

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #957
Executive Office of the President
June 13, 1944 -- 4.19 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Only got one book?

Q. Don't tell me we need more today?

THE PRESIDENT: You may need two. (laughter)

Q. It's too hot for that, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: You've got all night. (more laughter)

Q. Wait till it cools off.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought you might be interested in part of a dispatch that came from Ambassador ^{W.} (Averell ~~W.~~) Harriman in Moscow -- comment that Marshal Stalin made to Ambassador Harriman about the landing in France.

Marshal Stalin said -- very short -- quote: "The history of war has never witnessed such a grandiose operation, an operation Napoleon himself had never even attempted."

Then I have a long thing, which you needn't take down, because Steve will give you copies -- of a report from Leo Crowley.

(reading, not literally): "A summary of the conclusions of the detailed investigations of Germany's ferro-alloy position, which have been made by the Foreign Economic Administration.

"1. One of the most significant developments in

Germany's war production is the growing vulnerability of her ferro-alloy position. Germany's supply of these alloys required in the manufacture of special steels essential for her production of shells, and tanks, and artillery and other finished munitions, as well as for her war plants, is showing signs of deterioration. This situation is developing as one after another the sources of these vital metals are being cut off through United States military -- United Nations military, political and economic action.

"2. Manganese and chrome are used in greater quantities than other alloys. With the Russian recapture of the Nikopol manganese deposits and the action of Turkey in stopping Chrome shipments, important Nazi sources of these metals have been eliminated. When the Balkan supplies to Germany are cut off by the United Nations armed forces the last substantial source of chrome and the principal remaining source of manganese will be gone.

"3. Tungsten is practically indispensable for tips on tools used in armament production and for projectile cores.

"Fourth. Spain has thus far stopped a portion of its tungsten exports to Germany. Further substantial reductions and absolute control of smuggling are necessary.

"5. Considerable quantities of tungsten were being shipped from Portugal to Germany, but Portugal has agreed to suspend these shipments.

"6. The importance of this suspension of Portugese shipments and of completely shutting off the remaining

Spanish shipments to the Nazis can be appreciated when it is kept in mind that during 1943 about 90% of Germany's tungsten supplies came from Spain and Portugal. So highly do the Germans prize this metal that they have even resorted to equipping U-boats as blockade runners in an attempt to bring in small quantities from the Far East.

"7. A substantial part of Germany's supply of nickel, molybdenum and cobalt is now coming from Finland. Cobalt is almost unique in bonding tungsten carbide in tool steels and shell cores."

I hope you know more about that than I do.

(continuing reading, not literally): "Nickel and molybdenum can be used to some extent to replace manganese and chrome in some steels. The shortages which the Nazis are experiencing -- experiencing in manganese and chrome have thus increased her dependence on nickel and molybdenum from Finland. The stoppage of these Finnish ferro-alloys from getting to Germany would help the United States -- United Nations.

"8. Norway is presently a major source of molybdenum for Germany.

"9. In the event that the Balkan supplies of chrome and manganese and the Norwegian supplies of molybdenum are cut off by combined military operations -- and the remaining Spanish tungsten supplies are eliminated through political and economic action -- it is estimated that Germany's war production would be materially affected within six months.

"I know that you will agree that this picture

should not be permitted to result in any slackening of the country's all-out effort through over-optimism, but rather should be the stimulus for renewed and greater efforts to shorten the conflict."

Then I have also got for you, outside, a report to me from General Eisenhower -- came in yesterday.

(reading, not literally): "On June 6th we initiated the first vital step leading to the decisive battle of Europe. The first great obstacle has been surmounted -- that is the breaching of the beach defenses that the enemy by lavish employment of enslaved labor had installed in -- in forest-like density along the entire lateral of north -- northwest Europe. Gallantry, fortitude and skill were called for, and these, in abundant measure, the entire Allied force has displayed since the opening day of the battle.

"A particularly satisfying feature of the fighting has been the fine performance of troops -- American, British, and Canadian -- committed to battle for the first time. Just as they did and are still doing in the Mediterranean, these untried Allied units have conducted themselves in a manner worthy of their more experienced comrades who conquered the German in Africa, Sicily, Italy.

"What is more important, complete unity between the air, ground and naval services has prevailed.

"Satisfactory as is the progress of this battle to date, in magnitude it is but a mere beginning to the tremendous struggles that must follow before final victory is achieved.

Although the cross-channel landing operation was attended by hazards and difficulties greater, I believe, than have ever before faced an invading army, this initial success has given us only a foothold upon northwestern France. Though -- through the opening thus made, and through others yet to come, the flood of our fighting strength must be poured. Our operations, vast and important as they are, are only part of the far larger pattern of a combined assault against the fortress of Germany by the great Russian armies from the East and our forces from the Mediterranean.

"The Nazis will be forced to fight throughout the perimeter of their stronghold, daily expending their dwindling resources until overwhelmed by the hopelessness of their position. To this end we need every man, every weapon, and all the courage and fortitude of our respective peoples. The Allied soldier will do his duty.

"Dwight D. Eisenhower."

Q. Mr. President, will copies of the General Eisenhower report be available, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir.

Q. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: As soon as you go out. I think that's all.

Q. Mr. President, in connection with the message -- the comment of Marshal Stalin, and the Eisenhower statement, what can you say for us in the way of general comment about the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I talked ---

Q. (continuing) --- operations as of today?

THE PRESIDENT: I talked on that last night.

Q. I wondered if you had anything new?

THE PRESIDENT: It's still current. (laughter)

Q. Have you heard yet from General de Gaulle, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q. (continuing) --- as to when he will come?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Sir, Mr. Crowley mentions --in what you read to us -- mentions the desirability of cutting off manganese and chrome from the Balkans ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The what? I didn't get it.

Q. The desirability of cutting off manganese and chrome from the Balkans. Is there any indication as to how that might be accomplished?

THE PRESIDENT: By throwing the Germans out is the only way I know. (laughter)

Q. May we take it the same is true of Norway and Finland, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. May we take it that the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The same is true of Norway and Finland.

Q. Would the new Russian advance, sir, be predicated on the necessity of cutting off material from Finland?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. That's an "if" question, that I would have to ask Moscow about first, before I answered it.

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be some confusion as a result of your press conference statement at the last conference as to the Italian armistice terms. You said then you saw no reason for secrecy. The State Department passed the buck to the Army, and the Army says they see strong reason for the secrecy.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, after some inquiry about it, the answer is that the -- the military authorities still consider that for military security reasons it should not be given out at this time.

Q. Does that mean that it will be held a secret until the complete liberation of Italy?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. Until they decide it is not -- no longer a matter of necessary security.

Q. That is a matter of military security as contrasted with political security?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q. Mr. President, there is a little bill still pending in the House that represents an effort to keep a manufacturer from commercializing the Red Cross emblem. Have you heard anything about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I have found out about it. The bill is S. 469. Passed the Senate, and will appear now before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House, and discussions

are scheduled to begin tomorrow morning. They will meet in open session, so you can go up there and find out all about it.

(laughter) Ask all the committees.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Is there any place we could go, Mr. President, to find out about your fourth term intentions? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) My what? (more laughter)
Well, -- (in a whisper): I don't know! (continued laughter)

Q. (interposing) How about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I -- I want to be helpful, ---

Q. (interjecting) I think we would all appreciate it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- to enlighten you. So would I.

Q. How about the Democratic convention, sir? Would that be a good place to go to find out?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

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

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You are beginning to get a little over my head now. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, maybe you will tell us about your vice presidential intentions then?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think -- I don't know, maybe I could get you on a plane -- send you out to China -- the only thing I can think of.

Q. (interposing) The question I asked ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) If you want to go, Jim (Wright)?

Q. Yes, I would like to very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Get an application out -- try to get you out there. (more laughter)

Q. The question I asked was, there have been stories printed that you did have a talk on politics with Wallace before he left, and I wonder if that is true?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh! I was only talking to him about military operations in China! (much laughter)

Q. Mr. President, Senator Hatch told the Senate today that you will be willing to retire to private life, if by that action you will thus obtain unification in American purposes behind peace aims; that you would be willing to retire, but the Democratic Party wouldn't permit you to do that. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I can't -- I can't comment on current Senatorial debate. (laughter)

There is one thing that none of you have asked about. If you don't ask it pretty soon, I will have to ask it myself. (more laughter)

There has been quite a discussion, as you know, in England and some over here, in regard to the issuing of currency for Europe -- in northern France. And people are so apt to go wrong on financial matters -- I know I am generally ---

MAY CRAIG: (aside) Aha! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I might as well tell you the situation, because it ought to be printed straight.

When you go into a country, you have got to have something besides artillery and rifles and shells. It is always convenient for an army going into a -- another country to have a little cash in their pockets. We find it is really essential, for two reasons. The first is the soldiers themselves, and the other is the commanding officers -- certain things they find they can buy for their companies or regiments from the local people; and another reason is the usual desire of a soldier to buy a -- buy a souvenir, either to take home to his family, or to consume. (laughter)

And therefore, after consultation with the representatives of the French National Committee, who were in London, and with the British treasury, it was agreed that this special type of currency should be issued.

And they agreed, also, that there would be a -- a rate -- a ratio between this currency and the -- the franc. And by common consent, the rate was put at -- well, we might as well call it approximately 50 francs to a dollar, and 200 francs to the British pound sterling. There is no use telling you 49.566. Practically 50 francs to one United States dollar, and 200 francs to the British pound sterling. And these notes were printed by our own Bureau of Engraving and Printing. They are very attractive to look at.

And they are being used by our Army and by the British army at the present moment. This very -- this very moment,

while we are standing here, some commodity may be changing hands via the francs that the British and American soldiers are -- are using.

They were issued to both the forces in accordance with instructions issued by the Combined Chiefs of Staff to General Eisenhower, and the instructions had behind them the authority of both governments.

They bear the legend "Emis en France" which means "issued in France." On the other side and on the back there is the Tricolor, and the words, "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité."

They are running in eight denominations, from two francs to five thousand francs. Well, the two-franc note is worth four cents in our currency. From there it goes up to five thousand francs.

Realizing the importance of obtaining responsible French views, representatives of the French Committee of National Liberation have been consulted on matters relating to the design and the making of the supplemental currency, which is -- we call it supplemental currency. You see, there isn't enough -- we have no assurance that there is enough currency floating around in France that we could get hold of, buy, or use. Probably -- it's a German edition, probably, anyway. The forces -- the Allied forces have to be supplied with some kind of currency to be used as they advance into France.

The French Committee requested that American and British currency be not used in France, for fairly obvious reasons: until they get a -- a substantial, well-ordered

government of their own in France, after the Germans have left.

And this was shipped to London, where it was held in readiness for D-Day.

Complete records are being kept, and detailed accounting procedures have been set up in connection with the use of this supplemental currency by the Allied military authorities.

So that there won't be any question about the legality of it, when the United States forces obtain this supplemental currency for expenditures normally charged to their appropriation, such as a portion of the soldier's pay, the relevant military appropriation will be charged for the dollar equivalent of such expenditures at the decreed rate of exchange.

Those proceedings ensure the retention by Congress of its control over expenditures of the United States military forces.

And the British forces are following parallel procedure.

Well, somebody asked the question, what is behind this currency?

The first thing that is behind it is the authority of the Allied armies. It is necessary for the advance into France that the currency be made available to the troops. In many respects, the currency is as essential to the advance of the troops as ammunition is. There are no means assured that there will be sufficient francs within the country for the purposes of the Army. The only alternative was to issue supplementary francs, or use our own currency. The French very much preferred that

we not use our own currency, as I said before, for obvious -- obvious reasons.

It is rather an interesting fact that during the first World War a very huge sum of money in American bills, that we paid to the troops, disappeared into the insides of French mattresses. Some of it would drift back to the Treasury each year. But at the outbreak of this war, there were still a good many million dollars in American currency that were inside French mattresses. Now, how much of that will -- the old, big bills -- (demonstrating) -- how much of that will turn up at the end of this war, I don't know. It's anybody's guess. So it became necessary for us to print these supplemental francs to have ready.

In due course, when a stable government is erected in France, arrangements can be made for dealing with this currency in a fair settlement, which will protect the interests of all concerned. Certainly, neither this Government nor the British government will institute measures which will result in cheating Frenchmen who, in accordance with the instructions of the Allied Commander-in-Chief, accept this currency in return for services or goods rendered to our troops.

Somebody may say, why wasn't this currency issued by the French instead of by General Eisenhower?

There was no recognized French authority within France in a position to issue currency for France -- it was all German-controlled. General Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, is the only authority with the power to issue currency. Such

inherent power of a commander of an expeditionary force to issue currency is well recognized by international law. As soon as there is an appropriate French authority recognized by the Allied governments, we will of course fully accept any currency which it issues.

Is it true that our Army causes inflation in liberated areas?

The Army is taking every possible measure to reduce soldiers' expenditures in liberated areas.

And this is worth noting, I think, because I have had a great many letters from people who wanted to know, honestly, why we couldn't keep back a portion of the soldier's pay, so they wouldn't be floating around in a new liberated area with fifty dollars a month for the minimum, and cause inflation by having all this money on them.

Well, we have been working on that, and actually had it in effect for quite a long time. Soldiers are being pleaded with and encouraged to send as much money home as possible. They are being encouraged to buy war bonds, and facilities have been set up whereby the soldiers can transfer funds back to their families without inconvenience or red-tape.

We are supplying through the post exchange organizations the luxuries and semi-luxuries that soldiers want, such as candy, cigarettes, watches, and gifts that soldiers can send home, and things of that kind.

Furthermore, the Army has prohibited soldiers from buying rationed commodities or eating in public restaurants.

And the Army organization buys local produce through local authorities, only when the local authorities have certified that that produce is surplus and not needed for civilian requirements. In other words, any -- you can understand that -- any area which barely has enough food for its own population, we don't want an American or a British regiment turning up in town and eat them out of house and home. It just wouldn't work. So, we have pretty strict regulations about that. These efforts have been very successful in the North African, and Italian campaigns.

American officers and men spent only 16 and 3/10ths percent of their pay within the liberated area. In England it was 25 percent. Of course, the obvious reason: there was more to buy in England than in a liberated area like Tunis or Sicily or Italy.

Particular studies have been instituted here, and in London, regarding the measures which can be undertaken further to reduce the amount of money available to our soldiers in France, as well as other places.

The liberated countries need have no fear that our Army will be careless or unsympathetic to the distressed condition of the civilian population of those liberated areas.

Well, I think that covers it pretty well.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to make any comment on the various amendments to the Price Control bill which have been passed in the Senate, sir, and are being passed upon now in the House?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not now. I am not familiar enough with them.

Q. Mr. President, have you been informed by the governments of Belgium, Luxembourg, Czechoslovakia, and Poland that they have recognized General de Gaulle's Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Sir, is there any change in the attitude of this Government on -- towards the French Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q. Mr. President, in reference to the French National Committee as a representative as having approved of this currency set up, that means that General de Gaulle approved it also, does it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I did not use the word "approved." It was taken up with them, and as I understand it, various questions were raised and straightened out with the man in London, and no objection was made. Is that right, Jack?

MR. EARLY: Here also.

MR. JOHN J. McCLOY (Assistant Secretary of War, who was present): Here also. The Commissioner for Finance was here also.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that enough?

(laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #958
Executive Office of the President
June 23, 1944 -- 11.00 A.M., E.W.T.

Q. Good morning, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Looking very smart this morning.

Q. Thank you, sir. So are you. (laughter)

VOICE: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there's very much news. The Chiefs of Staff came in yesterday -- Joint Chiefs of Staff -- and talked about the war and its various phases. We were all disappointed, I think, that we were unable to annihilate the Japanese fleet, for the simple reason that it ran away. It is rather difficult to destroy a fleet that runs away.

The Cherbourg operation is proceeding according to schedule.

I don't think there's much else.

I have got the names here -- Steve has got it for you outside -- of the American delegates to the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, which will open at Mount Washington Hotel, Bretton Woods, (New Hampshire), on July first.

Secretary Morgenthau; Director Fred Vinson; Assistant Secretary Dean Acheson; Edward Brown -- Edward E. Brown, President of the First National Bank of Chicago; Mr. Crowley, Administrator, F.E.A.; Marriner Eccles, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve; Miss Mabel Newcomer, Professor of Economics of Vassar College; Mr. Brent Spence, Chairman of the Committee on Banking and Currency of the House; Senator

Tobey of the Senate Committee; Senator Wagner, Chairman of Banking and Currency; Mr. Jesse Wolcott -- Senator Wolcott -- No, Mr. Wolcott on the Committee on Banking and Currency of the House; and Mr. White -- Harry D. White, Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury.

I haven't got the names of all of the technical experts. That will come along in a few days.

I think that's all.

Oh, one thing I wanted -- I wanted to mention, to show how careful we all have to be in our English. The -- I got one or two protests from India, because in -- when I was on the radio about the capture of Rome, they claimed that I hadn't mentioned the Indian troops, and their feelings were rather hurt. As a matter of fact, I did. Question of terminology. I used the words "the French and French Moroccans, South Africans and Poles, and the East Indians."

Well, of course, the reason I put in "East Indians" was to distinguish them from the West Indians, and the Red Indians in our country. And the -- the word "Red Indian" -- "East Indians" was meant to include, of course, the British troops. They are the only Indian troops with the operation. They did a very, very good job. But I certainly intended to include them in the term "East Indian."

Q. Mr. President, are you considering a plan to make a public statement shortly after the Republican convention, expressing a willingness to abide by the mandate of the Democratic convention?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) That's the form it takes today, is it? (laughter)

Q. In the light of recent events, sir. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, Merriman (Smith), it won't work. (more laughter)

Q. Do I get anything for effort? (continued laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. You will have to write down today: total failure.

Q. Mr. President, I see that General de Gaulle is appointing prefects and subprefects in the liberated areas. How will that work with the civil administration of General Eisenhower? What basis does it do that?

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh, Constantine (Brown), I think that you ought to go and study, not geography -- because you know that very well -- but something to do with military operations.

It has been very clear that on the liberation of Europe, a thing has to happen first of all, and that is the word liberation. You can't -- you can't take a hill half a mile away with your troops and immediately set up a civil administration in that battle zone. It is going to take a long time to eliminate the Germans from France. Things depend entirely on how the time-table works. The -- the -- geographically, the portion of France that has been liberated represents, I think, about one-tenth of the -- of one percent. Not one-tenth,

but one-tenth of one percent of the total area of France.

Let us liberate a little more of France before we take up the question of civil administration in France.

Q. I see that De Gaulle is not studying that part of military strategy himself, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. De Gaulle is not studying that part of military strategy himself, because he is appointing his men.

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

Q. (continuing) I am talking about the moral effect of it.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- you said that. I don't know whether he has or not. Maybe he has. I don't know. In other words, you have assumed something. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, has General de Gaulle said when he would come here?

THE PRESIDENT: No reason why I shouldn't tell you that. I have -- I have only had a very indirect message, and that was delivered through the French National Committee in London to Monsieur Hoppenot, who is on the -- head of the French mission here; and Monsieur Hoppenot took it to the Secretary of State, who sent it to me.

The message was, General De Gaulle hopes to come over here at one of the two times at which I told him I would be here and would be glad to see him.

The only other thing I have was -- is in a very roundabout way, through Algiers, that he had said to somebody

that he hoped to come the second period that I mentioned. The first period was the 22nd of June, which is today -- yesterday -- to the 30th; and the second period was the 6th of July to the 14th. But that is only indirect.

Q. Mr. President, might there be more light thrown on the dismissal of Minister (Hjalmar) Procope (of Finland) and his associates?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know how you can throw much more light on it.

Q. It was just simply phrased, "acts in- inimical"

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That what?

Q. "Acts in- inimical" -- I'll get it out -- (laughter) -- "to this Government."

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (more laughter)

Well, of course, there has been a lot written about that. Some people have written the question editorially, and commentators, that: is the foreign policy of the United States for sale for a hundred and forty-eight thousand dollars?

And the answer is No, it is not for sale.

And we have to remember, of course, that the present government of Finland is allied with a -- a common enemy, our enemy -- the enemy of Russia, and is fighting against our Ally, which is Russia.

Q. Mr. President, it was indicated, however, that this was individual to him and his associates.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. (interjecting) He was the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's what persona non grata means.

Q. Persona non grata. I wanted to know if there was anything you could say about what he had actually done?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Just persona non grata.

Q. Mr. President, this isn't just another "effort," but I would like to know, when you make your decision as to your own political future, would you make it alone or will you make it as a result of what some of your other friends ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will have to hand you one. (laughter) You know, this is meant to be a press conference for news, it isn't a boudoir conference. (more laughter)

Q. My only interest is that you told us you would welcome political questions.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a boudoir question at the present time. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, have you anything to say about the Stabilization Act?

THE PRESIDENT: What Stabilization Act?

Q. The renewal by Congress of the Stabilization Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you mean ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) The price bill.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the O.P.A. thing?

Q. Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: It hasn't come down yet.

(looking in Mr. Early's direction): I don't think it has actually got to the White House ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) No sir, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- yet; but when it comes I will of course talk it over with the various people -- O.P.A., and Fred Vinson, and Jimmy Byrnes, and a number of others -- probably in Cabinet; but the -- the bill hasn't physically arrived at the White House yet.

Q. Do you think the report released by your cost of living committee last night warrants any reconsideration of the wage stabilization policy?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you until I see it. You mean the bill?

Q. No, the report that was prepared by the three economists at the request ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got it yet -- may be outside. It wasn't in here yesterday afternoon.

Q. Mr. President, have you any comment to make on the Italian political situation and this (Ivanoe) Bonomi cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have got -- this is off the record -- I have got a telegram this morning, which I hope to be able to give out; ^{my} but I have got to consult the State Department first.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Right.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #959
Executive Office of the President
June 27, 1944 -- 4.12 p.m., e.w.t.

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Administrative Assistants et al filing in) I have arranged for you to have special seats in the "bleachers" right back of the "catcher," but I've got a wire screen between wild pitches, so it's all right, you're perfectly protected. (laughter) All ready.

(as the newspapermen came up to the desk) How is our friend liking it on the Hill? (Douglas Cornell of A.P.)

Q. Fine. Fine.

Q. He is out with those people in Chicago. (at the Republican National Convention)

THE PRESIDENT: Is he? (laughter) I suppose it will give him a chance for a holiday until the first of August. I think you did it deliberately.

Q. I do too. (more laughter)

Q. Got something for us to compete with on it today?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Got something for us to compete with today?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh Yes. Steve is going to have photo-stats made of these things for you. (showing them facsimiles of two scrolls) Can't have it done in color -- you couldn't print them in color, anyway, but believe me it's a beautiful piece of work.

Q. Mr. (Adrian) Tolley (White House social room)

do that?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Mr. Tolley do that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. I think so.

VOICE:- All in.

Q. (aside) (seeing a message in Chinese before the President) Chinese checkers!

THE PRESIDENT: I have a couple of things.

About a month ago, I sent over to Ambassador Harriman two scrolls, one to the City of Leningrad and one to the City of Stalingrad, which he has today presented to Marshal Stalin; and he telegraphs me that Marshal Stalin has replied in a very delightful way. And that reply will come to us some time tomorrow. It's on the wires, but it's probably being given out in Moscow today, so you may at your offices find a cable which could be tied in with this release that Steve has done for you.

The text of the scroll to the City of Leningrad -- you needn't take this down, you'll get it -- (reading, not literally): "In the name of the people of the United States of America, I present this scroll to the City of Leningrad as a memorial to its gallant soldiers and to its loyal men, women and children who, isolated from the rest of their nation by the invader and despite constant bombardment and untold sufferings from cold, hunger and sickness, successfully defended their beloved city throughout the critical period September 8, 1941 to January 18, 1943, and thus symbolized the undaunted spirit of the peoples of the Soviet -- Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics and of all the nations of the world resisting the forces of aggression."

And the scroll of the City of Stalingrad reads as follows:

(reading, not literally): "In the name of the -- in the name of the people of the United States of America, I present this scroll to the City of Stalingrad to commemorate our admiration for its gallant defenders whose courage, fortitude, and devotion during the siege of September 13, 1942 to January 31, 1943 will inspire forever the hearts of all free peoples. Their glorious victory stemmed the tide of invasion and marked the turning point in the war of the Allied Nations against the forces of aggression."

And to Stalin I sent a letter, saying: "I am sending to you two scrolls for Stalingrad and Leningrad, which cities have won the wholehearted admiration of the American people. The heroism of the citizens of these two cities and the soldiers who so ably defended them has not only been an inspiration to the people of the United States, but has served to bind even more closely the friendship of our two nations. Stalingrad and Leningrad have become synonyms for the fortitude and endurance which has enabled us to resist and will finally enable us to overcome the aggression of our enemies.

"I hope that in presenting these scrolls to the two cities you will see fit to convey to their citizens my own personal expressions of friendship and admiration and my hope that our people will continue to develop that close understanding

which has marked our common efforts."

And we are having photostats made -- (holding up the scroll facsimiles) -- of those -- of the scrolls themselves -- and Steve will have those in a very short time.

I saw this morning Dr. (H. H.) Kung, who is over here to talk to us all about various problems in regard to China. He leaves, at the end of this week, as the Chinese delegate to the Monetary Conference at Bretton Woods; and then he will probably come back in the course of the next two weeks to see me here again and talk over these problems. He is coming in tomorrow afternoon to see me for a more extended talk.

He brought with him a letter from the Generalissimo -- (holding it up) -- which I know you would all be glad to read -- (laughter) (written in Chinese) -- presenting Dr. Kung to me, who is an old -- an old friend of mine. And I think his conversations in regard to the conduct of the war in China, and the economics of things in China, will probably be very helpful.

Don't think I have got anything else.

Q. Is the -- is the Chinese Minister, Mr. President, seeking another financial aid loan for currency stabilization purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: Is he what?

Q. Is he seeking another financial loan for currency stabilization purposes?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Haven't had any talk about that.

Q. Haven't had any?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything that can be said about the Democratic candidate for President? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What? They saddled it on you today, did they? (more laughter) No, I don't think so.

Q. Mr. President, has there been any reaction to your statement on postwar security organization about which you could tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing further, I think, than what we had the other day. We haven't -- we haven't had any meeting with anybody yet since then.

Q. Have you had much reaction from the public to your -- to that?

THE PRESIDENT: A great many letters, all favorable so far.

Q. Mr. President, have you signed the Price Extension Act yet?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q. Price Extension Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't think so.

MR. EARLY: Don't think so.

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. That -- that will be signed on -- on Thursday -- No, on Saturday -- first of July. There are various technical reasons for putting it in at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Q. Do you plan, Mr. President, to have a statement

on that Act at the time you sign it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so, probably.

Q. There has been some discussion, Mr. President, that the C.C.C. (Commodity Credit Corporation) or some other Government agency may have to go ahead and purchase commodities, in order to bring them up to parity level. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't, No. You are getting too abstruse.

Q. Mr. President, in the reaction of the many letters that you received, re your plan for postwar security organization, was there any communication from Mr. Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't seen this afternoon's mail. I don't think so.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything definitely about the prospects of the visit of De Gaulle?

THE PRESIDENT: I got a message asking whether it will be satisfactory if he came between the fifth and the ninth of July. And I haven't sent it yet, but I think at the present time it's in the process of being -- being sent, a message saying that that will be perfectly all right.

Q. Mr. President, would you care to comment on the work of the French resistance movement in cooperation with our own effort in Normandy? General Marshall spoke about that yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't -- I haven't seen on it anything more, really, than you have seen: the reports

that have been made by the few people that have been in -- in there. I haven't got there yet myself.

MR. EARLY: (aside) Yet. Yet. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, did Admiral (Raymond) Fenard bring back the message of which you just spoke?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Came through Monsieur Hoppenot.

Q. I see.

MERRIMAN SMITH: Mr. President, did you say a minute ago that you hadn't got to Normandy yourself yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Yet. You know that. (laughter)

MERRIMAN SMITH: But the "yet," sir, does that imply that you might be going to Normandy soon? (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I am not talking in implications. I am merely -- the people in the back of the room, they don't know, but it's me -- (raising his voice) -- I'm here, and I haven't gone anywhere yet. That's why I put in "yet." But, as you know, I am perfectly unpredictable. (more laughter) After all these years, Merriman, you must know. I may be leaving tomorrow, but the chances are I am not. (more laughter)

MERRIMAN SMITH: Well, when you do leave, sir -- (continued laughter) -- are the chances that we will leave too?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You are pretty young. I would hate to take you into a position of extreme and grave danger, Merriman, you know.

MERRIMAN SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President. (more laughter)