legislature voting for the removal of Governor Tugwell?

THE PRESIDENT: Did it?

Q. The lower house.

THE PRESIDENT: Did it?

Q. Yes, sir -- lower house.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought you said legislature?

What was the vote in the other house?

Q. It was against the removal. (laughter) Will you comment on the action of the lower house?

THE PRESIDENT: No, of course not. (more laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That was a dirty trick, wasn't it?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: A freshman back there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. EARLY: That was a trick one.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #942
Executive Office of the President
March 14, 1944 -- 4.11 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. GODWIN: Got Bill to sit down at last.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Bill Hassett can sit down at last.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. About time. I know somebody else who has to sit down too at press conferences. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Old Ned.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything today.

Somebody -- I don't know if he's in the room -- asked if I would say something about the bombing of territory in Italy by both sides. Oh -- jotted down this -- (to Mr. Early): have you got this mimeographed?

MR. EARLY: Will be by the time ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Steve will have it mimeographed.

(reading): "Everyone knows the Nazi record on religion. Both at home and abroad, Hitler and his followers have waged a ruthless war against the churches of all faiths.

"Now the German army has used the Holy City of Rome as a military center. No one could have been surprised by this -- it is only the latest of Hitler's many affronts to religion. It is a logical step in the Nazi policy of total war -- a policy which treats nothing as sacred.

"We on our side have made freedom of religion one

of the principles for which we are fighting this war. We have tried scrupulously -- often at considerable sacrifice -- to spare religious and cultural monuments, and we shall continue to do so."

So that's that.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, there are newspaper stories connected with your possible action on manpower draft deferments, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- and so forth. Is there any -- anything from here on that?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't anything yet.

MR. GODWIN: I find -- may I continue?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: I find some of the newspaper stories -- I think you know, and our Army officers seem to know that the Army is asking for more and more younger men.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

MR. GODWIN: And that is a problem. Is there anything you can say on that particular phase of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the only thing that can be said is that it is perfectly true we need more and more younger men for the Army and Navy. At the same time, there is a very small percentage of men who are young, who are specialists and who are doing vital war work, who don't happen to be in uniform. We take them, in uniform, and re-assign them to their present work. Well, we don't want to do that if we can help it.

So the problem is to sift the two elements in the country. The first, re-comb -- we have done it three times, we are doing it again -- re-comb the Army and Navy lists to find out what the able-bodied younger men are doing, working in the Army and Navy, which is not as important as if they were at the front. That ought to yield a certain number of people again.

And the other thing is to prevent a stoppage of work -- take away key men from certain absolute essentials.

The best illustration I can give you of that is this. Two years ago, we were working feverishly to turn out rifles and small arms ammunition. Well, we had to have people who were skilled in turning that out -- a small proportion of the workers, of course, to direct the work. It may serve another need -- a good many new needs. Well, for example, making landing craft; and somebody has to supervise the making of landing craft. Some of them are young people who were skilled at that kind of work. We are relieving -- actually shutting down the work on a pretty good percentage of small arms ammunition and guns -- rifles. In other words, we -- we have reached the peak of necessity on that. We are slowing down on it. On the other hand, landing craft, we want to make a great many more than we are making at the present time. Therefore, a young man who is doing -- making shells or rifles, could be more usefully put to work in the Armed Forces, whereas a young man who is essential at turning out landing craft probably (could) be kept in that work. Degree of necessity.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to comment on the proposed T.V.A. amendments which are now up before the Senate, or will be before the Senate on Thursday, and which Chairman (David E.) Lilienthal says will wreck T.V.A.?

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

Q. Mr. President, we understand that Bill Green has sent you a letter saying that the A. F. of L. insists upon representing labor solely?

THE PRESIDENT: Just got it six minutes ago.

Q. Is there anything you could say about that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that it hasn't been answered yet.

Q. Mr. President, going back to this reservoir of young men, is there a disposition now to look into the blanket-ing of young men in the farm industry more thoroughly than was the case before?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't -- I wouldn't single that out. The farm industry is just like any other essential industry. I don't think it's a fair thing to take that one in. Take them all in. They are all essential.

Q. Mr. President, along the same line, there seems to be a difference of opinion between the Truman Committee and the Army as to the extent to which consumer production could now be resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

Q. About consumer goods production -- the extent to which that could now be resumed. Would it be possible for you to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to give me a specific case. Much too broad a subject.

Q. (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What, for instance?

Q. For instance, in the last Truman Committee report, the Committee suggested that in labor areas that were not tight, that consumer goods production could be resumed in those areas. The -- the report made further comment that the Army attitude seemed to be that such production should not be resumed, for the reason that the labor then would be transferred to the tight labor areas for further war production; and I wonder whether or not you would comment on it, on those --- on that general problem about consumer goods production at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- that still is -- is too general. I mean, I would like to have a specific case. Well, just for example, immediately your question brings in -- ought to include the -- something else besides labor, and that is materials.

Q. (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) So that is a very important factor. You have an area in the country which is not a tight labor market. Of course, we could go to consumer goods in there, as far as labor goes; but how about -- how

about the materials? So right there, there's -- there's another part to the problem which is almost equally important. So you can't make a general reply to it, unless you have both the elements, labor and materials.

Now, for example, in one case that will occur to you -- agricultural implements. Well, we have now, because it's a very important thing, we have allocated a certain amount of steel, but I can't go up into some upstate county in New York where the labor situation is not very difficult and turn out agricultural machinery. I have got to have a plant to do it in. That probably will "throw me," if there is no plant to do it in a congested area. It's an awfully difficult subject. You have to do the best you can, being pulled three or four ways by necessity, or desirability.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to comment on the recognition of the Badoglio government by Premier Stalin?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got anything on it at all. You will have to ask the State Department.

Q. Mr. President, anything you can give us on the Irish situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

Q. (adding) Latest action of the British?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard a word.

Q. Mr. President, has any decision been reached yet on the French Committee's status in France ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No, ---

Q. (continuing) --- metropolitan France?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- not yet.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.