

CONFIDENTIAL  
Press and Radio Conference #977  
Executive Office of the President  
October 31, 1944 -- 4.17 P.M., E.W.T.

VOICE: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news today. Just been out -- you will find it out, anyway -- I have just at this moment come back from the Naval Hospital -- put it all down -- (laughter) -- certain ones of you. I wasn't examined medically. I didn't go out for that purpose. I went to see the Secretary of State, and the Secretary, I thought, was getting along awfully well. Very much pleased with his appearance. And we talked about various things -- foreign affairs and politics, I think that was all -- (laughter) -- for about an hour. I have just come back.

Outside of that, I don't think there's anything.

Q. Can you tell us, sir, how soon he may be out of the hospital?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't ask the doctor -- (laughter) -- and unlike some people, who are not doctors, I dislike to give medical information. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, speaking ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, that's a dirty crack, isn't it? (much laughter)

Q. (continuing) Mr. President, speaking of politics, would you comment on the statement by Representative Kefauver, Director of the Thousand-Dollar Club, that you suggested the Club, that the members had the promise when they were in

town that they could drop in on you, and there have been five such meetings, or occasions?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. I wouldn't comment on it. I will tell you the facts, which are very simple.

Oh, way back, sometime in the summer, I said, "Why don't you start a hundred-thousand-dollar club?" And they all laughed. I was going to start -- I said, "What are you laughing at?"

They said, "Do you suppose anybody would give a hundred thousand dollars to the Democratic National Committee?"

I said, "All right, start a ten-thousand-dollar club."

They said, "Nobody would give to it."

I said, "Start a thousand-dollar club."

"Oh," they said, "we might get a few members for that."

And I never thought of it again until a gentleman from Chicago came in the other day and handed me a certificate, which probably cost a half a cent, that I had joined the thousand-dollar club.

I said, "My God, what's that for?"

"Well," he said, "you sent a thousand dollars of your regular contribution to the Democratic National Committee."

I said, "So I did." I didn't even know that I was eligible.

And that's all the story that there is. So I am a member of it.

Q. What does that certificate entitle you to, Mr. President? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What? Don't know. I haven't thought. I am going to ask.

Q. I have the answer, Mr. President. Mr. Kefauver says it will let you go any place you want in town. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good idea.

Q. And also to see the President. I suppose that's in the mirror.

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to get an appointment through "Pa" though. (more laughter) If I want to see the President, I would have to get an appointment.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us in the way of background, or just general shedding of light, on why it was necessary to call General (Joseph W.) Stilwell home?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think you have got the story, and I don't see why -- well, in the first place, I don't think that anybody in the room can make any politics out of this ---

Q. (interposing) Can't hear you, sir.

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, we can't hear you.

THE PRESIDENT: (louder) I was afraid that nobody in the room could make any politics out of it. It's a very simple fact, which I think it has been -- the Army gave it out.

General Stilwell has done extremely well. I am very fond of him personally. I think that his record has been excellent. But, just one of "them" things that will probably -- some of you who hate -- some of you who don't like -- some of you, you have got personal likes and dislikes, I guess because I think you are extremely human. And in this particular case, General Stilwell had the -- really three commands. One was the Burma command -- I am talking about areas -- one was with Admiral Mountbatten, and one was chief of staff to General Chiang Kai-shek.

And General Chiang Kai-shek and the General had had certain fallings out -- oh, quite a while ago -- and it finally ended the other day.

The Generalissimo asked if we could send somebody to replace General Stilwell with him as his chief of staff. And we did it. You have to remember that General Chiang Kai-shek is the head of the Chinese Republic of 450 million people -- head of the state. He is also the head of the government, and he is commander-in-chief of the army.

Well, I think we had a Britisher -- take another example -- over here, whom I happened to have taken a dislike to. I would have let Mr. Churchill know. There wasn't any question about it. Of course he would have been recalled, and they would have sent somebody else.

The Generalissimo is the head of the Chinese Republic. He is commander-in-chief. Of course, it's perfectly obvious. And with the full approval of General Marshall, we have asked

him to come home to take an assignment that is equally important to that, commensurate with his rank. I think that's the word to use.

And we are sending another American, with the full approval of the Chief of Staff of our Army, and me, to replace the chief of staff in China. That's all.

Now, how you could get politics -- I know how difficult it is, you have got to go to next Tuesday writing political stories -- but honestly there isn't any politics that you can make out of this. I'm sorry, Bert (Andrews).

BERT ANDREWS: No Chinese politics?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. No. Not that.

Q. Mr. President, is General Stilwell in the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He is on his way home.

Q. Mr. President, some of your Australian friends would like to know whether you might consider going down there, during or after the fourth term?

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) That's a new one.

Q. Is that the only answer?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, is General Hurley still in China?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, can General Stilwell's successor in China be announced now?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Could General Stilwell's successor in China

be announced now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You had better ask the War Department. I know who he is, but I don't know if they are ready to have it announced.

Q. It's (Major) General (Albert C.) Wedemeyer.

Q. General Wedemeyer.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. It isn't General Wedemeyer.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I just said you would have to ask the War Department.

Q. That was in the original announcement.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, it was? Then all right. What are you asking for?

Q. But not a full replacement.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Not a full replacement of Wedemeyer.

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask the War Department. Those are -- those are details that I don't know.

Q. Mr. President, going back to China for a minute, sometime ago ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can't go back there. I have never been there. (laughter)

Q. Well, let's just pretend that you are there -- this may be "iffy," I don't know -- but sometime ago, I mean a few conferences ago, you discussed at some length about the amount of material we were getting over the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Over the hump.

Q. (continuing) --- over the hump, as contrasted with what they got over the Burma Road when it was operating. Well now, isn't one of the really vital points of difference how that material has been distributed after it reaches the Chinese army, whether it is going to the fighting fronts, or just being spread too thin over the whole army?

THE PRESIDENT: I would be afraid to comment on it, Jim (Wright), because I honestly don't know. There was a question along that line five or six months ago, when we were only getting about 14 thousand tons over the hump. Now that we are getting well over 20 thousand tons a month, I don't know whether that question has been settled or not. So you see my dilemma. I really don't know.

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us whether Mr. Donald Nelson's and General Hurley's mission to China was in connection with the differences between the Generalissimo and General ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That had nothing to do with it.

Q. Had nothing to do with it.

THE PRESIDENT: Had nothing to do with it.

Q. Mr. President, it follows then that there was no connection between what did or did not go over the hump and General Stilwell's removal?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh No. Oh No. Nothing at all.

Q. Is there any significance in the recall from the standpoint of supplying materials to China, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any what?

Q. Any significance in the recall other than the matter of personalities?

THE PRESIDENT: Just personalities, that's all.

Q. Mr. President, was the difference between the Generalissimo and General Stilwell on the matter of policy or personality?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you might say personality.

Q. Wasn't there a question of strategy involved at all, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Did the so called Chinese communists figure in it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. Try again! (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, have you received the resignation of Ambassador (Clarence E.) Gauss?

THE PRESIDENT: The State Department told me day before yesterday that he was going to resign. Further than that, I don't know. Don't know whether he has. Probably wrote and said he was going to.

Q. Do you know any reasons behind that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: He has been wanting to for a long time.

Q. Will he be appointed to a new post, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. Most certainly.

Q. Mr. President, is there any reason to believe

that there is any connection between his resignation, or his coming resignation, and General Stilwell's withdrawal?

THE PRESIDENT: There is no -- no connection, even remote. I'm sorry. Try again! (laughter)

Q. Can you tell us, Mr. President, who might be his successor in China?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't picked out anybody yet. That is Gauss's successor, you mean?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't got anybody else.

Q. Mr. President, as I understand it, you say that there is no connection between the Stilwell recall and Gauss's resignation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. That would be another bad guess.

Q. Have you made your election bet yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I made one on the train -- (laughter) -- twenty-five cents.

BERT ANDREWS: Whom did you bet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

BERT ANDREWS: Whom did you bet?

THE PRESIDENT: That's a very dangerous question. You know what the answer is? (cupping hands to mouth): None of your damn business! (much laughter)

BERT ANDREWS: All right. Whom did you bet on?

THE PRESIDENT: (cupping hands to mouth): That also is none of your damn business! (more laughter)

Q. Did you get any odds, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter) No. This is an even money bet on a certain State.

Q. With whom?

Q. (interposing) Doesn't that disqualify you from voting, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Doesn't that disqualify you from voting in New York State?

THE PRESIDENT: No. If it's made outside of the State of New York, it's all right. (more laughter)

Q. (aside) Circumstances.

Q. Mr. President, have you made your guess yet ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, I haven't done that. I have got to do that. Steve, remind me of it.

Q. (interjecting) The time is getting short.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Remind me of it. I have got to do that, and put it in the top drawer as usual.

Q. Will you show it to us, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Will you show it to us?

THE PRESIDENT: Will I what?

Q. Will you show it to us?

THE PRESIDENT: The top drawer?

Q. Your statement on the election?

THE PRESIDENT: It's kept locked when I'm not here.

(laughter)

Q. Can you tell us anything, Mr. President, about the Russian withdrawal from the international air conference?

THE PRESIDENT: About its doing what?

Q. About the Russian withdrawal from the air conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You will have to ask the State Department about that. All I can tell you is what I read in the papers.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) All right. (to Bert Andrews): You deserved it! (laughter)

BERT ANDREWS: All right. No harm in trying to find out. (more laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #978  
Executive Office of the President  
November 3, 1944 -- 11.21 A.M., E.W.T.

VOICE: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got much, except Steve (Early) brought the schedule up to date. We are praying for good weather tomorrow, all of us who are going. And I am going right through by train, stopping at Bridgeport, just a little platform appearance and a few kind words. Then we go on to Hartford and get there -- on the train -- at 11.55, and as usual get out and get into the car and go to that park, which is the main park, I suppose. And we will do as we did last year -- I mean four years ago and eight years ago, go up on the bandstand in the car and say a few kind words.

I might be inspired by the insurance buildings that surround the park to say a few kind words about the fact that insurance policies are, in spite of the predictions of four years ago and eight years ago, they are still good. The same thing is going out again this year -- (laughing) -- that they won't be any good if I get re-elected.

And then go back to the train, and then go on to Springfield, ---

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and make another train appearance in Springfield. And then on to Boston. I get there at 5.30, and the meeting in the evening. I think that's all

there is on the schedule.

Q. Mr. President, do you have a stop at Worcester?  
I notice Senator Walsh said yesterday ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) He is coming on at Worcester.

And the only other thing I have has been quite a large number of telegrams from individuals and organizations asking me to say something about some time off to vote, and I think -- I am having the thing looked up now -- and I think probably this afternoon Steve will give it to you. I will get out an appeal to employers to let their employees vote.

Of course, this year, more than any years in the recent past, there will probably have to be more time given off to vote, because of two reasons. The first is that nowadays an awful lot of workmen live a long ways from their plant, and in view of the general feeling that the soldiers should vote in the country, they have it tough, to keep -- keep a worker from voting, just because he happens to live fifteen miles away from the plant. Same way with the departments, who -- Navy Yards, arsenals, for instance, all departments -- this went out way back October 12, (reading): "Employees who desire to vote in communities where they are employed will be excused for that purpose for a reasonable time on all election days."

It becomes a question of "reasonable" with the Government department or plant managers.

(continuing reading): "Such authorized absence should not exceed time actually required to vote, and in no event

should it exceed one working day."

In other words, if it's more than one working day that it takes to go home and vote, it's charged up to the annual leave. That's the usual rule. But as I say, it's a question of "reasonable," where the employees live further away than they have in the past. And that is true in a great many cases.

Get that out this afternoon, Steve.

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's all.

Q. Mr. President, how do you think the campaign is going?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. How do you think the campaign is going?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, don't let's have "opinion" questions. I am busy writing a speech, and you are busy writing a story.

Q. Mr. President, Representative Walter Judd of Minnesota has issued a public statement in which he says that General (Joseph W.) Stilwell, as the agent of the White House, gave General Chiang (Kai-shek) an ultimatum demanding that he be placed in full charge of the Chinese army.

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe that's one of those things that I was talking about last night, or that Hannegan was talking about last night.

Q. Mr. President, do you have any comment on the reports published this morning that Mr. Wallace will succeed Mr. Hull as Secretary of State?

THE PRESIDENT: I thought that would come. That probably is another one of those things that I talked about last night, or Mr. Hannegan talked about.

Q. Sir, has there been any indication that Secretary Hull plans to resign?

THE PRESIDENT: No, of course not. The answer to that, as I say, is probably one of those things that would fall under the category of what I talked about last night, and what Mr. Hannegan talked about last night. (laughter) Have you got it?

Q. Mr. President, any comment, please, on the published report that Great Britain seeks certain Lend-Lease supplies of a non-military nature for resale in their own export trade?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it. Never heard of it.

Q. It was in the New York Times this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: I'm sorry. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, have you received any word that Senator (Carter) Glass (of Virginia) intends to support you for a fourth term?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't, No. Better ask Jimmy Byrnes.

(long pause here)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

(laughter)

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #979

Executive Office of the President

November 10, 1944 -- 10.56 A.M., E.W.T.

Q. Happy Fourth Term! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: The strange thing is I haven't got any news.

Q. That's fine, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: It is?

Q. Keep it that way. We'll stop right now. (more laughter)

Q. What's holding Early up? (more laughter)

MAY CRAIG: (handing the President a silver coin)

Your fare to Paris.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, good for you. Fine. What's it made of?

MAY CRAIG: Aluminim.

THE PRESIDENT: Aluminum.

MAY CRAIG: Hasn't got "Liberty, Fraternity and Equality" on it, either.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that's "Travail, Famille ---

MAY CRAIG: (interjecting) German issue.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the Bo\$ches. That's the Bo\$ches.

MR. DONALDSON: All-in.

THE PRESIDENT: I just said to the front row that I didn't have any news, and there was a chorus of "Thank Gods."

(laughter)

MERRIMAN SMITH: We know you are a busy man today, so we are not going to take up too much time ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) O, Merriman -- (laughter) -- this consideration for me is perfectly amazing! (more laughter) Good.

MERRIMAN SMITH: (haltingly) But there are -- couple of things -- (more laughter) -- the -- the Prime Minister -- (more laughter) -- Prime Minister Churchill said the other day that he thought it was time for another meeting of the Big Three, and indicated it was ---

FRED PASLEY: (interposing) Time for a change! (continued laughter)

Q. (aside) What a bedlam.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't any news on that. We do want to meet whenever we can arrange it. Any details -- it's literally true nothing has been worked out as to time or place. And when they are worked out as to time or place, I won't tell you. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, we understand that one third of the firm of "Martin and Barton" is like a fish out of water. (continued laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good line too.

Q. Did you win your election bet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I called it off. I got scared.

(laughter)

Q. Mr. President, I am still curious about your

electoral college guess?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't looked at it. It ought to be in here somewhere -- (searching his middle desk drawer) -- but I don't see it. Did you steal it, Steve? (laughter)

MR. EARLY: No, sir; but I can tell you it was on a little piece of yellow paper, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: It ought to be. You must have stolen it.

MR. EARLY: No. I wish I had, now that you suspect me.

THE PRESIDENT: (still looking) Somebody has gone and stolen it. I don't know what it was. No, it's not. I haven't got it. Well, I'll have to search somebody. (Charlie Fredericks saw a piece of yellow paper in the drawer and directed the President's attention to it) There! -- ah! -- ah! -- (much laughter).

MAY CRAIG: (interjecting) The Secret Service! (continued laughter)

MR. EARLY: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Doesn't -- does that add up right?

MR. EARLY: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, mine was 335 -- for me -- (laughter) -- to 196 for my opponent, ---

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) 335.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- so I wasn't very accurate, was I?

Q. You were conservative.

Q. 335?

MR. EARLY: That's right.

Q. 335?

THE PRESIDENT: 335 ---

Q. (interjecting) 335.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- to 196. That wasn't good at all. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, have you heard from Mr. Dewey yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Mr. President, do you expect to appoint an Ambassador to China soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought -- thought of it since you asked me last.

Q. Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't thought of it since you asked me last.

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have got quite a lot of things like that to be done.

Q. When are you likely to name the board to -- for the war surplus property?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that's held -- held up by one name. I am waiting to hear from that one name.

Q. Mr. President, what was the last report you had on Secretary Hull's health?

THE PRESIDENT: I heard this morning from Dr. McIntire. I asked him how it was. He said it was getting on very well.

Q. Do you expect him back in the State Department

soon, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

Q. Mr. President, have you received a peace feeler from Germany?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That sounds like almost a pre-election question. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, has the French Ambassador been named?

THE PRESIDENT: Has what?

Q. The French Ambassador to the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read in the papers. I haven't heard anything. I haven't seen anybody this morning.

Q. May I be the first to ask you, Mr. President, whether you are going to run in '48? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a question that I was asked in 1940, isn't it? (more laughter) It's hoary -- absolutely hoary. It may have been '36 that somebody asked me the same question -- '48.

Q. Have you received congratulations from Mr. Landon, Mr. President?

Q. (interposing) Same answer, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I did. Yes, that's all right, ---

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and he has been in to see me, too.

Q. Mr. President, there was a report this morning that you -- (noise here) -- five-billion-dollar credit to Congress for

the rest of the Allies between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan as a supplement to Lend-Lease?

THE PRESIDENT: I would be very leery of that story. It hasn't even come to me. That makes it particularly dangerous.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President! (much laughter)

Q. Congratulations, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the boys that went to the Nelson House just barely got by. That's all right.

Q. What did you say?

THE PRESIDENT: They just barely got by. It's all right. I was worried for a while.

Q. I think they did pretty well.

THE PRESIDENT: We did bring them back, but barely.

(laughter)

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #980

Executive Office of the President

November 14, 1944 -- 4.10 P.M., E.W.T.

DORIS FLEESON: How do you do?

THE PRESIDENT: Glad to see you. How have you been?

DORIS FLEESON: Fine.

THE PRESIDENT: May, I see you've got a rival.

MAY CRAIG: What?

THE PRESIDENT: You've got a rival.

DORIS FLEESON: This is a dress.

THE PRESIDENT: Why aren't you in uniform?

DORIS FLEESON: Just give me a chance.

MAY CRAIG: She's staying with me. I'll keep her in order.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Now who outranks who?

MAY CRAIG: She does.

DORIS FLEESON: I rank.

MAY CRAIG: She does.

DORIS FLEESON: Seniority, you know, Mr. President. I am several "numbers" ahead.

THE PRESIDENT: Toss a coin. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got a thing this "morning." (to May Craig): Got anything today?

Q. (interposing) Well, we wondered if you have heard anything about Hitler, sir? There have been a lot of reports

coming out of Europe.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all I have had, just the reports that appeared in the papers.

Q. Mr. President, three members of the War Labor Board announced yesterday that they would like to resign. Do you have anything that you could tell us, whether their resignation ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Nothing at all. I am looking up the whole question. I can't even tell you when there will be any action down here.

Q. Mr. President, Senator Overton says that the Missouri Valley Authority proposal would be dead, in his opinion, if the Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation plan, which he favors, is adopted. Would you care to comment on the acceptability of that plan as a substitute?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not really sufficiently in touch with the plans. I couldn't -- I couldn't even tell you what is in them exactly.

The problem is this, in the Mississippi (meaning Missouri) Valley. Like other watersheds that contain a good many States, there are always problems between -- two kinds. The first is the problem of the States themselves. Each State wants everything, and the say in everything affecting, of course, their own State, but affecting incidentally the whole flow of the river from the top to the bottom, passing through a number of other States. Well, that is something that has to be reconciled.

In the Tennessee watershed, for example, there were, I think, seven States that were affected by the T.V.A., and there

was a lot of feeling that they were going to give up some kind of a right; and that was a good many years ago, and it has been in operation for quite a while, and there isn't one of those States today that feels that they have been -- that State has been unfairly treated. It has been done for the benefit of all the States, and in proportion to the flow of the water, and the mileage, and the character of the land in the whole Valley.

Well, there has been a feeling out there in the Missouri Valley, that there are two parts, the parts further back at the head of the streams -- tributaries -- of the Missouri, and the parts that are lower down and that are affected by floods and other things. And they think that by some other method they will be able to agree, but it's always been terribly hard to get them to agree, unless there is some what might be called a central authority to -- to make the final decision.

Of course, they ought to be heard the whole length of the Missouri, which covers a tremendous territory, but somebody's -- there ought to be somebody -- it's a question of speed -- getting things done. So they would hear them all, and bring them together, and talk things over, and make a final decision.

Then the second part of it relates to a thing that goes way, way back. Who is to build the dam, the Department of the Interior or the War Department? Well, that is purely a jurisdictional thing, and it has never worried me very much. They each have a corps of dam builders, and they are very good. They built some very, very good dams. Some of them were built by the War Department engineers and some by the Reclamation Bureau.

Of course, the theory -- that goes way, way back to 1860 something -- is that irrigation was always turned over to the Interior Department to do, but that navigation was turned over to the Army engineers to do. Well, I don't -- I don't much care who -- who does the actual dam building. It probably is a good thing to have two different dam building authorities -- agencies -- in the Government, because you get a certain amount of competition between two Government agencies.

Well, there is -- as it worked out, they are both pretty good. They are both awfully cocky about the good dams they build. Well, that's fine. That's all to the good. They will both bring in a plan on the same dam, which is part of it navigational in its purpose and part irrigational. And we get plans from both, and then decide which one will do it. Well, that's not bad. There's very little waste as between -- in the competition between the two Departments. I would say you would save money, on the whole. But that is a purely jurisdictional thing within the Government construction work.

Of course, the only real example that we have got in operations on a big scale is the T.V.A., and the people down there in all the seven States like it, and it seems to be working. There is no local dispute over the T.V.A. so far, because it has been fair as between the different States. So I don't -- I can't tell you in that one particular case about the Missouri, because I am not sufficiently up to date on these different -- these different bills.

I still think there ought to be a Missouri Valley

Authority. There are an awful lot of States -- an awful lot of territory.

And of course, I hope that there will be an authority, for instance, for the Arkansas river. Well, people there -- in the East don't -- don't visualize it. The Arkansas river rises right on the Continental Divide in western Colorado, and it already has become -- has become a menace -- floods -- by the time it gets down to southeastern Colorado. Pueblo is on the Arkansas river. Well, Pueblo is way out in Colorado. And then it goes -- meanders down through a lot of States before it gets down to Arkansas and Louisiana to the Mississippi river. It's an ideal thing to put under an authority.

Same way, we have talked about a Columbia river authority and some people talked about an Ohio river authority, so that I have drawn the thing out on a sheet of paper so many times I can do it in my sleep. A map of the United States -- well, I divide it up roughly into seven different regions, one of them being the main stem of the Mississippi river itself, because that has been a separate entity for all time. There is the barge line on the -- on the Mississippi, and it is more of a unit than any other river, just a narrow strip from the top end of the country to the southern end of the country.

And I hope that in time we will get seven different authorities, each one with a separate general location.

For instance, a good example, the Cumberland river, which starts up in -- what? -- northern Kentucky and wanders down into Tennessee. And it's almost parallel with the

Tennessee, and actually as it gets west, just before the Ohio goes into the Mississippi, it turns north and goes into the Mississippi within ten or fifteen miles of where the Tennessee goes in. And yet it is an entirely different watershed. Well, in all probability, affecting in general terms the same States, it ought to be part of the -- of the Tennessee -- Tennessee Valley Authority, to save time and trouble. And the construction work of the T.V.A., of course, will be completed pretty soon. I think it's fair to take on another valley basin.

When you come to the other problems, the little rivers to the south of it, like -- what? -- Tom Bigbee, which starts across a little watershed about 150 feet high and about 25 miles from the Tennessee -- and the Tennessee, of course, running at that point northwest to the Tom Bigbee and due south to the Gulf of Mexico -- well, there are half a dozen Tom Bigbees in that -- in the Gulf section. Probably, they should be put into a separate authority, including rivers in Texas.

But it is awfully hard, because there is so much feeling, that no one State wants to join up with another State in the general policy or management of running a great watershed project. Mind you, it isn't only water power. That is one of the -- one of the lesser things, on the whole.

Q. Mr. President, there is another waterway perennial that has been activated now, and that is the St. Lawrence.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Well, I was wondering whether you have made up your mind as to whether this would be attempted as a treaty

now, or as part of legislation? The immediate proposal is legislation before (Senator George D.) Aiken, to put it on the Rivers and Harbors bill.

THE PRESIDENT: I think constitutionally it could be done either way. Now I haven't talked to the Senators about it, Jim (Wright), but I am going to do it. I don't care much, as long as I get action.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that Senator Aiken's legislation should go through in this session?

THE PRESIDENT: You mean in the -- November and December?

Q. Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you would have to ask them on the Hill. It depends largely upon what they want. If it goes over to January-February, I am not frightfully concerned about it. I hope it will go through, one way or the other. That is a question of legislative preference. That lets everybody out. (laughter)

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us about your inauguration plans?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw it on the ticker. (laughter)

Q. Can you confirm it?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Can you confirm it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, it's all right. I had Ed Halsey and Dave -- what's his name, the Architect of the Capitol? ---

VOICES: (interjecting) Lynn.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Dave Lynn down Saturday, and I said, "You know, I am terribly concerned about dollars and cents because I am afraid that a lot of people in the Senate -- Senator Byrd is the Chairman of this Committee -- (much laughter) -- and what are you laughing at? -- (more laughter) -- and they have appropriated 25 thousand dollars for the inauguration. But, you know, I think I can save an awful lot of money." (more laughter)

And with that desire to save money, I said, "I think I can do it for less than ten percent of that cost. I think I can do it for less than two thousand dollars. Give them a light buffet luncheon, that will be the only expense." (laughter)

The ladies here are all fascinated over what a good housekeeper I am. (more laughter)

MAY CRAIG: (interjecting) That's not what fascinates me! (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) So they were quite interested. They said, "How can you do it for less than two thousand dollars?" A lot of that can go to consomme and chicken-a-la-king, and a few sandwiches and coffee. "Well," I said, "I think I can do it."

The best architectural view, almost, in the Capital is the front of the White House that was originally meant to be the front door. There wasn't any, what's it called? -- the north portico. There wasn't -- when the White House was built -- there wasn't any north portico. And the main driveway was this one right here -- (indicating) -- that had these two curving

stairways -- steps, up to a perfectly charming porch -- curving porch. And that was the front of the White House until about 18 -- what? -- 25, somewhere along there. And it really is lovely, the iron-work of those steps and the beautiful design. And there's a rail on top. (laughter)

Q. (aside) Wonderful.

Q. Mr. President, on the car hire, unless you give us permission to circle, it's going to be very tough on the expense account. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I tell you what we found. Up there, Dave Lynn has got an iron scaffold, and I have got down here a wooden scaffold, and by putting them up both, there will be room not only for the photographers but all of the press, so everybody will get a chance to see it. Now isn't that a happy thought? (laughter)

Q. Are you going to parade any on inauguration day?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Who is there here to parade?

Q. That gets back to car hire. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, is the Administration going to continue consultations on foreign policy with the Republican leaders, now that Mr. Dulles is gone?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. You had better ask Stettinius.

Q. Mr. President, does Mr. Byrnes's decision to stay on as War Mobilizer, until Germany goes out of the war -- does that indicate that -- or does that clean up your immediate shifts, or are there immediate problems or are there other

things coming?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Lots more. I sent half a dozen appointments to the Congress today.

Q. Those were pretty minor appointments.

Q. Did you say that he is staying on to avoid ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. He is obviously the best man for this job, that's all.

Q. Mr. President, have you picked a successor to Ambassador Gauss yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Done what?

Q. Have you picked a successor to Ambassador Gauss yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet.

Q. Have you done anything about that resignation from the man (Secretary of the Interior Ickes) that Dewey was going to kick out?

THE PRESIDENT: No! (laughter) I know exactly. I haven't done anything about it.

Q. Mr. President, in your earlier comment on the Labor Board, you said you were looking into the whole question. Did you mean just the question of the Labor Board, or the question of the -- all the labor agencies?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, one or two others involved. That gives you no information at all. (laughter)

Q. Absolutely. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, if there is any inaugural ceremony, have you thought who might be the inaugural chairman?

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't that up to -- oh, there won't be any. Why do we have one?

Q. (interjecting) We have to have one.

Q. I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: Now you see, the way they have been running before, we put up -- what was the name of the architect?

MR. EARLY: Dave Lynn.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Your architect?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Waddy Wood. Well, each year since I have been inaugurated -- (laughter) -- we have had Waddy Wood draw a picture. One year it was Jackson. Another year it was the Federal Building in New York, and they put up an elaborate structure and elaborate stands. Now we didn't get any money from Congress, but that was the big job of the inaugural chairman, to sell the tickets; and the seats in all those stands were sold at a high price -- all we could get. And we came out each year about even, and paid for the whole thing. Now we are not going to have any inaugural stands this year -- so there won't be any this year. We won't need any money.

And this little party out here, we will have to have tickets, because otherwise it would become an Easter egg hunt -- (laughter) -- and aside from that I don't think there is any need for an inaugural chairman. Maybe I may find somebody, if they would like to have it, but no real need.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us something about your talk today with the new Australian Minister?

THE PRESIDENT: I received him and had a very nice talk with him. That's about all. There wasn't anything particular brought up.

Q. Mr. President, have you made a decision on the proposal to have the Army and Navy game moved to a bigger stadium?

THE PRESIDENT: I am talking to the Secretary of War this afternoon. I meant to do it this morning, and I haven't.

Q. Mr. President -- sir, have you received a message of congratulation from General Franco of Spain?

THE PRESIDENT: Congratulations? What does he congratulate me on?

Q. On re-election. It's reported in the press, sir, that he sent you a message of congratulations.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't seen one. But I haven't finished going through them all.

Q. Have you received one from Governor Dewey?

THE PRESIDENT: I had a letter yesterday, and I haven't replied to it.

Q. Mr. President, ---

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

Q. (interposing) What kind of letter was it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you can't see my personal files.  
(laughter)

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us what you talked to General O'Dwyer about?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, talked to him about Italy.

Italy is still a problem.

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Charles Taft today proposed that the Johnson Act be repealed -- Johnson Act in regard to loans to foreign governments in default. Have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Who did that?

Q. Charles Taft -- State Department.

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it. Don't know.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Thank you, sir.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #981  
Executive Office of the President  
November 17, 1944 -- 11.36 a.m., e.w.t.

MR. EARLY: (to May Craig): May, sit down. (she did)  
I think that's yours by default now.

THE PRESIDENT: You are the only veteran present, May.

MAY CRAIG: What?

THE PRESIDENT: You are the only veteran present.

MAY CRAIG: She (Doris Fleeson) is still in bed.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to be so very late. We have certain actions on, as you know, in Europe and other places. I couldn't get here earlier. Don't think I have anything. Steve didn't give me anything.

Q. Mr. President, where is the Army-Navy game going to be?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (laughter)

Q. Is there a shortage of cigarette holders too?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Is there a shortage of cigarette holders too?

THE PRESIDENT: No! (producing a holder from his pocket) The day is saved. (more laughter)

Q. Mr. President, could you tell us something about your visit with Dr. Kung yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q. Dr. Kung? H. H. Kung?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, just the usual thing. Talked about the same type of thing right along, ---

Q. (interjecting) Supplies?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- the economic end of the China situation.

Q. Have you decided to appoint a new Ambassador to China yet, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes, ---

Q. (interjecting) Are you going ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- but I have to get an agreement first.

Q. Will his name be sent up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) If I get the agreement.

Q. Mr. President, are you making a war bond speech Sunday night?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I haven't prepared it. Don't know what I am going to say -- but very short.

Q. Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the progress of the drive on the western front?

THE PRESIDENT: Not a thing. I wish I could. That is right in -- it is in operation at the present time.

Q. Mr. President, are we going to have universal training legislation coming along soon?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so. I have been for it, as you know, right along.

MAY CRAIG: Could you tell us what degree of

universal training, what kind of universal training? There is a great deal of discussion as to that.

THE PRESIDENT: I should think that was a matter for legislation. For instance, should we -- should we teach cooking to the girls?

MAY CRAIG: Some need it, of course. (laughter)

MR. EARLY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President -- President, there is some legislation pending. That Wadsworth bill I thought had been cleared with you sometime ago, for the training of every boy who reaches 18. Is that, in broad outlines, what you favor?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course, the idea is between the ages of 18 -- it's one year of service out of the life of every boy in this country to his own government, beginning let us say at 18 up to perhaps -- you wouldn't have to serve -- it depends on family circumstances a good deal -- between the ages of 18 and 23, something like that, to give his year of service to his own government.

Q. Mr. President, would that be military?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Would that be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That -- there you are now -- now you're as bad as May. (laughter) Would you call cooking military? Well now, in some cases it is and in some cases it isn't. Or carpentry -- lots of things like that.

Q. This really is going to be military training

though, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you went to a military camp, or the Navy. You would know that it would take you about six months to know your right hand from your left. It would take you a great many years to learn it, probably, in a different way.

Q. I'm not sure now. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Neither am I. And there are an awful lot of boys in the country that have to be told how to brush their teeth. And there are a lot of boys who have never been taught to live with other men in a camp. And that takes time. You take our Navy boys that come in. It takes up a long time to teach them to keep clean. Very few people realize that. It takes a lot of people -- and the percentage, in this country, of people who are turned down for physical reasons is appalling. And the mothers of the country are just beginning to learn that.

Look at the tremendous physical advantages that were given to the boys in C.C.C. camps. Well, they didn't have military training. There are lots of things the boys can do for the government, and in -- in case of war we will have a much larger percentage of boys that can defend the country. Now the question of where the Congress comes in, don't ask me that question, because that is another thing that is up to Congress.

MAY CRAIG: Mr. President, it wasn't the agenda I was thinking of so much as the national guard people would like to have the national guard do it, and have three or four months spread over several years, or do it in a drill a week, or something like that.

THE PRESIDENT: Won't work.

Q. Mr. President, as a representative of the octogenerian bloc ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes -- you and I.  
(laughter)

Q. (continuing) --- I remember how much the pendulum swung back after the last war. That is why I was interested in whether you were going to press for it now or not.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, because when I say "now," I mean this winter. I don't know that there is very much work that can be done in the present session of Congress before they go home, but the new Congress will be here in January.

Q. Mr. President, would you hope for a continuation of the national guard idea, in addition to this particular year of training?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't considered that at all.

Q. Mr. President, have you made any progress ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Depends largely on the States. Depends on Congress.

Q. Mr. President, have you made any progress toward the proposed meeting between -- among you, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Stalin?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q. Your old rule still stands, you would like to see them ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Oh, Yes.

Q. (continuing) --- as soon as possible?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We all three of us want to see each other.

Q. Have you made up your mind, sir, whether you are going to accept General de Gaulle's invitation?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope to some day. But the "some day" is, at the present time, rather vague. It is more important for me to see the Prime Minister and Mr. Stalin than -- and the question of geography comes in, too.

Q. There have been reports that Postmaster General Frank Walker now wants to step out of the Cabinet, Mr. President. Have you heard anything specific on that point?

THE PRESIDENT: The only -- the only thing I have heard is that the press and -- between the press and radio I have been offered, I think five Cabinets complete -- (laughter) -- and, of course, none of them has the same people in them. The press and radio have been awfully good to me in making all these suggestions. I want to thank them all. (more laughter)

Q. (interjecting) Any of the Cabinets any good?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't know whether that is sarcasm or irony. (more laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

## CONFIDENTIAL

Press and Radio Conference #982  
Executive Office of the President  
November 21, 1944 -- 4.11 P.M., E.W.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to the front row): Got enough elbow room?

Q. Just about enough.

THE PRESIDENT: Still growing. Both of them growing a little. (then to May Craig): What have you done to the usual occupant of that chair?

MAY CRAIG: He won't sit down.

THE PRESIDENT: Why, there's Mr. Godwin! Why, you're not mad at me, are you? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: What?

THE PRESIDENT: You're not mad at me?

MR. GODWIN: (laughing) Ladies first. Age before beauty. (more laughter)

MAY CRAIG: That really "leaves" me.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got any news, but I wanted to say something -- put in a little plea -- with some others, like General Eisenhower -- for the continued production of certain necessary things -- ships and shells, and some other things that we are still short of.

The case is, of course, perfectly clear. We are not sending enough shells over to the other side at the present time, with the result that they have to ration the shells

that we are firing. Well, that is costly in life.

And it comes in part from -- in industry -- shell industry and ship industry -- from people quitting their job in this country. The result is that we fill their places with inexperienced labor, and the inexperienced labor in a good many cases, in learning how to turn out their job, smashes the machine itself, not purposefully but because they are so everlastingly inexperienced. Every time that you get a hundred new men to take the places of people who have left, the chances are that one or two of them will smash up a machine. Well, that slows up the actual production.

And, of course, on the -- on the question of people quitting their job, there are lots -- lots of reasons for it. One of the reasons is the fear that they won't have work after the war. And I think that they need reassurance on that, because almost everybody that knows much about it realizes that not only the Government but -- but industry is working awfully hard to provide jobs, not only for the people at the front in uniform but also for the people over here who have been turning out munitions during the course of the war.

There was a -- an article the other day -- story by Charlie Wilson of General Electric, which is an awfully good little talk on this question of jobs. And I am going to ask Steve to make it available to you. You may have read it, but it is worth reading again.

It's along the line of a lot of industrialists who see the thing to do is not to cut the pay envelope at the

end of the war, but to -- as, for instance, when we go back to a 40-hour week, normally the pay envelope would be a great deal less than for people who are working 54 or 56 hours now. But so many of the industrialists like -- like Charlie Wilson have got a -- a more modern point of view, and feel that the pay envelope -- perhaps it can't be maintained absolutely to the actual dollar or dime, but substantially it should be maintained.

And therefore, I think it is safe to say that the -- when that time comes, the tendency in the country is going to be not to decrease wages but at least to keep up actual wages to approximately what they are now. Well, actual wages means to take home pay on Saturday night. Work it out any number of different ways.

So I will ask Steve to have that mimeographed, and let you have copies of it. It's -- it's an old -- old story. It's a week old. But I think it's -- it's so good, coming from the head of one of the largest companies in this country, and will be so startling to a lot of people, as coming from the head of a great industrial company, that portions of it at least are worth reproducing.

I don't think I have another thing.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your visit with Paul Fitzpatrick today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I just said "howdy" to him. I had only one word with him during the campaign.

Q. I wondered if the question of (Senator James M.)

Mead (of New York) running again for Governor of New York came up?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, No. We didn't talk about anything two -- two years hence.

Q. They talk about it four years hence, you know.

(laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, may I ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Getting wild, Jim (Wright). (??)

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- may I revert to this Charlie Wilson matter? Many of the workmen seem to think that it isn't only pay in munitions, but that there will be a considerable lag in reconversion, the old story that was -- we discussed months -- several months ago.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Have you anything new on that, or any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No, ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- suggestions?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- except that I'll -- I'll illustrate by telling you the story of when the automobile plants out in Detroit were turned into munitions plants, and all of them, practically, agreed that it would take about six months before they could convert from automobiles to munitions. And we were worried about it. We supposed that the lag in employment there -- the changeover -- would cost the company and the workers about six months in wages.

Well, actually, when they came to do the job, it

was less than half that period. It was done much faster than the -- the planners, the Army, the Navy, the companies, or the -- the workers themselves anticipated. And I feel a little bit like reconversion -- about reconversion as I have had proved to me about conversion.

Q. Mr. President, there is a great deal of renewed controversy on the Pacific Coast about the matter of allowing the return of these Japanese who were evacuated in 1942. Do you think that the danger of espionage or sabotage has sufficiently diminished so that there can be a relaxation of the restrictions that have been in effect for the last two years?

THE PRESIDENT: In most of the cases. That doesn't mean all of them. And, of course, we have been trying to -- I am now talking about Japanese people from Japan who are citizens ---

Q. (interjecting) Japanese Americans.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Japanese Americans. I am not talking about the Japanese themselves. A good deal of progress has been made in scattering them through the country, and that is going on almost every day. I have forgotten what the figures are. There are about roughly a hundred -- a hundred thousand Japanese-origin citizens in this country. And it is felt by a great many lawyers that under the Constitution they can't be kept locked up in concentration camps. And a good many of them, as I remember it -- you had better check with the Secretary of the Interior on this -- somewhere around 20 or 25 percent of all those citizens have re-placed themselves, and in

a great many parts of the country.

And the example that I always cite, to take a unit, is the size of the county, whether it's in the Hudson River valley or in western "Joe-gia" (Georgia) which we all know, in one of those counties, probably half a dozen or a dozen families could be scattered around on the farms and worked into the community. After all, they are American citizens, and we all know that American citizens have certain privileges. And they wouldn't -- what's my favorite word? -- discombobolate -- (laughter) -- the existing population of those particular counties very much. After all -- what? -- 75 thousand families scattered all around the United States is not going to upset anybody.

Q. (interposing) But, sir, if I may interrupt ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And, of course, we are actuated by the -- in part by the very wonderful record that the Japanese in that battalion in Italy have been making in the war. It is one of the outstanding battalions we have.

Q. But, sir, the discussion on the West Coast is more about the relaxation of the military restrictions in that prohibited area, as to whether they should be allowed in the areas from which they have been excluded. It isn't about allowing them to go elsewhere in the country. I was wondering if you felt that the danger of espionage had sufficiently diminished so that the military restrictions that were passed could be lifted?

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

Q. There hasn't been any difficulty about that

general policy question?

Q. Mr. President, did you have up the question of war financing with Secretary Morgenthau and Admiral Leahy today -- and Mr. White of the Treasury?

THE PRESIDENT: Just a continuing thing. Nothing new on it.

Q. Mr. President, ---

Q. (interposing) Has it -- have you had a chance yet to start going into the budget for next year?

THE PRESIDENT: Mmm. I have done just about what I have done at this time of the year. I have still got quite a number of conferences scheduled with Harold Smith. Getting along all right.

Q. Does it look, sir, as if it would be somewhere around the size of this year's budget?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, we don't cast -- cast it up that way.

Q. Mr. President, have you had any request for intercession in the Polish territorial dispute? There was a report today that you had it from the Premier (Mikolajczyk) in London?

THE PRESIDENT: For about three years. Nothing new.

Q. No new recommendations?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. Mr. President, Lord Keynes is supposed to have -- just on the point of finishing his discussions over here with various State Department and Treasury officials. We understand that that has had to do with second phase Lend-Lease. Is

there anything you can say on the nature of the Keynes mission?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean, second phase Lend-Lease?

Q. The logical successor to Lend-Lease as we now know it in our relationship with Britain.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Lend-Lease will continue just exactly as it has.

Q. Is that without any terminal thought?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q. Without any terminal thought?

THE PRESIDENT: Unless you can tell me when the war ends?

Q. Is that total war?

THE PRESIDENT: (nodding) Germany and Japan.

Q. Mr. President, ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, do you think that the point of view you attribute to Mr. Wilson is a pretty general or dominant one among business men now, with regard to postwar purchasing power, or is that an iconoclast ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) How do you mean?

Q. With regard to the maintenance of purchasing power after the war, which you (just) discussed in the (press) conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I will put it this way: it's growing.

Q. Mr. President, last August, sir, in your Bremerton speech, you said you thought it was desirable to establish a commission for the development of Alaska in the interest of

the soldiers and veterans.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q. (continuing) Has that commission been appointed, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, all kinds of things have been done about it. No commission has been appointed yet. It has taken up a lot of study, and I don't know whether it will take the form of a commission, or whether it will take the form of definite recommendations.

Q. Mr. President, paraphrasing some published reports today, has there been any snag in plans for a meeting between you and Prime Minister Churchill and ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) We are all ---

Q. (continuing) --- Stalin?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- all hoping very much that it will be held as soon as possible, and you know what that means.

Q. Mr. President, ---

Q. (interposing) Mr. President, did you say, sir, that you hope to have it before the end of this year?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I honestly don't know. There are operational problems involved. There are travel problems involved. All kinds of things involved. And I really couldn't make a guess.

Q. Mr. President, in view of your statement a few minutes ago that you have those Budget problems and conferences to take up before you finish the Budget, and also the fact

that you have your State of the Union Message, those would point to no conferences until possibly after inauguration. Is that proper speculation?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't be able to guess. I wouldn't try to write a story on it because it would probably -- probably be -- what do they call it? -- too highly speculative.

Q. Have you heard anything on an Ambassador -- Ambassador's appointment for China, sir? Anything new?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

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

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't know. It might have come in this morning. I haven't seen the afternoon mail.

Q. Mr. President, the Rivers -- the Budget, and Rivers and Harbors bill in the Senate, contain authorizations for the Missouri River which may be prejudicial to your Missouri Valley recommendations. Do you think either of these bills, or both of them, should be passed at this session with those items in, or should the M.V.A. authorization be included -- substituted ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have no idea whether it will pass this session, but I have asked the Director of the Budget to study that very question, as to whether either bill would be prejudicial to a Missouri Valley Authority. That is as far as I have got.

Q. You haven't had a report yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q. That's the Bureau of the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us anything more specific about what Mr. Nelson's duties will be in his new job?

THE PRESIDENT: Heavens! I just handed out a story on that -- pretty good story.

Q. Do you remember saying anything sinister in the polling booth at Hyde Park, Mr. President? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know who the fellow was that wrote that story for Time, but I am going to withdraw his card from these conferences -- if he comes to these conferences -- I don't know who he was -- on the ground of deafness.

Part -- part of what he said was true -- perfectly true, but just the -- for the sake of the record, so that I won't get any more letters from ministerial associations -- (laughter) -- I am -- as I -- I went into the booth, an old friend of mine, Tom Leonard, who is one of the inspectors -- a captain at the election booth -- or whatever they call it -- was standing right outside; and I got hold of this handle that you have to pull 'round back of your neck, and it didn't click. So I started another go at it, and that locked it. And I couldn't do anything about it. The thing was locked -- the curtain was locked.

So I said to Tom, over the top of the -- the curtain, I said, "Tom, the damn thing won't work."

Now, the trouble is that some person -- whoever he

was I don't know, but he must have been awfully deaf, because he added another short word before the word "damn" which I didn't use. (laughter) Well, I suppose that is his -- his privilege. However, he is too deaf to suit me -- (more laughter) -- especially because I didn't, on that occasion, take the name of the Deity in vain. I said "damn." (more laughter)

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

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) So that's all there is to it. Now, I am not going to ask the White House Correspondents' Association to expel him for being "deef," because that is pretty severe punishment, but the Association ought to know what to do with him. I suppose probably the best thing to do is to pay his expenses and have him go to a good ear doctor. (more laughter) Well, that's all there is to that episode.

JIM WRIGHT: What are you going to do with a man who is "deef" like I am? I didn't hear you say it, and I was there! (much laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Jim, don't you ---

JIM WRIGHT: (continuing) May I still come?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- your imagination is good, but it isn't that good. (more laughter)

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.