November 6, 1947

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt
United Nations
Lake Success, New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I have just come across a copy of the prayer used by me at the Memorial Service for Mr. Roosevelt at the Kingman Army Air Field, Kingman, Arizona, where I was a Chaplain at the time. I thought you might like to have it. Ten thousand troops and officers in military formation stood with bared, bowed heads as the prayer was given. It was a cold, windy Sunday morning, and the tops of the distant mountains were covered with snow. We did not mind the cold nor the wind, for our hearts were full.

We cannot understand why our leaders so desperately needed at times of great crises should be taken from us. We think of the statesmen and then Roosevelt. Both were men who led our nation through perilous times. Neither was permitted to see the tasks completed. We cannot know what the course of events might have been had each lived additional years. We do know that each served magnificently and the burdens laid upon their shoulders could not be borne by men for long.

For your own high courage and complete devotion to the cause of justice, you have my profound admiration and sincere thanks. Surely deep in your heart you understand what Jesus meant when He said: "Take up your cross, and follow me."

Respectfully yours,

Charles L. Austin
Prayer used by Chaplain Charles L. Austin at the Memorial Service for Franklin D. Roosevelt at the Kingman Army Air Field, Kingman, Arizona.

We have lost a great leader at a critical time. The welfare of generations may well be dependent upon the course of events in the next few months. It is fitting and desirable that we pray to Almighty God for the comfort of those who are grieving; for the strength and guidance of those who must now lead; for the grace to follow, and to labor for the right and the true, and to these ends let us now pray.

Almighty God who art the creator of the heavens, the earth, and all who dwell there-in. Thou whose power is from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God, there is none other. To Thee now we turn at the time of our loss and great need. The death of our President has come as a mighty blow - we are sorry. Be Thou a comfort to those who grieve. Help them and us to remember the courage and vision of his leadership, the truth for which he stood, the justice for which he labored, the peace of which he dreamed. In our judgments of his errors we would be generous, in our disagreements honest, and for his many achievements which have benefited ourselves and others, we are sincerely grateful.

Bless, O God, him who is now President. It is a mighty burden. Speak to him that he might have courage. Be to him a guide and an inspiration that the cause of liberty does not falter nor the dream of peace with justice be unfilled. And to these ends may we each one lend his best efforts, his finest thoughts, his unstinted loyalty.

Humbly do we pray unto Thee, for great is the task before us, weak and foolish are we, yet in Thee do we find strength, in Thee is our faith made strong, in Thee does our vision of the right and the true become more clear; and to Thee in the time of our need we would turn.

Amen.
DEAR MRS. ROOSEVELT,

In addition to my regular Christmas message for 1947, may I add the following note. If you are able to have the three inclosed poems printed in some leading newspaper, you'll have the sincere thanks and appreciation of a veteran, who after six years in four veterans' hospitals is still convalescing at Bath, New York.

At the time I wrote the poem entitled "THE MAN UPSTAIRS, KNOWN AS 'F.D.R.'", in honor of President Roosevelt, I was a patient at Mt. Alto—Washington, D.C.

While in Washington Senator Mead was to take me to the White House to interview the President. However, my physical condition didn't warrant it at that particular date, and I was transferred back to The Veterans' Facility at Batavia, New York, for further medical treatment. The poem has been in my personal files ever since.

YOURS SINCERELY,

CLARKSON F. AUSTIN,
I was just leaving the White House and the meeting of a great man. He had just given me a most hearty welcome and a glad-hand. As I walked along the lower White House hall, I could see patriotic pictures of noted men hanging on the wall. There I saw such famous Americans as Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Robert E. Lee. All trying to tell me to stay democratic and keep America free. And as my mind drifted to my little history book of this great country both near and far, my thoughts would always go back to the man upstairs, known as "Y.D.R." I could think of my teacher taking from little book these great words: "UNITED WE STAND—DIVIDED WE FALL." As I walked along this great White House hall, I could recall what history said: "Columbus' discovery in 1492 was a great shock. And then meditate over the date my own forefathers landed at Plymouth Rock. I could also dream of Washington at Valley Forge, and Lincoln making his great "Gettysburg Address." And then say to myself: "America is now passing through her greatest distress." But as I pictured all our forefathers did to make what we are, my thoughts would always go back to the man upstairs, known as "Y.D.R."
As I walked with the dark to my left and General Grant to my right, I gazed upon something most beautiful, patriotic, and bright. There I saw the great emancipator's historic words:

The ones that you and I so often have heard;
With that immortal ending, "That Liberty shall not perish from the earth."

I felt proud that America was my place of birth.
As all of these things creased in my mind—like a bright star,
My thoughts would always go back to the man upstairs known as "F.D.R."

After reaching the end of the hall and opening the great White House door,
I looked back and said: "All of these things I will have to go back home to again when I am to go back home to again"

Because this may be my first and last call,
That I'll ever walk along this great White House hall.

And before I go back to a new life,
To face the world and another strife;
I will always think of this day above any other—by far.
As my thoughts go back to the man upstairs, known as "F.D.R."

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WRITTEN BY—CLARENCE P.—AUSTIN,
X.—U.S. VETERANS' FACILITY,
MT. AIRY,—WASHINGTON, D.C.,
MAY 5, 1942.

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A VETERAN'S STORY

I
To COMPANY ENLIST I go every day,
With the greatest of ease type the hours away;
With the tick of the clock and without any glory
I write of my life, a veteran's story.

II
At COMPANY ENLIST where everything's fun,
Whether days are slow or happy with sun,
It's work and more work without any glory,
To tell the long tale of an injured vet's story.

III
At COMPANY ENLIST I met Mr. Drum,
And with his teachings words started to run,
Oh what pleasure, without any glory,
To tell of the strife of a veteran's story.

IV
All day long I seem to have wings,
As I write words like a bird sings—
Typing and typing and look for no glory;
To bring you the history of a veteran's story.

So do this and not ask why?
Will complete my task "up and up";
If I keep plugging and ask for no glory.

Until I finish my life, a veteran's story.
WANTED: CLARKSON F. AUSTIN,
6th COMPANY NO. 2,
U.S. VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION CENTER,
BOSTON, MASS.
THURSDAY DECEMBER 4, 1947.
"TO THE GOOD OLD U.S.A."

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"BY CLARENCE F. AUSPIN,"

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I

FAITH has been kind. Let's all have more FAITH.
And learn to love and not to HATE.
Be kind to those we chance to meet.
It'll take you to some happy street.
At least it's bringing me that way,
After six long years to a brighter day.
So let's all turn from gloom to cheer!
For we're darn glad we're ever here.

II

It makes us proud that we can say,

"WE'RE LIVING IN THE U.S.A."

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WRITTEN BY—CLARENCE F. AUSPIN,
7—COMPANY NO. 9,
U.S. VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION CENTER,
BATH, NEW YORK.
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 10, 1947.

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DEAR MRS. ROOSEVELT AND THE FAMILY,

The dawn of another holy Yule-tide season is about to come over the year's horizon and bring with it, the coming of Christmas for the year of 1947. Since I last wrote you from "Eighty-one" in the great city of New York, I have been transferred to the large "Veterans' Administration Center" at Bath, New York, for further treatment and convalescent care.

During this Sacred time of the year, it's no more than proper and fitting for me to pause from whatever I'm doing today, to think of you and give credit where credit is due.

At the turn of the road when the old year ends, and I look back to greet you and all my old friends, I want you to know this is just a little reminder that I haven't forgotten you and all you have done in helping me over my long siege of sickness.

It is thus that I send the following message to my buddies at Bath and to all disabled veterans throughout the nation and to my loved ones and friends back home.

Nearing the close of the year, when the holiday season is about to begin, we approach once more the "Eve of Christmas" known as the Feast of the Birth of Christ. Christmas being the Birthday of Christ, should not only be a time of glad-tidings, but it should also be a time of universal joy—a joy that knows no bounds of states, countries or continents.

It was on this date nearly 2000 years ago that Christ was born into the world for all of us. His coming brought with it the song and voices of Angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth Peace to men of good will."

It's that God may be glorified by our goodness on this day and throughout the year for finding this, "Peace on Earth to men of good will," that we should make it our fervent prayer on "Christmas Day," to bring Peace unto our great land for a long time to come.

I have seen my comrades of all wars in distress for the past six years in four veterans' hospitals. Those who have not seen the veterans, who now fill the hospitals, because they have been disabled by the horrors of war, should offer a fervent prayer on Christmas Day for the speedy recovery of these men.

Once again may I extend all that goes with the season of 1947, for a Joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year during the holiday season, along with the enclosed poem I wrote for this time of the year. May I have the pleasure of being always—

FAITHFULLY YOURS,

CLARENCE F. AUSTIN

A VETERAN STILL IN CONVALESCENT AT BATH, N. Y.