
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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Mr. Roosevelt said: I have come to New England for the serious purpose of presenting a serious argument, not to the men and women who have made up their minds beyond recall nor to the partisans on either side. I want to speak to that great mass of voters who are not bound by irrevocable ties to one party or the other but who vote sometime for a Democrat and some time for a Republican on a fair presentation of the issues of the campaign and of the qualifications of the candidates. As a matter of simple fact Massachusetts like New York is normally a Republican State but like New York it votes on occasion for Democratic candidates, when it believes these candidates and the issues they represent will do more good to the State of Nation than the people on the other side. Especially do I want to bring out an argument in this campaign which so far has been little used. It is an argument which is based on necessity on a partisan view of the personalities of the two honorable, upright and able men, Alfred E. Smith and Herbert Hoover who are contesting for the presidency of the United States. ~~That~~

I want to lay down the hypothesis which I believe to be true that an executive post such as that of Governor or President calls for more than mere executive ability. For instance, I know dozens of supremely successful corporation executives -- Presidents of great railroad systems, of nationwide industrial corporations, of huge banks, and I can frankly say that very few of them would have a successful careers as State Governors or in the presidency.

The administration of a governmental chief executive calls for an added quality, ~~of far more~~ or to be more correct, two qualities. First, the rare ability to coordinate an executive branch of the government with the legislation thereof. Secondly, equally rare ability to present great public issues in such simple terms to the voting

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public that without heat or ~~passion~~ passion, that voting public can act fairly and honestly on those issues.

I have long been a friend of Governor Smith. I have long been a friend of Sec. Hoover. I have tried to picture to myself without partisanship what kind of a President each of them would make. I am proud as an American citizen of the fine and able way in which Sec. Hoover has carried out certain specific tasks, his relief work in Belgian and later in Poland, his Food control, his help to the victims of the Mississippi Flood, his aid to industry through the Dept. of Commerce.

~~But~~ ^{But} Mr. Hoover as President would have a very different task to perform. His previous tasks have been directed, first one then the other, towards one definite aim. He has been sole dictator of each of these tasks. He has had no colleagues with equal authority in performing them. In a sense each of these tasks has been an amplification of a specific engineering job, the building of a great bridge, the tunneling of a mountain or the building of the Panama Canal.

The task of the Presidency is far different. The President of the United States must have a mind not single-tracked, but like a great railroad yard. During the course of each and every day in the White House he is confronting tasks with ten wholly uncoordinated problems, presenting by ten uncoordinated government departments. He concerns himself with the broad field of foreign affairs, then with the Army and Navy, then with agriculture, then with Foreign commerce, then with Home industries, then with difficult legal problems, then with ~~convert~~ conservation, then with the Mails and Express service, then with the business of separate commissions, like the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Federal Trade Commission and then with grave problems of finance. Somehow, though I admire him greatly as an administrator for a single task, I cannot picture a President Hoover successful in jumping at half hour intervals from problem to problem and keeping his equilibrium, *continued next*

from point to point in the administration of the vast array of business affairs of the Federal Government.

Then there is the other point. Weaving in and out of every part of these multifarious problems is the inevitable, constant and pertinacious "involvement", as President Harding would have said, with the Legislative branch of the Government. History says that some of the finest executive Presidents have made complete failures of their relationship with the Congress of the United States. Frankly, I do not ~~think~~ for one minute believe that my friend, Mr. Hoover, if elected President will succeed in having anything but a four years' struggle with our friends, The Senators and Representatives on Capitol Hill. His is not the type of mind to meet the legislative mind. He has not the patience to work with them to settle differences to achieve results. Frankly, I fear a kind of deadlock which will do little good to the Nation.

I say all this not in the spirit of partisanship but as one who wants to see results accomplished during these coming years. On the other side of the picture stands my other friend, The Governor of the State of New York. You people here in Massachusetts know of his record of accomplishment in the State of New York. It is a record known to a very wide field of industry. It covers Social legislation, it covers Financial legislation, it covers Conservation, the aim of education and it covers a bettering of the health of the State.

The singular thing is that during all these years the Governor of New York has been faced by a hostile legislature, a legislature belonging to his political opponents and I may say a legislature which has tried on every possible occasion to trip him up.

Let me give you an example: During all these years not one appointment of Gov. Smith has been denied confirmation by the Republican State Senate. During all these years not a single bill has been passed by

this Republican Legislature and vetoed by Gov. Smith -- and there have been many of them -- has been passed by the Legislature over his veto.

It is true that he has had Legislative experience himself. That has been a good thing for he knows how to handle a Legislature. In all of his daily work he reminds me more of Theodore Roosevelt than of any other executive in our generation. Gov. Smith's mind is a mind of intense concentration but he is able, like Theodore Roosevelt, to leave one subject and become in sixty seconds as deeply interested in another wholly different subject. Smith's is not a single-tracked mind. It is a whole railroad yard full of them. He has proved his ability to coordinate the Executive branch with the Legislative branch.

Many of the great ~~progressive-reforms~~ measures of progressive reform which he has obtained approval for by our Republican Legislatures have been put through by direct personal contact between himself and the members of the State Senate and House.

But in other cases where that Legislature has stood firm and been unwilling to meet him at least half way, Gov. Smith has had that second great quality in an Executive, the ability to go before the people of his State and state the case so clearly to them that in the succeeding election they have in every case given him a popular mandate of their approval. It is not rare to find Governors of States who are able in one term, or even in two terms, to obtain applause and approval, but it is very rare to find a Governor who is stronger and more recognized for ability at the end of four terms than at the beginning.

In the final analysis the problems at Washington are not different in principle than from the problems ^{at} Albany; differ only in degree. I have been in Washington for many years and I do not hesitate to say that in my judgment Gov. Smith will, if elected, prove to be ^{the} most successful President of modern times, both in carrying out as a practical business man the much-

needed reforms of administration in the Federal Government and also with his experience in coordinating the two great and actively operating branches, the Executive and the Congress. In other words, with him as President the people of the United States will get things done

When I think that as far back as 1920 President Harding proposed a reorganization of the scores of Government Departments, Bureaus, Commissions and what not, and that for eight years he and President Coolidge succeeded in obtaining from Congress literally nothing along these great and practical lines, I pray for a man who will be able to work this Congress towards this vital end.

I understand that my friend Mr. Hoover is coming here to Boston in four days and is going to talk to you about prosperity. You in Boston know probably better than I do as to how prosperous New England is at the present time. You know more than I do about the Industrial and Agricultural conditions of the factories and farms of the New England States. All I can say is that if Sec. Hoover can persuade New England that it is right on the crest of a wave of prosperity he is a greater charmer than I have given him credit for.

The fact, of course, is very clear. There is on the whole fair prosperity in many of the industrial centers of the United States, in many trades and allied industries. Yet there is one other side of the picture in which no charmer can alter the facts. Forty million people in our population-- those dependent upon the soil for their very existence, what we used to call in the old days the backbone of the country -- those very people are in a serious plight. Relief for more than a third of the population requires not merely an administrator in Washington. Eight long years have gone by and no solution of the problem has been found found.

Gov. Smith I back to solve that problem, first because he is recognized by every business man in his own State to have sound financial judgment. Secondly, because he ~~gets-to-work-with-Congress~~ knows how to work with Congress and can ~~meet~~ get many ~~prae~~ practical accomplishments. This is only one phase of the need of accomplishment in Washington during these next few years. Weigh the personal characteristics of the two men against each other. We in New York are going to prove by an overwhelming vote for Smith in November that we have confidence in the judgment which has formed been ~~confirmed~~ during many years.

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