
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”

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**Denver, CO -
Extemporaneous remarks at dinner
in his honor - 8:00 p.m.**

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT
At the Dinner given in his honor at the Brown Palace Hotel
Denver, Colorado
September 15, 1932, 8.00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman, Brother Adams, Ambassadors, Members
of the Cabinet, Marshals -- and, may I even say, "Postmasters":
(Laughter, prolonged applause)

This is a nice family party. I wish the press were
not here. (Laughter) You people know -- you people who go
back into the dim distant past, the way I do -- this is not
my first visit to Denver, or to Colorado. I have been here
many, many times before. I am always glad to be back here,
because your climate, I think, is represented in the spirit
of the people of this State. You, in this State, represent
in essence, the true liberalism that this country stands for.
You have shown it in the past in great crises, such, for in-
stance, as the year 1916 -- to which the Chairman has just
referred. And I believe that you are going to show it again
this year -- beyond peradventure. (Applause)

I want to talk to you a little bit about Democratic
organization -- just here in the family.

As you know, taking it by and large the Democratic
Party has always been the party of poverty, as compared to
the Republican Party. We have had to appeal not with dollars,

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This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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I want to talk to you a little bit about Democratic

organization -- just here in the family.

As you know, taking it by and large the Democratic

Party has always been the party of poverty, as compared to

the Republican Party. We have had to appeal not with dollars,

but with arguments. We have had to appeal, not with dollars, but with better material in the shape of candidates for every kind of office, in pretty nearly every state in the Union.

That is true this year. Partly because we are a liberal party, and a poor party, very often we haven't won, or we don't win as often as the other fellow. That goes with the liberalism perhaps in every country in the world.

The world marches forward very often toward more liberal solutions of new problems, for a shorter period of time, and then is very apt to stop and digest the new things that have come about.

We are about to enter into a new period of liberalism in the United States. -- And, we need it! (Applause, prolonged)

In order to do that, a party has to set up, of course, certain machinery to bring the message back to the people who do the voting. We have this year adopted for the Party a new policy, with which to run the campaign. Very often in the past -- in fact usually the rule has been to set up national headquarters somewhere, and then to open branch headquarters that would cover some particular region -- the region representing a large number of States. This year I conceived the idea that the same machinery which made my nomination possible

in the pre-convention campaign was so successful, which was so successful, rather, in that campaign, that it might be successful in the national campaign too. In other words, the theory of making each state responsible for the November election. That is Democratic. It goes back to the old theory of state home rule, on which we have all been brought up. And it seems to be working exceedingly well. Instead of running to Chicago, or San Francisco, or some other branch headquarters, the responsibility is vested in the State Committee in every one of the forty-eight states.

You will get more practical results there. And frankly, national headquarters can more directly place the responsibility in some one given spot. That was the reason for the new method of handling a national campaign which has been put in effect this year.

In addition to that, I want to speak about two other phases of organization work itself: The first relates to an organization known as the Business and Professional Men's League; also I think a "Women's League". In other words, an attempt to interest the people in this country who are engaged in business, or in the professions, in the Democratic Party -- a field of action which has not been properly covered by us in the past.

I bespeak for you in this State, as I would in every other State, your assistance and aid in that great work.

Hand in hand with that goes another piece of machinery, which I heard a great deal about as soon as I crossed the Mississippi River. In some of the older parts of the country the Democratic Party is rather highly organized, as you know. But the further West you get, the looser the organization has been.

I am speaking quite frankly to you, as fellow Democrats. Therefore, we have sought, and with great success, especially West of the Mississippi, to build up the Young Democratic Clubs -- Clubs which will appeal to the younger men and women who are voting for the first time, or the second time, or the third time in this particular national election -- an element which is essential, not only for this particular election, but which is absolutely essential for future elections, if we are to keep the Democratic Party alive, or a live force in the Nation.

These young Democratic Clubs are springing up everywhere. I was told yesterday in Kansas that in that State 160 of them have been actually organized, and that a very large proportion of the membership of these clubs -- the younger men and women -- are men and women who come from Republican

families who have decided this year, because of deep convictions, to cast in their lot with the Democracy of America.

(Prolonged applause)

It seems to me that that particular part of our work is well worth carrying through, not merely this Fall, but long after November 8th has passed -- to keep the interest of the younger generation in the Party of true liberalism. That is something which I look forward to as a Democrat by conviction. We cannot live as a party merely on the efforts, the work of "old fellows" like myself, who have just passed their fiftieth birthday. (Laughter, applause)

I am very confident of the results this Fall. I have been taking part in political campaigns for a good many years -- twenty-two years, to be exact. And I have got beyond the point when I could go out and merely claim everything in sight, without justification in my own mind for the claim. I am convinced from what I have seen -- not on this trip; not merely since the Chicago Convention; not on this trip, but during the last three or four years; I am convinced by a very definite attitude -- the evidence that comes from the great cross-sections of the American voting public, that they believe not merely that the time has come for a change -- a change in those who are responsible for our national government --

not merely that alone, because that is purely a negative vote -- but also the tremendous underlying currents of a greater confidence in the principles that lie behind the Democratic Party.

People are thinking these days more than ever before about the principles of government. We have gone through a period since 1921 or 1922, when men and women were giving less and less thought to the problems of government. We went through that mad scramble for riches, which tended inevitably to make people's thoughts and purposes drift away from the problems of government.

Four years ago, before I went to Albany, I started to campaign for the Governorship. I used to amuse the people of the State of New York by going up and down the State, starting my speeches off with a very simple sentence. I would say: "My friends, I am here, not to talk politics, but to talk government." Even then I sensed a very definite trend away from the mere thought of mammon -- a trend towards the deeper, basic principles of human relationships. That, of course, has been accentuated during the past three years -- since the happenings of such conditions of business, and lack of prosperity, and -- shall I put it politely this way -- it has given people more time to devote to government. (Applause)

The result is that we have had a deeper thinking. We have had an analyzing of the methods under which the Government of this country operates -- not only in Washington, but in the State Capitals, and in the localities where Government is being conducted. We have had a searching to find out whether it was safe any longer to simply "let George do it", or permit the "buck to be passed"; or safe to fail to go to the polls, or to accept the blind promises of whoever might be running for office. People in these last three years have been going back to the fundamentals.

To me that means Democratic victory inevitably. When people go back to the fundamentals, they will come to the conclusion that you and I have come to; not just because we were born Democrats, perhaps, or because our fathers, or grandfathers were Democrats, but because we, of our own volition, after thinking the thing over, have come to the conclusion that if our representative form of American Government is going to live, it must be based on the exercise of an intelligent vote by the electorate.

The voters today are asking questions. The electorate today is dissatisfied, not with the mere happenings, or doings of individuals; they are going deeper than that; they are asking if the Republican leadership is giving us the kind

of Government we want; if the theories of that leadership are making things in this country safe for a continuance of our type of government twenty years or forty years or sixty years from now. Nearly everybody believes that that representative form of Government is responsible for the fact that we have in this Nation today the oldest continuous form of government in the world; the people who are satisfied that representative government has brought that about are also saying that a continuation of the principles of representative government along the lines of the "fathers", the fundamental lines, is the only thing that can keep it going for another 150 years.

I believe that we have a marvelous opportunity this year, when there is, quite frankly, a natural drift to the Democratic Party, to go out to the voters of this country and teach them some of the fundamentals.

We can teach them that representative government, according to the principles of the much abused and much maligned Thomas Jefferson -- that those principles are essential for the continuation of our type of government; that we will otherwise come to some other form of government; that the form of government laid down by Thomas Jefferson means, of necessity, a choice by the average of the citizens -- an intelligent

choice, and the carrying on of administration and legislation for the benefit of the average of the electorate. (Prolonged applause)

We, in the State of New York, as you know, have remained in power in our State government for twelve out of the last fourteen years.

It has been due to the fact that under the leadership of Alfred E. Smith, in the first instance, (prolonged applause) we have presented to the people of our State a program for government that was based on the well being of the average citizen -- social welfare in all of its forms has played an important part. It is true that it has cost money, as it has in almost every other State in the Union, for the proper solution of the problems of social welfare. But it is money which today we recognize in our State to have been well spent -- money which, because it was spent in days of prosperity, will enable us today, in these days when we have to be more careful of our expenditures, to make savings without great detriment to the social welfare of our citizens.

I am convinced that great things can be done by our Party when we come into control, not only in the legislative branch but in the Executive branch of the Government in Washington next fourth of March. (Applause) We shall have an

opportunity at that time to revise the actual operation of the Executive branch of the Government along sounder lines, less extravagant lines, lines which will perform a greater good for a greater number than we see today in the operation of the present administration.

The education of the electorate takes a long time. It can't be done even in one campaign. But at least in this campaign we have a populace throughout the country who are in a responsive mood -- who want to learn -- a populace who will listen to the arguments that we present to them -- a populace who will understand, as you and I do, that the Democratic Party is founded on liberalism. If we once get them in this campaign, we are going to hold them, not for one year, or four years, but for a generation to come. (Applause)

As you know, there are a good many of you people with whom I have been campaigning, or with whom I have been personal friends, for a great many years. I am glad that Colorado is to be so splendidly represented in Washington during the next few years. I am confident that you will send down there a larger delegation of Congressmen, and I am happy, too, that the splendid Democrat who, as I said this afternoon, is known all over the United States -- Governor Adams -- is to be succeeded by this active young Democrat, Johnson. (Applause)

And so let me ask you in this family talk to keep up the good work for eight weeks to come -- just short of eight weeks. That is the period, of course, of the greatest activity. The seeds have been sown -- go through and reap the crop and, believe me, the price that we will get for that crop will be far more than the current yield on domestic commodities. (Continued applause)

BROWN PALACE -- HOTEL,

DENVER, - COLORADO

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th.

....(We arrived at Denver, Colorado, early in the afternoon on the 15th; toured the City, and returned to the Brown Palace Hotel.

.....(The Governor made a few extemporaneous remarks from one of the interior balconies of the Hotel. (See the succeeding pages).

.....(That night he made a speech before several hundred people in the main dining room of the Brown Palace Hotel.

.....(The Chairman of the State Democratic Committee was Master of Ceremonies, introducing those prominent in State affairs, each of whom took a bow.

.....(He then introduced the Governor, who made the following extemporaneous remarks.

BROWN PALACE HOTEL ADDRESS

BY:

GOVERNOR FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT,

Mr. Chairman, Governor Adams, Ambassadors (referring to the Chairman's comment that there was material among those present for Ambassadors, Postmasters and even Cabinet Members): (laughter) Members of the Cabinet,

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Marshals, and, may I perhaps say, Postmasters: This is a nice family party, and I wish the press were not here. (laughter) This is not my first visit, either to Denver or Colorado. I have been here many, many times before. I am always glad to be back here because your climate, I think, is reputed only second to the spirit of the people of this city. You represent, in the essence, the true liberalism that this country stands for. You have shown it in the past, - in the great crisis in the year 1916, to which the Chairman has referred. I believe you are going to show it again this year beyond peradventure. (applause).

DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION

I want to talk to you a little bit about the Democratic organization -- just here in the family. As you know, taking it by and large, the Democratic Party has always been the party of poverty, compared to the Republican Party. We have had to appeal, not with billions, but with arguments. We have had to deal, not with dollars but in better material in the shape of candidates for every kind of office and in pretty nearly every state in the Union. That is true this year. Particularly because we are a liberal party and a poor party, we do not

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win as often as the other fellow does, but that comes with liberalism perhaps in every country in the world. The world marches forward, very often towards more liberal solutions of new problems, for short period of time, and then is very apt to stop and adjust the new things that have come about. We are about to enter into a new period of liberalism in the United States; and we need it. (ap-
plause)

STATE COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to do that, a party has to set up certain machinery to bring the message back to the people who do the voting. We have this year adopted for the party a new policy with which to run the campaign. Very often in the past - in fact, it has been the usual rule, - we have set up national headquarters somewhere, and then opened branch headquarters that would cover some particular region, the region representing a number of states. This year I conceived the idea that the same machinery that made my nomination possible in the pre-convention campaign was so successful in that campaign that it might be successfully used in the national campaign as well. In other words, it was decided to use the plan of making each state responsible for the November

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ELECTION.

That is democratic. It goes back to the old theory of state home rule, which we have often brought up, and it seems to be working exceedingly well. Instead of running to Chicago, or San Francisco, or some other branch headquarters, the responsibility is vested in the State Committee in every one of the forty-eight states. You will get more practical results there and, frankly, the national headquarters can more directly place the responsibility in some one given spot. That was the reason for the new method of handling the national campaign, which has been put into effect this year.

Now, in addition to that, I want to speak to you about two other phases of organization work itself.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL MEN'S & WOMEN'S LEAGUE

The first relates to an organization known as the Business and Professional Men's and Women's League. In other words, it is an attempt to interest the people of this country who are engaged in business or in a profession in the Democratic party. It is a field of action which has not been properly covered by us in the past. I want to ask your aid in this great work as I

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have in every other state.

YOUNG DEMOCRATIC CLUBS

Then there is another piece of machinery of which I have heard a great deal since I crossed the Mississippi River. In some of the older parts of the country the Democratic party is rather highly organized as you know, but the further West we go, the looser the organization has become. I am speaking quite frankly to you as fellow Democrats. Therefore, we have sought, and with very great success, especially west of the Mississippi River, to build up the Young Democratic Clubs -- clubs which will appeal to the younger men and women who are voting for the first time, the second time, or the third time, in this particular national election. It is an element which is essential not only for this particular election, but is absolutely essential for future elections if we are to keep the Democratic party a live force in the Nation. These Young Democratic Clubs are springing up everywhere. I was told yesterday in Kansas that in that state 160 of them had been actually organized, and that a very large proportion of the membership of those clubs -- the younger men and women-- are men and women who came from Republican families but

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have decided this year because of their convictions to cast in their lot with the democracy. (applause)

It seems to me that that particular part of our work is worthwhile carrying through not merely to be discontinued after November eighth--to keep the interest of the younger generation in the party of true liberalism. That is something I look forward to as a Democrat by conviction. We cannot live as a party merely on efforts, - and work -- old fellows like myself who have just passed their fiftieth birthday. (laughter)

I am very confident of the results this fall. I have been running for office, or taking part in campaigns for a great many years -- twenty-two years to be exact -- and I have got beyond the point where I can go out and merely claim everything in sight without justification in my own mind for the claim. I am convinced from what I have seen -- not on this trip, not merely since the Chicago Convention, but during the last three or four years -- I am convinced by the very definite attitude, the evidence that comes from the great cross-section of the American voting public, that they believe that the time has come for a change. It is not merely that they want a change in those who are responsible for

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our National Government because that is a purely negative vote, but there is a tremendous underlying current of a greater confidence in the principles that lie behind the Democratic party. People are thinking these days more than ever before about the principles of government. We have gone through a period since 1921 or 1922 when men and women were giving less and less thought to the problems of government. We went through that mad scramble for riches which tended inevitably to make people's thoughts, to make people's purposes drift away from the problems of government.

Four years ago when I went to Albany, and started in to campaign for the governorship, I used to impress a good many people in the State of New York by going up and down the state starting my speeches off with a very simple sentence. I would say, "My friends, I am here not to talk politics, but to talk government," and even then I sensed a very definite trend toward the deeper basic beliefs of human relationship. That, of course, has been accentuated through the past three years, since the conditions of business and prosperity have -- shall I put it bluntly--given people more time to devote to government. And the result is that we have had a deeper

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study; we have had an analyzing of the methods under which the government of this country--not only in Washington, but in state capitals, and in localities--has been conducted. It is a searching to find out whether it is safe any longer to "Let George do it" -- to pass the buck -- to fail to go to the polls--to accept the blind promises of whoever might be running for office. People have been going back in these last three years to the fundamentals; and to me that means a Democratic victory inevitably.

When people go back to fundamentals they will come to the conclusion that you and I have come to, not just because we are born Democrats--perhaps because our fathers and grandfathers were Democrats--but because we, of our own belief, after thinking the thing over, have come to the conclusion that if our representative form of American government is going to live, it must be based on exercises and an intelligent vote by the electorate. That vote today is asking questions. That electorate is dissatisfied, not with the mere appointments or doings of individuals. They are going deeper than that. They are asking if the Republican leadership is giving us the kind of government we want, if the theories of that leadership are making things in this country safe for the continuance

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of our type of government twenty years, or forty years, or sixty years from now. And everybody who believes that that representative form of government is responsible for the fact that we have in this nation today, the oldest continuous form of government in the world, the people are satisfied that that representative government has brought that about and also are saying that a continuation of the principles of representative government along the lines of the founders is the only thing that can keep it going another 150 years and I believe we have a marvelous opportunity this year.

JEFFERSONIAN PRINCIPLES

There is, quite frankly and naturally, a group from the Democratic party to go out to the voters of this country and teach them some of the fundamentals, teach them that the representative government according to the beliefs of the much praised, much maligned Thomas Jefferson are essential for the continuation of our type of government; that we will otherwise come to some other form of government; that the form of government laid down by Thomas Jefferson must by necessity and choice by the average of the citizens--an intelligent

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choice--and a carrying on of administration and legislation, must be for the benefit of the average of the electorate. (applause)

ALFRED E. SMITH

We in the State of New York, as you know, have remained in power in our State Government for twelve of the last fourteen years. It has been due to the fact that under the leadership of Alfred E. Smith in the first instance (applause), we have presented to the people in our State a program for government. It was based on the well-being of the average citizen. Social welfare in all of its forms has played an important part. It is true that it has cost money, as it has in almost every other state in the Union which has gone in for the proper solution of problems of social welfare; but it is money which today we recognize in our State to have been well spent, money which, because it was spent in days of prosperity, will enable us, in these days when we have to be more careful of our expenditures, to make savings without great detriment to the social welfare of our citizens.

I am convinced that great things can be done by our party when we come into control, not only in the legislative branch, but in the Executive branch of the

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Government in Washington next fourth of March. (applause)
We shall have an opportunity at that time to revise the actual operation of the Executive branch of the Government along sounder lines, less extravagant lines, lines which will perform a greater good for a greater number of people than we see today in the operation of the present administration.

The education of the electorate takes a long time. It can't be done even in one campaign. But at least in this campaign we have a populace throughout the country who are in a responsive mood - who want to learn - a populace who will listen to the arguments that we present to them -- a populace who will understand, as you and I do, that the Democratic Party is founded on liberalism. If we once get them in this campaign, we are going to hold them, not for one year, or four years, but for a generation to come. (applause)

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send down there a larger delegation of Congressmen, and I am happy, too, that the splendid democrat who, as I said this afternoon, is known all over the United States -- Governor Adams -- is to be succeeded by this active young Democrat, Johnson. (applause)

And so, let me ask you in this family talk to keep up the good work for eight weeks to come -- just short of eight weeks. That is the period, of course, of the greatest activity. The seeds have been sown -- go through and reap the crop and, believe me, the price that we will get for that crop will be far more than the current yield on domestic commodities. (continued applause)

* * * * *

.....(The Chairman then thanked the Governor, and said that he had had a very strenuous day, and asked that he be excused. The Governor then left at about 9:30 P.M.

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