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## EDITORIAL PAGES

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*You will no doubt want to see this.*



### RALPH MCGILL

## It Was Really A Good Day

WARM SPRINGS—It was really a very lovely day. True enough, there was an occasional misting of rain. But the minnows trees were still in bloom and they had carpeted the ground beneath them with blossom. There was the greenness of pine and oak accentuated by the amber clouds, the grayness of the day, and the infrequent bursts of sun.

But, really, it was a lovely day and everyone seemed to know that even though the clouds were thickly gathered, that the sun was up above.

Stephen Vincent Benet wrote once of the Summer rains which leach the window panes with the slight fierce passion of a young man's grief.

But this day was like a brave and good person who, in time of great emotion, displayed at most only a slight misting of the eyes. The day and the ceremony had dignity.

**Presence** It was a day given over to the twentieth anniversary ceremonies of the Warm Springs Foundation and the formal acceptance by the State of Georgia of the Little White House where a very great, great man one late afternoon in the curiously lamplight of a Georgia afternoon when Spring has come early and clear, said, "I have a very bad headache," and then passed readily on into the greatest adventure of a very adventurous life.

The presence of Franklin D. Roosevelt was very real here today. But, one wondered, watching the crowd that had filled the special train for the journey walk about the grounds, and go quietly into the little cottage where death had come for him, how that presence seemed to each of them. For no two, probably, was it the same. There was this to be said of those who came. They came because they wanted to come, because something inside said to them "Yes."

Time was when almost everyone sought to look in his smile; time was when there were those who would do almost anything to be admitted to his circle. And it is almost incredible to recall how many rode his political coattails to success when they themselves were ordinary and mean little men who had nothing to offer the people save to say they were for Roosevelt.

Yes, they were the John Bunyan coattails of all our political history, those coattails of FDR.

**Change** Now it is not popular in some circles to stand up and say you were a Roosevelt man. And, of course, to a politician and to a self-seeker, it is very unwise to do anything at all which might be unpopular, even in the slightest degree. So many of those who rode the political coattails and who are what they are only because they went shuffling in his train, carrying his banner and calling his name, found they could not make the trip.

I had to laugh, thinking about some of them, who are empty and windy, pompous little men who now are sitting on much less adequate coattails and who are very insecure there, and think fretfully of the good old days when the Roosevelt coattails were broad as the nation and never ripped at the seams.

You could laugh at them, knowing that the mills of the gods grind slowly, but that they grind always.

**Wept** It was a good day, and if it wept now and then, it always cleared its face and smiled. And the people who were here came because it was in their hearts to come.

There were great ambassadors here. They were from Russia, Switzerland, Honduras, Yugoslavia, India, Paraguay, Greece, Ecuador, Norway, Argentina, France, Belgium, Italy, Poland. They walked about, seeing the townscapes of Warm Springs at the station, as they always were when the President arrived.

A newspaperman said facetiously to the Russian ambassador, Nikolai V. Novikov, "These are the real Americans, not to be confused with those of New York or Washington."

He smiled and nodded. It could have been one of his small towns in Russia, and surely the people want peace and co-operation between the great nations in Warm Springs as much as they do in the smallest village of Russia, if only the great powers and bureaus in New York and Washington and Moscow and Leningrad will find a way.

**The House** There was the Little White House, and when we reached it the day conspired for sunshine. It made golden the dome of moisture on the grass. The green leaves shone brightly and the house basked there in the warm light as if it were aware of the great memory it contained, suited by that of death.

The Minister of Ecuador could recall that his people cried when the news of that death came. And so did they in Paraguay and in the other countries as well.

And now, when America is so afraid, as is the rest of the world, and when Washington is in a mood to say to Americans "you must" or "you must not," when we talk so much about democracy and are afraid to be all we pretend, you thought here today of the man who said, to a country afraid and writhed in 1933, "All we have to fear is fear itself."

**Words** It was a great moment when the greatest living Southerner and one of the greatest living Americans, Joseph Daniels, spoke out in the Roosevelt manner and tradition. The people are confused today, and afraid.

There is no one to speak to them. Somehow, in all the countless words spoken in Washington, few seem to be addressed to the people.

Here today one felt sure that if that great, organic voice could speak again, the people would relax and a great sigh of relief would go up. No one has really spoken words they understand since you said, here, "I have a very 'bad headache,' and never spoke again."

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Library  
National Catholic School of Social Service  
The Catholic University of America  
Washington 17, D. C.

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
c/o "McCalls"  
230 Park Avenue  
New York 17, N. Y.

My dear Roosevelt:

I am Librarian of the National Catholic School of Social Service Library and a student in the Department of Library Science of Catholic University. To complete the requirements for the Master's degree in Library Science, I am undertaking to compile a complete bibliography of the works of Monsignor John A. Ryan.

From my readings I see that Monsignor John A. Ryan and your husband were close friends. Perhaps you too knew Monsignor Ryan very well. It has occurred to me that some statement from you pertaining to the Monsignor would greatly enhance my thesis. It may be a paragraph or just a sentence that I, with your kind permission, may quote. I should greatly appreciate your granting me this favor. I enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

Thank you kindly for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully yours,

*Theodora McGill*  
Theodora McGill

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