
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”

The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Political Ascension

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1912 March 4

Poughkeepsie, NY

March 4, 1912

[Speech at Poughkeepsie]

FD R Speech File

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Franklin D. Roosevelt's

Speech before Business Men's Luncheon Club, Poughkeepsie,
N.Y., Mar. 4, 1912

(excerpt) "... I want to say a few words about the necessity of developing the country hand in hand with the city. We in Dutchess County well know the tremendous strides that have been made in the city of Poughkeepsie in the past six years.

We, who live outside the city, appreciate coming into a town where the streets are paved, where the lighting is modern, where the stores and banks and in fact the whole spirit of the people shows an up-to-date attractiveness. By the strides made by this city along civic lines you have encouraged the farmer and suburban dweller to increase his trade with you.

If I may criticize at all it would be along the line that you haven't been doing enough to boost the countryside at the same time with the city.

It ought to be an axiom that no city like this can be sufficient unto itself. You need the everyday supplies of life - food and building materials from the country, milk and butter, eggs and grain can be supplied to Poughkeepsie more cheaply from Dutchess county than from outside sources, and if this city continues to grow, as I believe it is going to, the surrounding country must be opened up to provide for a greater production.

Then there is the further necessity of supplying

Mar. 4, 1912 (continued)

the growing number of people who work in this city with small homes or little farms in the country. It is undeniable that there is a growing sentiment in favor of country life today.

The man who earns \$1,000 a year or more should rather have his children brought up in pure air with plenty of room to play in than in a crowded city street. Any real estate dealer will tell you that he has hundreds of demands for small houses and four or five acres of land near but not in the city.

I believe that it would pay the business men of this city, and pay them well if they would study the question of development of the surrounding country - its development along lines that will consider the problem of providing homes and small farms in the country; the problem of increasing and making more available the produce of the country and the problem of securing better transportation.

There should be better transportation into Poughkeepsie from every quarter - more trolleys, motor busses, etc., and better service on the steam roads.

This is no real estate scheme - it ought not to be handled as such. It should be handled by intelligent cooperation among the citizens of the city and in the end, if the development of the rest of this county goes on hand in hand with Poughkeepsie with the progress of Poughkeepsie, our prosperity and happiness will be strengthened in every way."

From: Poughkeepsie (NY) Evening Enterprise, Mar. 4, 1912, p.1.
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