
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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Las Vegas, NM - Extemporaneous remarks

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT
From the Back Platform of his Special Train
Las Vegas, New Mexico, September 27, 1932

GOVERNOR: Good morning! Glad to see you all. We have had a perfectly grand reception right through the State. I was glad to see Governor Seligman this morning, also both of the Senators. We have had a nice time, and it is mighty nice to see you all.

AUDIENCE: How do you like New Mexico, Governor?

GOVERNOR: Very much. I have been here before a good many times.

AUDIENCE: Tell us something about your travels.

GOVERNOR: (Laughing) First, let me introduce Mrs. Roosevelt, right here beside me, (applause) and this is my "little" son, Jimmie, who is only six foot three, (applause) and my daughter, Anna. (Applause)

AUDIENCE: Governor, how do things look, so far?

GOVERNOR: Very fine. It looks like every state west of the Mississippi.

AUDIENCE: Have you seen a Republican?

GOVERNOR: Not so you would know it. Of course, we have convinced a lot of Republicans who have decided to vote the Democratic ticket.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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 previously 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.

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF FROM THE BACK PLATFORM OF Las Vegas, New Mexico, September 22, 1935

GOVERNOR: Good morning! Glad to see you all.
I was glad to see Governor Seligman this morning, also both of the Senators. We have had a nice time, and it is mighty nice to see you all.

AUDIENCE: How do you like New Mexico, Governor?
GOVERNOR: Very much. I have been here before good many times.

AUDIENCE: Tell us something about your travels.
GOVERNOR: (Laughing) First, let me introduce Mrs. Roosevelt, right here beside me. (Applause) and this is my "little" son, Jamie, who is only six foot three. (Applause) and my daughter, Ann. (Applause)

AUDIENCE: Governor, how do things look, so far?
GOVERNOR: Very fine. It looks like every state west of the Mississippi.

AUDIENCE: Have you seen a Republican?
GOVERNOR: Not so you would know it. Of course, we have convalesced a lot of Republicans who have decided to vote the Democratic ticket.

AUDIENCE: What is your idea about New Mexico?

GOVERNOR: My idea is that it is a great state.

There is one thing you will want to know: I realize that the depression has hit every state in the Union. Some people back east think it has hit the east alone, but it has hit out here as well, and what we want to do is to bring back prosperity in a general way, instead of in one section. (Applause)

AUDIENCE: Tell us how Kansas is coming.

GOVERNOR: Well, Kansas looked mighty good two weeks ago. We had a mighty wonderful reception there. We are going to do something for the farmers.

You know, it is rather nice to get to a place in daylight. Sometimes in the middle of the night we have people come down to the train about three o'clock in the morning -- people come around the "stateroom" window and say, "Come on out, Governor; come on out." And they keep on yelling, and the other night a fellow in the crowd said, "If you don't come out we will vote for Hoover." (Laughter) I didn't believe it, so I went back to sleep. (Laughter) My boy Jimmie had a bad time one night out near Spokane. We went through about half-past two in the morning, and an old lady had driven in 200 miles to see me -- we had been delayed by a wreck --

and she came to the platform and Jimmie was there in his pajamas, and he told her that I was asleep and that he could not wake his Dad up, and she said, "All right. If you don't wake him up, I will go in and wake him up." (Laughter)

(At this point the Governor was handed a telegram.)

This is a telegram to Senator Norris to come on aboard the train. You know we find that most of the progressive Republicans are going to vote with us this year, (applause) because we don't believe that there is room in this country for two old-line conservative parties, and we are going to make the Democratic Party the Liberal Party. (Applause)

AUDIENCE: Governor, say just one word about the farmers.

GOVERNOR: Well, you know what has happened to the farmers as well as I do. I farm in up-State New York, and I also farm down in Warm Springs, Georgia, and we are all busted. (Laughter) What we really have to try to do is to restore the purchasing power of the farm dollar. The simple fact is that it takes two wagon-loads today to buy the same thing that it took one wagon-load of the farmer's produce to buy before the war. We want to change that. (Applause)