

CONFIDENTIAL

**Press and Radio Conference #949
Executive Office of the President
May 9, 1944 -- 4.18 P.M., E.W.T.**

(this is the first press and radio conference held by the President on his return from a month's rest on Bernard Baruch's plantation Hobcaw Barony at Georgetown, South Carolina)

THE PRESIDENT: How is everybody? I won't say what I was going to say. (laughter)

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Fine.

THE PRESIDENT: Not all three of you. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Got back in one piece, didn't you?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Got back in one piece, didn't you?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter) (then speaking softly) I think all I need do as evidence we had a good trip is to point out exhibits A, B and C. (more laughter)

Q. Let's forget that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. We have been kidded enough about that. (more laughter)

Q. You look better too, Steve.

MR. EARLY: Pinehurst.

Q. Pinehurst.

(pause here as newspapermen continued to come in)

MR. EARLY: Almost a record-breaking attendance here.

Q. Everybody's here.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it seems and sounds -- and sounds familiar. I had a very good trip. I don't think I need tell you any more about it. If you want evidence of the trip, if you will cast your eyes upon the countenances of the three representatives -- exhibits A, B and C -- of the press associations who were with me, you will find out more about the trip. Just look at them! (laughter) (they were quite tanned, and smiling)

MR. GODWIN: Are they exhibits for the prosecution or the defense? (more laughter) What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: Luckily, where I was, we don't think in litigious terms. (more laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I see.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all the news I have. (much laughter)

Q. Mr. President, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Dean -- Dean hasn't got any question. I was wondering about it.

MR. GODWIN: I will ask you a question, sir. Have

you heard of the Montgomery Ward case?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I told the ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Could you say anything about that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I told the three "exhibits," whom I saw just before I left down there, that I supposed that they would ask the question; and I told them they had better not, because somebody who wanted trouble would ask the question at the Tuesday's press conference. (laughing) Are you a lawyer?

MR. GODWIN: I wasn't looking for trouble. (laughter) I thought you might have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I was going -- I told them down there that the first question I would ask of the questioner was: are you a lawyer? Well, I -- I have known him quite a long while, and I don't think he has been studying law nights, and I don't think there's an awful lot of lawyers that "lay" around editorial rooms, or are in this room.

You know, it's a funny thing, there's a thing called law. We don't hear about it much -- what do you call it? -- practical operations of Government -- except through the Department of Justice. And the Department of Justice has a duty, which we are very apt to forget. It happens to be in the -- in one of the early statute laws; I think it's the original law that created the Department of Justice. It wasn't in the Constitution. You probably know by now -- I would say, if you remember back to the early days when you

first came to Washington, that the Departments are not set up under the Constitution. They are set up in the law. Well, the law which set up the Department of Justice way, way, way back -- before you were born -- said that the Attorney General, meaning the Department of Justice, would be the legal adviser of the Government of the United States. Well, that -- that law stayed ever since, and works in with the Congressional law. It is set up in this particular case that you are asking about.

About -- soon after Pearl Harbor, I got pledges from the great bulk of organized labor, saying there would be no strikes. You remember that. That is really -- recent history. And they said they would very much like it if we could get established a National War Labor Board. This is -- this is ABC stuff, but sometimes -- sometimes it's a good thing to read it over. And the ABC stuff said that this National War Labor Board would be a tribunal, where labor disputes would be settled in an orderly manner. Well, on the whole now, it has been going on from December 7, '41, which was the date of the -- of the origin of the whole thing, the war itself -- been going on until now, the late spring 1944.

And on the whole, the -- where there have been strikes, the ending of those strikes has been fairly prompt. There have been exceptions, of course, both here and in the other great democracies which are fighting at our side, and with similar laws -- England. And the total percentage of strikes has been, on the whole, very low. We have had

that out before.

And in order to implement the progress of this, and because of a very serious, threatened strike which threatened to tie up not just one industry or one series of supplies for the Government -- the coal strike -- it looked as if it might tie up the whole of industry, which was a terrible threat against the Government -- so Congress passed a thing called the Smith-Connally Act, which gave statutory authority to the War Labor Board, which had been in existence for some time before that, and provided in that Act that whenever a labor dispute threatened to interfere with the war effort, the Board would take jurisdiction and fix the terms and the wages and conditions of employment. That would continue until changed by the Board.

And then came this Smith Ward -- the Montgomery Ward case. And the Board -- War Labor Board by unanimous vote took jurisdiction, including the industry members on that Board. After the hearings, the Board by unanimous vote ordered Montgomery Ward to continue until an election could be held -- the wages and terms of conditions of employment that had existed for a year.

Montgomery Ward refused to comply, on the ground that the union no longer represented a majority of its employees. Well, they had a right, except that they laid themselves open for subsequent action.

MR. GODWIN: You said they had a right?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Montgomery Ward, like any

citizen, had a right to say, "I won't live up to the law" -- the action of this War Labor Board which is now duly authorized by law, just as you would have the right to say, "I won't go to jail." But the police would have a right to take you to jail, if they thought they had a case. Same thing -- you would have a perfect right to decline to go, only I don't think you would.

The employees thereupon went on strike, after -- I am just giving you a little history that the country doesn't know. Now that's an actual fact. I want to emphasize that. And if it had been -- this had been only the old press conference, I would have said the press hasn't let the country know, but being a radio conference also now, besides press, I will say that the radio hasn't let them know. Now that's mathematically provable. It's a perfectly simple thing. And I am not charging it. I am merely stating it as a fact. I am not even asserting, I am not even admitting it.

MR. GODWIN: Which particular fact hasn't the press and radio let them know?

THE PRESIDENT: Just what I said.

MR. GODWIN: All the way down?

THE PRESIDENT: All except what -- the whole thing. What I have said, plus what I am going to say.

After all other efforts to secure compliance with this Order failed, the Board again by unanimous vote -- second time -- recommended that the property be taken over, pending an election by the employees. That their recommendation be

taken was after their second notice to me that there had been no compliance.

The Director of Economic Stabilization (Fred Vinson), who passes on sanctions, joined in the recommendation.

The Attorney General submitted an opinion, that under the law the Government had authority to take possession.

Thereupon came out the telegram to Montgomery Ward and the union, and it stated that an election, which would clear things up, would be held within thirty days. Thereupon, having announced that the election would be held within thirty days, I called on the company to continue its contractual relations until the election, and called on the employees to return to work.

The employees complied.

The company refused.

Then I directed Secretary (of Commerce Jesse) Jones to take possession of the property, and as employer to continue with the contractual relations until we could have the election.

This election -- over the protest of the union -- it's too quick -- was ordered, and it is being held today. They are having an election today.

If the election shows that the union does not have a majority of the employees, that is the end of the case. Now that's simple. That has never been stated by press or radio. On the other hand, if the election shows that the union has a majority, then the management has already declared that it

is willing to continue its contract, and that will end the case.

There used to be all sorts of bedtime stories about children who saw things under the bed. And as you know, sometimes when people grow up, they see things under the bed. And you have got a very interesting thing. Mind you, I was able to see it because I was away, and I could look down on the whole thing. And that is what it is, what I -- I saw happen, a lot of people seeing things under the bed in this country, because they haven't got over their childhood habits. Maybe that's an allegory.

And I will read this last thing just once.

***** If the election shows that the union does not have a majority of the employees, that will end the case. On the other hand, if the election shows that the union has a majority, then the management has declared that it is willing to continue its contract, and that will end the case. *****

So I hope that by tonight when the news comes over the ticker, that we will all feel better.

Q. How about a direct quote on it, Mr. President?

(the President indicated approval, and this reporter read back the paragraph starred above)

THE PRESIDENT: And the only other thing is that, after they once end this matter -- off the record -- I hope you will all crawl out from under the bed. (laughter)

MAY CRAIG: Well, Mr. President, with the exception

of the last two sentences, everything that you have said I heard on the radio or read in papers. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, ---

MAY CRAIG: (interjecting) Yes, sir. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Yes, yes? Next to the last page?

MAY CRAIG: Not the last two sentences, the quoted sentences, but ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Next to the last page?

MAY CRAIG: (continuing) --- everything else.

THE PRESIDENT: Was it the lead? Was it in the lead, May? Oh No -- Oh No. I have been covering papers while you have been ---

MAY CRAIG: (interposing) Dorothy Thompson had it.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, maybe. Well, ---

MAY CRAIG: (interposing) Mark Sullivan had it. Two good ones.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't let's get into personalities. Mind you, I have been specializing for the last few weeks in reading papers. You ought to read papers the way I do. (much laughter)

MAY CRAIG: I read them. I read them.

Q. Mr. President, who ordered the troops to take Mr. (Sewell) Avery out of there?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose it was done like

any number of other plants we have taken over. I don't know, Pete (Brandt). I don't know. Nothing unusual about that.

Q. Mr. President, may we turn from mail order to politics for a minute?—(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Last night, Chairman (Robert E.) Hannegan made a very direct statement, that it was his personal judgment that you were going to be the candidate in 1944 for the Democratic ticket.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, look -- look. I am only just back. And I am not going to talk about it now, any more than I did before. And number one, I didn't read what he had said. And number four, if I do read it, I am not going to talk to you about it. That's easy -- and you could have answered it yourself. (laughter)

Q. Well, Mr. President, there are only 71 days before the Democratic National Convention. (much laughter, with the President laughing loudest)

Q. Would you give us -- would you give us some clue when you will be ready ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) My God, ---

Q. (continuing) --- to talk about it?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- have you been counting? (more laughter)

Q. Yes, sir. On the calendar.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't. Bad habit. (continued laughter)

Q. Anything about the vice presidential nomination?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) No. I don't talk about that either.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have talked to the Vice President about his trip.

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, what about Knox's successor?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I talked to him yesterday morning for about three minutes -- Henry Wallace's expected trip.

Q. Mr. President, any announcement about a successor to Knox?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Not yet. Soon.

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

Q. (interposing) Soon, did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Could you tell us -- give us a fill-in on what Mr. Stettinius has told you since your return?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. It wouldn't go in the paper. 21 pages -- a memoranda with, I think -- I think something like 40 subjects. Everything. Everything in the world.

He went over there, you know, with no agenda, no whatever they call the thing. He took up all kinds of questions in an extremely effective way, and the result has been awfully good, because there were a good many of the

subjects -- I think there were 40, or something like that, of them -- they were things that we hadn't discussed with the British at first-hand for a long time. And some of them ended in fairly long discussions. They all made progress. It was an extremely useful trip, and showed the course of the next lot of things which should be taken up, you might say straightened out the -- the order of -- of need, of talking with the British on all these subjects soon.

Like for instance the -- Oh, I am trying to think of something that -- that would -- for instance, the oil. That really created no discussion, because they are in the study stage and won't come up beyond the study stage for several weeks. Other things are in the more accurate stage. It was a very good, a very useful trip, and we are still talking about it. We had two good conferences. We are going to have another.

Q. Mr. President, since you have been reading the papers so closely, did you read about Father (Stanislaus) Orlemanski's visit to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Did you have that advance knowledge, that it was going to be made?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We are sending people abroad all the time. You can apply to go over. And you would be surprised that a lady over in the State Department -- I can't think what her name is ---

VOICES: (interjecting) Mrs. (Ruth) Shipley.

THE PRESIDENT: She's grand. A regular "ogre."
She's a wonderful "ogre."

Well, if you can get by Mrs. Shipley, it means that you have conformed, you have lived up to the law, and everything else. And then, apparently, these two people got over. I think Mrs. Shipley was satisfied with the reasons they gave for going over. There are people going over all the time. Why, all of you could get over, if your excuse was good enough. Think of that! (laughter) There are only a few of you that I wouldn't allow to go over. (more laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you very much.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #950
Executive Office of the President
May 16, 1944 -- 4.12 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: You have got to take down a lot of figures. I am going to leave some of this out -- (indicating figures before him) -- it won't be so bad as you think.

Q. Just take it slow then, will you? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: A report from the Budget.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I was just telling the front row to sharpen their pencils. I have got some figures for you. I am not going to have it mimeographed because I don't think it's worth it. I am speaking in comparative terms now.

These are reductions in the 1945 fiscal year war program, expenditures below the January estimates, which nearly -- all, of course, which went in from here and the rest of us budget experts in early January.

The recommendations now total 85.7 billions, compared with the January estimate of 90 billion decimal five, or a reduction of 4 decimal 8 since then. But they include -- these new figures of 85.7 -- three-and-a-half billion of new appropriations, recommended for Lend-Lease, on which no preliminary estimates were made last January.

Thus, as it stands now, with this increased -- with this new recommendation of three-and-a-half (billion) for Lend-Lease, the recommendations to Congress are 8 billion point three less than the corresponding preliminary estimates

made last January.

Now that 8 billion, three reduction is made up of 4 billion point 4 for the Navy, three billion for the War Department and the military establishments, and one billion for the War Shipping Administration; and other war activities are up a hundred million dollars. In other words, making the total reduction of 8.3.

These were made feasible because the January estimates were based on the major decisions which had been made very recently as a result of the -- the Cairo and Teheran meetings on strategic plans of the Allied Nations, and since then it has been possible for the planners -- military planners to determine with greater precision what they would need for the particular areas where fighting has taken place, or will take place.

And as they say here in this memorandum -- it depends on one word -- "to relate the procurement program to a definite operational plan." Another factor of importance was the decision that the expanded productive capacity of the nation constituted our real reserve of supply, and accordingly warehouse stocks during this coming year should not exceed the volume necessary to keep our supply pipelines filled. And then the third factor was that operational losses since January on land, sea and air were also less than had been previously anticipated.

Well, take for instance, the total loss of merchant ships by submarine action. The recommendations of the War

Department, Navy Department and Maritime Commission, Shipping Administration, and the Lend-Lease, represent 98.6 percent of the total 1945 war program. Which is rather an interesting thing, which some people won't mention.

Q. Mr. President, we didn't get that here. We didn't understand that last point.

THE PRESIDENT: All these things, War, Navy, Shipping Board, Lend-Lease, represent 98.6 percent of the total 1945 war program. In other words, it's practically the whole percent goes into those three major factors -- four major factors.

The remaining 1.4 percent provides for the emergency war agencies outside of those, and the war activities of the regular Federal agencies. Of course, there are always certain things, the State Department, and so forth and so on, that relate directly to the war, outside of the four big spenders. But the totals of the -- of those are only 1.4.

Q. Calendar year?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Calendar year?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am talking about fiscal year 1945.

Q. Did you say, Mr. President, that the State Department and similar activities were within that one point

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. Yes. All the other agencies of the Government are within that 1.4. In other words, 98.6 percent is just for Lend-Lease, War, Navy, Shipping Board.

Q. Can you expand a little more as to why the operational losses were less, or how they were less? That's a good story, if we can get some details on it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the example I used was the fact that we expected a great many more merchant ships to be sunk by submarines than actually have been sunk; and -- oh -- other things, like I suppose the -- the life of the artillery that is at the front. Evidently that's one of the items -- the guns are lasting longer than we thought they would last.

Q. Mr. President, does that contemplate the guns are not being used?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. They are being hit less frequently, and they are being better taken care of.

And then the -- the following tabulations, which are not very important, go more into the details by departments. I don't believe you want that. And then a small item, one ten billion, one six billion -- I won't even give you that -- liquidating obligations incurred against prior contracts. That's a different thing. I haven't got all of that on ----.

Now, these amounts that I read, whatever the figure is -- 85.7 -- are recommendations. They represent the amount required for the placing of orders and the letting of contracts, rather than the amounts of the anticipated cash expenditures for the fiscal year 1945. Well, that -- this is based on the budgetary business. For instance, the other day, Budget brought me in a story for you people on the War Department final estimates. I don't know what it ran to. It ran to

some perfectly vast sum. And I read it, and that was in the -- in the lead. And I found it wasn't true at all, because it wasn't explained. It was 45 billion of -- of -- of new appropriations, but there was an -- an even larger sum, I have forgotten what -- fifty -- sixty billions, that was left over from previous appropriations. So the story there in the lead was not -- not -- not the total thing, because that was not the point -- but we were only asking 45 billion new appropriations. That's the way it came out, and that's the way you people carried it, which was correct. There was a small sum of money that was left out of an appropriation. We were asking for a whole lot of money re-appropriated out of previous appropriations, but it was not clear until I got it, and I re-wrote it for you.

Q. Mr. President, is this going up in the form of new budget recommendations to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Steve, do you know that?

MR. EARLY: Mr. President, this is a complete report on all of the war estimates and recommendations. They have already been submitted to the Congress. This is a summary of it.

Q. A summary of the whole thing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes, that's right.

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

Q. (continuing) --- as reflected in the appropriations for the 1945 fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: They have gone up.

MR. EARLY: Now up in the hands of the Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Now, only one thing that it hasn't gone up on. Steve -- where was that, Steve? (indicating the figures before him)

(as Mr. Early conferred with the President, an air-raid siren sounded suddenly, provoking much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Now what do we do?

MR. EARLY: Did you hear the whistle?

THE PRESIDENT: Can't get out! (more laughter)

Yes, that's right -- I told them that. That's right, Yes.

I have a wonderful story that I -- is really an off the record story, and it really belongs to Steve. But I think it would hurt Steve's feelings if I told you, even off the record.

Q. Don't spare him too much, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Don't spare him too much.

MR. EARLY: Don't spare yourself. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: He dug the story out. Don't you think I ought to tell them, Steve?

MR. EARLY: Some other time. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's on the White House Correspondents' Association so I'll be kind, I won't tell you.

It's all right. (more laughter) That would hurt Steve's feelings.

Q. What have we done now, sir? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. What have we done now? (continued laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, maybe -- maybe I can give you a tip.

MR. EARLY: Better leave it where they "flang" it.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Never mind, sir. (continued laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. You haven't done anything. But -- I won't now -- I'll cut it out. (pausing) The story relates to President Hoover. I think it happened just this past week -- since last week. (pausing again)

Q. Go ahead! (a burst of laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: And Steve found out where it had gone. (another pause) Now I will tell you just one other thing -- (more laughter) -- and nothing else. (continued laughter) About a week ago, we found out that a former President had lost his "hair shirt." Period. Thanks. (much laughter, and whispered comments on what he had said)

Q. Who's got it now?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I said I would answer no more questions.

Q. Is it in the laundry, Mr. President? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I am putting it in my "column."

It's all right. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, there have been some reports out in Madison, Wisconsin, that you might see fit to endorse the Democratic State ticket out there. Would you care to confirm the reports in any way?

THE PRESIDENT: I know -- I am strictly off the record absolutely -- I know nothing about it.

Q. Mr. President, two Oklahoma Congressmen saw you today (Jed Johnson and William G. Stigler), and when they came out, one of them told us that 22 delegates -- Democratic delegates to the Convention -- Democratic Convention yesterday pledged you. And we asked them did they tell you about it, and they said Yes. And we asked them what the reaction was, and one of the Congressmen said, well you didn't seem exactly angry about it. I wonder if you could tell us in a little more detail what your --- (laughter drowned out the rest of the question).

THE PRESIDENT: No, Merriman (Smith), I couldn't. I was so -- just at that time, Steve had told me about what he had found, and I thought -- (laughter) -- I had really forgotten that they had told me. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, could you comment on the plan the Australian government has for a postwar meeting of leaders in the Pacific, to which they have invited Prime Minister Churchill, and I understand that he has indicated he will attend? I wonder if you are going to attend?

THE PRESIDENT: I heard that. Somebody told me.

I didn't even read it. Somebody told me that as a rumor. I haven't heard a word from the Australian or the New Zealand delegates. I don't think they have left England yet, but I expect to see them both on their way home, both Peter Nash (meaning Fraser) and Mr. (John) Curtin. I haven't heard anything except the rumor.

Q. Mr. President, shortly after last Tuesday's press conference, Mr. Sewell Avery said that he had no intention of signing a contract with the Montgomery Ward workers at Chicago, apparently disagreeing with the statements that you had made at the press conference. Do you have anything further on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q. Mr. President, have you received a report from the War Labor Board on -- on the Hummer Manufacturing case?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think so. (looking in Mr. Early's direction)

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Mr. President, have you got any late reports on the Italian campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what you have seen. The War Department reports are just the same thing as yours -- and all published.

I will say this, that the -- in one of those things, just to show the difficulty of being three thousand or more miles away from the place, the first day that I got the reports on the Italian campaign, just after we jumped off, I

wasn't feeling at all well about it.

And of course, when you have a major operation of that kind, I am very apt to disappear, to devote most of the time -- this is off the record for all of you -- there will be times where I am going to -- to disappear, so far as you are all concerned, during a very important thing.

And I was away from -- what? -- call it this room, and the reports came in to me in a different place than this room. And that first day I was very much worried, because we didn't seem to be making much progress on that Italian push. But it got better the second day, and better the third day, and this is the fourth day; and the -- the whole success of the operation is much more encouraging today than it was when it started on Thursday night. You see, it started our time on Thursday night -- about five o'clock in the afternoon. Things are distinctly better.

Q. Mr. ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, was all of that off the record, or at least what you said about ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

Q. (continuing) --- your going to be away?

THE PRESIDENT: Only that about my being away.

Because when you get into an important thing, it is much better that I should keep a fairly -- fairly clear mind on the whole of this thing.

As you know, I talked the whole thing over with General (Mark) Clark only about three weeks ago -- came

down to see me.

Q. Mr. President, Ross McIntire said he was going to make another thorough physical examination as soon as he comes back. Has he done that yet?

THE PRESIDENT: He is going to next week.

(laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #951

Executive Office of the President

May 26, 1944 -- 4.11 P.M., E.W.T. (Friday)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a number of things this "morning." The following -- it has been published -- that we have called this meeting early in July on the monetary subject. I thought I would read you the -- just a summary of the form of the invitation that went to the other United Nations and associated nations.

The publication of the joint statement of the technical experts, recommending the establishment of the international monetary fund, has been very -- received with great gratification here, as marking an important step toward a postwar international economic cooperation. Undoubtedly your people have been equally pleased by this evidence of the common desire to cooperate in meeting the economic problems of the postwar world. Therefore, I am proposing to call a conference of these nations, for the purpose of formulating definitely -- formulating definite proposals for the international monetary fund, and possibly a bank for reconstruction and development.

May (Craig), this is very important. You ought to take this down. (laughter)

MAY CRAIG: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It would be understood, of course, that the delegates would not be required to hold plenipotentiary powers, and its proposals formulated at the conference would

be referred to the respective governments and authorities for their acceptance or rejection.

I thought I would put that in before certain agencies of information could say that I was doing this without consulting the Congress.

Therefore -- and I hope very much that you will accept -- send in the names of the delegates.

It is the Government's belief that formulation of definite proposals for an international monetary fund, and bank for reconstruction and development, in the near future is a matter of vital -- vital concern to all of the United Nations, and the nations associated with them.

My Government sincerely hopes to receive a favorable reply at the earliest possible moment.

You have got the names of all the countries that have been asked to send delegates. They have been told yet where it will be?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Bretton Woods (New Hampshire). And the usual arrangements that have worked out at the last couple of conferences.

Q. Mr. President will the press be admitted to that meeting?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but you can't sleep with the delegates. (loud laughter)

Q. (aside) Why?

Q. Mr. President, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Enough said! (more laughter)

Q. Yes, sir.

Q. Does that hold both ways, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. (more laughter) No more questions. You will get me embarrassed.

MR. GODWIN: I was going to ask, ---

Q. (interposing) How about Congressmen, Mr. President?

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- who wants to sleep with the delegates?

MR. EARLY: There may be some ladies.

Q. How about Congressmen?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you sleep with them all the time, so what's the difference? (continued laughter)

Q. Are they going to be appointed as delegates? I mean the Members of Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: Have the delegates been given out yet?

MR. EARLY: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It hasn't.

MR. EARLY: Hasn't been decided.

Q. Mr. President, in the case of the relief and rehabilitation agreement, I believe that the United States, Russia, and Great Britain had reached an agreement before they called the other nations in. Is that true in this instance?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, the preliminary steps you will have to ask the State Department about. I couldn't cover them all just from memory.

Then, one question which I -- Steve thought that you might ask a question about.

I have had the Director of War Mobilization and the War Department working on the problem of the use of war prisoners, to the maximum number possible, this summer on farms. And the Director of War Mobilization sent this through the Under Secretary of War, Mr. Patterson, to me.

MR. EARLY: The opposite way, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: That is from Patterson through Byrnes to you.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Transmitted by the Director of War Mobilization through the Under Secretary to me.

MR. EARLY: That's right, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That's what I said.

(reading, not literally): "Inquiries from various sections have recently been made to the War Department, concerning the use of prisoners of war for seasonal work, particularly in agriculture and food processing during the summer.

"There are at present a hundred thousand prisoners of war available for all kinds of manual labor. The demands for their labor, of course, are greatly in excess of the supply.

"The United States will observe the terms of the Geneva Convention, which forbids the use of prisoners of

war in direct war activities and in hazardous occupations. Subject to this limitation, it is the policy of the War Department to utilize the labor of prisoners of war on projects of a useful character where our own -- own supply of manpower is inadequate.

"The most effective use is on necessary work of a non-military character at Army camps, posts and stations, where the work releases soldiers -- American soldiers -- for military activities, and on work that continues throughout the year. With this use in mind, a large number of prisoners are located at Army installations. Employment of this character results in the least amount of idleness. The balance are available for seasonal work, and it is the practice of the War Department to furnish prisoners of war seasonal work according to priorities specified by the War Manpower Commission, so far as considerations of location, safety and other factors will allow. In the case of agricultural workers certification is made by the War Food Administration and priorities set by the War Manpower Commission.

"The War Department will keep the matter under constant study and will do its best to see to it that maximum utilization of prisoners of war is carried out. As conditions change, the numbers furnished for various activities will change."

I think that's all I have got. The rest may come out. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, you have so far received far more than enough delegates to the Democratic Convention to assure -- (the President began to laugh) -- to assure your renomination, except for one fact, unless you refuse it. Now, not asking what your decision is, but have you reached a decision -- (more laughter from the President) -- whether to accept or refuse?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, this is good. We get a different form of it every -- just about once a week. That's a new one. It's a brand new one. It's awfully interesting.

Q. What's the answer, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. What's the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am making a list of the varieties of questions.

Q. Are you going to answer them all at once, Mr. President? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think the time -- I will give you -- I will give you a real good one: Time will tell. (continued laughter)

Q. Only 55 days of time left.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) You remember in 19 and 40, there was some lady -- at least she said she was a lady -- (more laughter) -- that got out -- oh, what? -- back about -- just after the Convention -- "93 days more of Roosevelt." And the second time the word "only" in. "Only 92 days of -- more of Roosevelt." And she went right on down through.

(laughing) And I bet you have all forgotten her name. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, here is a related question. You were nominated for President last week by a liberal party (formerly Communist Party) in New York. Have you been notified of that nomination? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) I have been notified in very interesting terms by ninety percent of the press.

MR. GODWIN: Have you -- have you made a reply?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet, because they are still coming in.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) The liberal party, they should have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They are still coming in.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- they should have let you know.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) These press notices are coming in. I find them in my clippings.

MR. GODWIN: May I get back to the farm matter? Do you know how the farmers could get in touch with who or whom, on this war prisoners matter?

THE PRESIDENT: Who in your own State? Does it say, Steve?

MR. GODWIN: Commissioner of Agriculture?

MR. EARLY: The county agent, Mr. President. The county agents.

MR. GODWIN: County agent.

THE PRESIDENT: County agent. And of course, we have given as much as we can, but we have to distribute it fairly all over the country.

Q. Mr. President, with the time of invasion apparently drawing nearer, is there anything you can tell us in generalized terms about our preparations, and our -- our chances for the success of the operation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's in the first paper that I happen to hold in my hand, thinking that somebody would use the word "invasion." And Merriman (Smith), you did it.

There was an editorial in a -- a certain local paper (The Washington Post for May 13), suggesting that the word "invasion" is not quite adequate for the tremendous thing that is happening in Europe, and suggesting that instead of the word "invasion" that we should call it "liberation."

And I most heartily reciprocate that idea. It isn't a war of invasion -- you want to get the word "invasion" out of people's heads all over the world -- it's a war of liberation.

This action in Europe, which is going to come off some time this summer, is intended to be a liberation and not an invasion, and I would say that all of our plans are built on that basis.

Of course, we have got a great deal further ahead in the discussion of things at the present time than we had at a -- what we might guess at having been a similar period in the last war.

Well, one -- one very -- very important example.

I was reading a book the other day -- I have forgotten the name of it -- that pointed out that it wasn't until sometime in the rather late summer of 1918 that we began a study of the postwar World War problems, and had all kinds of papers, information of all kinds that were thrown together, I think it was under the supervision of Colonel House. And he appointed a committee. This particular book mentioned the fact that Isaiah Bowman was extremely active in -- in getting information about all kinds of things, like racial origins, and the history of boundaries.

The result was that in December -- early December, when the President left for the peace conference -- that same year, mind you -- '18 -- they took dozens of packages of this information over to the other side. A lot of it had been pretty thoroughly digested by the experts, old and young, who accompanied the peace mission. But there had been practically no discussion of postwar World War -- first World War terms with the other Allies. There had not been time. And I don't suppose any one of the Allied nations had done any talking with any other Allied nation except in very general terms as to whether they could come together on an agreed program -- what it should be -- general discussion -- beforehand. So they arrived in Paris with all the information in the world, but practically very few plans -- concerted plans.

Now, of course, we have done a great deal along that line. We have had the conference at White Sulphur Springs that you all loved so much. We had the conference at Atlantic City just recently. We had the ---

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[Hot?]

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Labor conference in Philadelphia.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I.L.O. labor conference. And now we are having the monetary conference.

In other words, this merely follows what I think I mentioned just about a year ago, that we are taking up these things. We can't do them all at the same time, but we are taking up the major problems of the postwar world and talking them over, and in many cases making specific recommendations or specific determinations of what we are going to do to seek -- all the United Nations. In other words, we are making far greater progress in this war than we did in the last war. Coming along in an orderly way, with the retention of friendships -- using separate rooms, and coming along all right.

Q. Mr. President, in that connection, the Secretary of State said at Noon today that this country is probably more advanced than any of the other Allied countries in plans for a general security organization in the postwar world.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I think that's true.

Q. (continuing) However, nothing has been said specifically as to the nature of the plans, which now apparently are in good shape.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, for instance, I -- I have been -- I have had two sets of conversations, one at the Casablanca conference and the other with the -- one was the combination of the Cairo conference, where the Far East was represented, and the Teheran conference.

And of course, as you all know, we have talked about a postwar world. I am trying to eliminate a third World War.

Furthermore, in those discussions, there have -- while at that time there was nothing on paper, we talked things over pretty thoroughly, and since then they have been reduced to -- what? -- first draft form. Well, I wouldn't give out a first draft any more than I would give out a first draft of one of my speeches. It would horrify you. (laughter)

MR. EARLY: It would.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It would horrify you. (more laughter) In my -- my fifth, sixth, or seventh draft you might say was at least worth listening to. So we are -- on that line, too, we have got along reasonably well.

Q. Mr. President, ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President, there was a word in Mr. Reynolds's question on which your answer depended, which I missed in my -- I have Hull said this country was further ahead on security plans ---

Q. (Tom Reynolds) (interjecting) General over-all.

MR. GODWIN: General over-all.

Q. Mr. President, in these discussions about postwar policy, are you finding the Soviet Union an active and satisfactory collaborator?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely. Yes.

Q. Mr. President, are you considering the appointment of somebody from the West Coast as Under Secretary of the Navy, or Assistant Secretary of the Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I can only tell you off the record, and that is that I am considering -- I have forgotten, what? -- five, six, or seven names; and Jim Forrestal at Cabinet meeting, which ended only three minutes ago about, asked me whether I wanted to talk about it. "No," I said, "it will have to wait until the beginning of the week."

Q. He didn't suggest a successor to himself?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There's no point talking about it.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, is an appointment going to be made to take Mr. Wilson's place as delegate to the French Committee at Algiers?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Have to ask the State Department.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Churchill in his foreign debate speech said that General De Gaulle was invited to London with your full approval. Could you tell us the purpose of General De Gaulle's visit to London?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you would have to ask Mr. Churchill.

Q. In that same connection, Mr. President, there was a dispatch from London this morning saying that Russia is about to recognize the National Committee as a -- the permanent government of metropolitan France. Have you received any information from Moscow to that effect?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better check

Moscow. Find out how he came to write that.

Q. That came from London, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. That came from London, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better check London.

That wasn't A.P., was it?

Q. No, but very often the A.P. --- (laughter drowned out the rest of this answer).

Q. Mr. President, do you anticipate a meeting with Mr. Churchill this summer?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I hope some time, but I don't know when. This summer, or autumn -- or late spring -- something like that.

Q. What about winter?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. You missed winter.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't like -- I don't like stormy weather on the Atlantic. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, does Mr. Churchill's outline of the postwar world conform to yours and Mr. Hull's first draft?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I couldn't go into that. We have been talking now for a whole year. You will have to -- you will have to excuse me from going into that kind of detail.

Q. Mr. President, the -- Senator McCarran suggested that the decisions of the War Labor Board should be submitted to judicial review. Do you have any comment on that suggestion?

THE PRESIDENT: Only this. Now I will put it in the form of a question.

If you have a decision of the War Labor Board, affecting a firm which has locked out its employees or failed to keep its word, or a whole bunch of employees who walk out and won't go back, and then they were to -- the War Labor Board were to hand down the decision, and then it went to the District Court, and then to the Circuit Court of Appeals, and then to the Supreme Court, and then to a committee of investigation by the Senate, what would happen to the poor devils who were out? Who would pay for their food?

That's the answer.

Q. Thank you, sir.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #952

Executive Office of the President

May 30, 1944 (Memorial Day) -- at 4.08 P.M., E.W.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have much news.

On the Brewster plant matter -- Long Island -- looking into the whole situation there -- I asked the Navy Department for a report. Especially, I have asked Justice Byrnes to go into it, and I was talking with him a few minutes ago and he thinks, what probably is true, that the -- the action of stopping the building of planes there, except the small number they still have on hand to be built, had to be done in the interest of economy, but which was probably -- as far as we can tell now -- done too fast, or put the other way -- without sufficient notice. However, the thing is coming along all right.

And the Navy is -- and any other organization of the Government -- is being asked to put in there any new contracts that could be appropriately placed there. And that includes the -- the Navy and the (War) Production Board, and any other building organization.

Also, the Joint Contract Termination Board -- which has been set up about a week ago, among other things, to cover situations like that -- is just being organized, and it has only started a week ago -- hasn't had time yet to get into this particular instance. Working closely -- in close touch with Mr. (Richard T.) Frankenstein, the vice president of the United Auto Workers. And I think the situation will be cleared up.

I don't think I have got anything else.

Q. Mr. President, this Joint Contract Termination Board that you referred to, is that the one that is headed by Mr. (Charles E.) Wilson of the War Production Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q. Mr. President, there has been a lot said recently about the transfer of some of our warships, or a warship, to the Russian government. I wonder if you would ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. This is the thing you forgot to ask me last -- last Friday? (much laughter)

Q. Yes, sir. You gave us a little too much then.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to give you the same answer I would have given last Friday -- it's all right: ask the Navy Department.

Q. Mr. President, when you were in the Navy Department as -- as part of the -- as Assistant Secretary, I was not a newspaperman, but if my mind serves me right, at that time you supported President Roosevelt on the League of Nations -- (much laughter) ---

Q. (interjecting) President Wilson.

Q. (continuing) --- President Wilson. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: All right now. We have got it straight. You are all right. (more laughter)

Q. (continuing) Well, I wonder if you could say anything as to what you think about that now?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think I was quite right

in supporting it at the time.

Q. How do you feel about it now?

THE PRESIDENT: About a new League of Nations?

Q. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know that we are working toward a -- a unity of the United Nations toward the prevention, if we can humanly help it, of another World War. Of course, we were -- it was a new experience for us in those days -- brand new. It was going to be a war to end wars, and through this altruistic unity of all the nations, of which we were going to be part and hoped that there would never be any more wars.

Well, you are older than you were then. Probably, in those days, you would have been in favor of the theory of ending all wars. Today, we are -- we are a little older -- have gone through some pretty rough times together. And perhaps we are not saying that we can devise a method of ending all wars for all time. Some of us -- I don't think I include myself in this -- are a little more cynical than we were then. Some of us -- and I don't think I include myself -- are a little more foolishly-minded domestically than we were when we were twenty-five years younger.

And so we have an objective today, and that is to join with the other nations of the world -- oh -- not in such a way that they would decide whether -- some other nation would decide whether we were to build a new dam on the Conestoga Creek, but for general -- general world peace in setting up some machinery of talking things over with other nations,

without taking away the independence of the United States in any shape, manner or form, or destroying -- what's the other word? -- the integrity of the United States in any shape, manner or form; with the objective of working so closely that if some nation in the world started to run amuck, or some combination of nations started to run amuck, and seeks to grab territory or invade its neighbors, that there would be a -- a unanimity of opinion that the time was to stop them before they got started; that is, all the other nations who weren't in with them.

And, in a sense, the League of Nations had that very, very great purpose. It got dreadfully involved in American politics, instead of being regarded as a nonpartisan subject.

And that is why, in this particular year, the Secretary of State and I have been working very closely together, and we have been working in conferences with the duly constituted constitutional machinery of Government, which in this case happens to be the Senators on the Foreign Affairs Committee -- four from each party. And, so far, the conversations from them have been conducted on the very high level of nonpartisanship. So far, they have worked very well.

And we have -- as the Secretary of State told you, I think -- we have been talking with Britain and -- and Russia about this plan which was evolved over here which, as I said, is a first draft. It will be modified, of course, before you get to a final draft. And we have also talked -- I talked, for instance, with the Generalissimo in Cairo along exactly

the same line. And that is where the thing stands today.

But let me emphasize that both the Secretary of State and I have been trying to look at this thing -- and, I think, the Senators -- in a spirit of nonpartisanship, thinking about a hundred and thirty -- thirty-five million Americans, and thinking about a great many small nations, as well as the bigger nations, who at this stage are directly involved.

After we get through talking -- what I call the first draft -- we will talk, of course, with all the other nations of the world.

Well now, that is as closely as you can describe what is happening at the present time. I can't tell you what necktie each of the people will be wearing on a given date, although I notice that tendency in the only afternoon paper I have seen, to begin asking questions of that kind.

Q. May I ask this, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. What you mean then, if I interpret what you said correctly, is that you are not following the pattern of the former League of Nations, but you are seeking for a new pattern ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, you can't ---

Q. (continuing) --- as applied to latter day questions?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you can't follow the old pattern, because obviously conditions are entirely different from those days in 1919 -- entirely different.

Q. (interjecting) That's what I wanted.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We are proceeding with a good deal more experience than we had then on a 1944 pattern -- at least what we think is a 1944 pattern -- rather than a 1919 pattern.

Q. Mr. President, what about the holding of this forthcoming conference here? It will definitely be in Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any conference. Who told you that?

Q. The conversations that Secretary Hull spoke of yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: The conversations? I could conduct a conversation with you over the telephone. He never said to anybody anything about a conference that I know of.

Q. A conference is implied in his statement then.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but then ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, Mr. Hull did say that Mr. Molotoff entered a resolution at Moscow which suggested that conversations be conducted at Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what he said, but a conversation doesn't have to be a conference.

Q. Right.

THE PRESIDENT: He doesn't say that. It doesn't imply that. We are proceeding in the easiest way, whatever that may happen to be. There may be a conference. I don't want to be tripped up later on, if we should have a

conference some day, somewhere. I don't want to have it said that there won't be any conference. I don't know. I haven't heard of any conference. I don't think Mr. Hull implied that.

Q. Mr. President, in his statement last night, Mr. Hull said that the plans that they were working on were in line with the Declaration of Moscow and the Connally Resolution, and with the declaration which he said today included ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, ---

Q. (continuing) --- the Mackinac declaration.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Oh, sure.

Q. (continuing) In your purview -- in your view of the thing, does this plan that Mr. Hull has fall with inside the outline of the Mackinac declaration?

THE PRESIDENT: Now you are getting us into politics -- pretty close to it -- awfully close. I don't know. I suppose we might take an exceedingly good editorial out of -- what? -- the Evening Star. That might enter into it. Or any other paper -- that's the one that happens to be in front of me. But take that, anything that bears on the subject, including -- including even the -- the suggestions that come from entirely outside sources, because we want to cover the whole ground -- including even suggestions from what "T.R." would have called the "lunatic fringe." You sometimes find something pretty good in the lunatic fringe. In fact, we have got as -- as part of our social and economic government today a whole lot of things which in my boyhood were considered lunatic fringe, and yet they are part of everyday life.

I can imagine, for example -- No -- I guess I won't say it -- it's all right -- it might be considered from the political angle. (laughter)

Q. Well, Mr. President, the big question then, in everybody's mind apparently, is whether or not this thing would meet before the war ends or after the war?

THE PRESIDENT: Will you tell me, please, what difference it makes whether it meets before the war ends or afterwards? That's an awful hard question to answer.

Q. Mr. President, have you ever decided or found a better name for the war? You were seeking one. Have you found a new one?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there was -- somebody suggested it to me about two or three weeks ago, and I thought rather well of it. Could be called "The Tyrants' War." It comes pretty close to being a tyrant's war.

Q. Mr. President, do you want this foreign policy matter eliminated from the 1944 campaign? Is that what you have in mind, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you see, the trouble is that I don't control all the newspapers of the United States, so it doesn't make much difference whether I would like it or not. (laughter) Is that a fair answer?

Q. I had in mind the Republican Party, Mr. President. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I see you are getting into politics again, and the whole basis of this thing, so far,

has been going along on an amazingly effective nonpartisan basis, and I don't want you or anybody else to go and gum the works intentionally.

Q. Mr. President, has there been any change in our relations with Spain?

THE PRESIDENT: In what?

Q. In our relationship with Spain? Or is there any comment that you could make upon it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I should say essentially none, but I don't think that I would try to make an international episode of it, because it might hurt the war. And I don't think there's anything that I could contribute, except the fact that we are working along -- might almost say from day to day.

I don't think that any of us are satisfied with what Spain -- the government of Spain has been doing. Certainly, as long as we have been in the war, they have been sending an awful lot of stuff to Germany, and now the amount of that stuff -- the total of the stuff has been cut down very, very materially. But, in my judgment -- not enough yet.

Q. Mr. President, the Senate Banking and Currency Committee has approved several amendments to the O.P.A. extension act, which evidently is designed to raise the prices of some basic commodities and also textiles. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: What were the articles?

Q. Congress would have set up an escalator clause requiring the O.P.A. to raise the price of textiles as the

price of raw cotton goes up.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't seen it. I can't comment on it, except it does carry me back to the days back in -- what? -- in 1933 or 4, when I went down to the Oglethorpe celebration -- General Oglethorpe -- in Savannah.

And the Governor of Georgia at that particular time got up and introduced me, and he made a great speech. And he says, "What we want in the South is 35-cent cotton." It had been selling in March or some time at the end of 1932, beginning of 1933, about four-and-a-half cents a pound. And it got up to about, I think, eleven cents a pound. And as you remember, that was one of the origins of the word "parity." The farmers throughout the country at that time were -- through their Members of the House and Senate -- pleading for parity, so that they could get what they -- what their returns were from their agricultural products up to a relatively even purchasing power with things that were made in factories.

And he went on and said, "We want 35-cent cotton." That was the price of cotton in the first World War. Well, at that particular time, parity for cotton would have been 14 cents; and after four or five years we did get it up to 14 cents, with the various other gadgets that were put onto the various bills from the Congress, and the farmer was getting approximately his 14 cents for cotton. Cotton now is, as I remember it, about 22 cents? (looking in the general direction of the couch)

MR. DANIELS: I think that's right, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I think around 21 -- 22 cents. And, of course, the price of other things that the farmer uses has gone up, but cotton is certainly at parity at the present time, and relatively -- maybe slightly above, for all I know.

And when I replied to the Governor of Georgia, I started off by saying that I was "agin" -- eternally and irrevocably against 35-cent cotton, which at that time would have been about three times over the parity price.

Well, it's the same old thing, anything that you grow. Well, I grow -- I grow lumber. I am getting twenty-nine dollars a thousand -- which is pretty good -- a thousand board feet. Of course, thinking personally, and selfishly, I would like to see lumber selling at seventy-nine dollars a thousand. Well, we have all got that streak in us. If you pick out cotton, you will have somebody else on your neck, and then -- then you will get inflation. But if you do it for one -- I suppose one out of ten -- you ought to do it for almost anything that grows.

Substantially, the price that asparagus and some other things bring is a pretty good price, and I know it has made the cost of buying asparagus in the White House awfully high. This is the asparagus season.

Which reminds me of a friend of mine, a foreman of one of the substantial trades, who came in last January, and said to me, "I have an awful time when I go home." He says, "My old lady is ready to hit me over the head with the dishpan."

I said, "What's the trouble?"

"The cost of living."

"Well," I said, "what, for instance?"

"Well, last night I went home, and the old lady said, 'What's this? I went out to buy some asparagus, and do you see what I got? I got five sticks. There it is. A dollar and a quarter! It's an outrage.'"

Well, I looked at him, and I said, "Since when have you been buying asparagus in January -- fresh asparagus?"

"Oh," he said, "I never thought of that."

"Well," I said, "tell that to the old lady, with my compliments."

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You get a lot of that.

Q. (continuing) -- is that the same foreman who bought the strawberries in the winter? (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It happened to be a different one, but it's all right. Still marks a true story.

Q. I just wondered if it was the same man that came in then. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, getting back to that former question of mine about the League, do you have a program that you want to submit or that you will submit, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: To what? On what?

Q. On any organization of our United Nations postwar ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh Yes. O Heavens,

Yes.

Q. You do have a program?

THE PRESIDENT: That's what Mr. Hull and I both have been talking to the Senators about.

Q. Well, you haven't submitted it to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, because it's in the first draft stage. May be tremendously improved before we give it out.

Q. Points, sir? Or do you get away from points?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Are there points, or do you get away from them?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean like the Fourteen Points? Oh, No -- Oh, No. This is an organization. Things like points, well, are principles. This is a working organization that we are talking about -- got that far.

Q. Would the President's clearance for this apply to the plan for the organization itself, or merely for the process of putting it up to the Big Four at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: We are putting up -- we are putting up a first draft of the plan, with definite objectives and a method of carrying them out.

Q. Would it take in the Senate -- submit it to the Senate as to whether they are bound irrevocably ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now you are waxing political, if you start -- if you start making people sign things when they have got only a first draft. We want them to -- to go along with the general idea for the peace of the

world. And, so far, they like the idea.

Q. In other words, then, Mr. President, you don't find any willful men, do you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I never have.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have known some awful fools in my life, and I have been sorry for some people in my life, but I don't hate. (laughter) And that is an interesting thing to some of you people. It's rather -- it's rather interesting how many people in -- some of them in this room, I think, have talked about how I hate this person, or hate that person, or a feud, or an awful row between so-and-so and me. It just isn't true. It's what -- it's what -- well, I won't characterize it. You know. I don't hate people -- especially on Memorial Day. (more laughter) Some of them are dead that I "hated." (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, there has been considerable agitation recently for this establishment of the -- what have been termed free ports for Jewish refugees in this country. What is your reaction to this proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: I like -- I like the -- I don't like the name, but I like the idea, and we are working on it now. And well, when you said "this country," I'd take those two words out, because it is not, in my judgment, necessary to decide that we have to have a free port right here in the United States. There are lots of other places in the world where refugees conceivably could go to.

Q. Mr. President, one more question on the point that we were talking, over the security organization. You said at our last conference that you hoped to see Mr. Churchill in the near future ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, ---

Q. (continuing) --- or in the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- between now -- between now and next January 20th. (laughter) I made an unfortunate slip. (more laughter)

Q. (interposing) What was in your mind when you said "late spring"?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I made an unfortunate slip. I said "next spring." I'd like to see him next spring, regardless. Just the same way I created the perfectly terrific calendar dispute as to -- as to what the word "summer" meant. "This summer," to some people, they say that it's the 20th of June. Technically that is correct, but in ordinary conversation a fellow who takes his family off somewhere for the summer, very often does it before the 20th of June, but he calls it "for the summer."

I don't -- I didn't mean to be technical, and I apologize for what you thought, or just what the word "summer" means. I have always thought of June, July and August as summer months. Some people would say July, August and September. I don't know. (much laughter)

Q. Mr. President, my question was: do you believe that your meeting with Mr. Churchill might be in time to

take up this question of the world security organization?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it will -- it's happening now.
It has started.

Q. Mr. President, have you any plans for a radio address in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Thinking it over.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Yes, thank you, sir.

Q. I didn't forget anything today. (laughter)

Q. You caught everything.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. You caught everything.

(more laughter)