
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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Atlanta, GA - Press Conference

PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT
Atlanta, Georgia, October 24, 1932

GOVERNOR: Well, good people, you all know Mr. Kelley, don't you -- Bobby Jones' side-kick, press agent, father, mother, brother and sister -- all in one. Is that right? Well, I have got my breath again. It's all right! Did everyone go down to Warm Springs? I didn't see any of you.

Q I have a button. (Referring to buttons sold at Warm Springs for raising funds for the Georgia Warm Springs Foundation.)

GOVERNOR: Good! I hope it cost you a dollar. (Laughter)

Q It did.

GOVERNOR: Well, Ernest (referring to Ernest Lindley of the New York Herald-Tribune), how did the old Warm Springs gang stand it? Did you come through all right?

ERNEST LINDLEY: Yes; we left some of them behind.

Q Did you go swimming, Governor?

GOVERNOR: No. I went up to my cottage -- there were just five of us -- the Trustees -- to talk over the Foundation. And then we went up there at the request of Sam (referring to photographer representing the New York Evening Journal, etc.), to have our photographs taken with the "herd of cattle", and then we came back.

Q Which Trustees were they?

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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 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.

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etc.), to have our photograph taken with the "band of

cats", and then we came back.

Which Trustees were there?

GOVERNOR: Frank Root, Basil O'Connor, Arthur Carpenter, Dr. Hoke, and myself.

Q Who is Mr. Root?

GOVERNOR: Frank C. Root, of Connecticut. It took about an hour.

Q You have undoubtedly had your attention called to the copy-righted story in the Telegram?

GOVERNOR: I think the only thing I can say is off the record. You all know it is off the record. But any discussion of Cabinet before November 8th is premature, and any discussion of Cabinet after November 8th is also premature. Is that all right?

Q I don't see why that has to be off the record.

GOVERNOR: Oh, no! But on the record, just say nothing.

Q Then everybody will think it is so.

GOVERNOR: No; because, you see, what is going to happen is this: If I were to say anything about that -- put in a denial, or an affirmation -- some other syndicate would have a bright idea, and I would have to deny that.

Q No; but this is a cover-all. That will settle it for all time. This is a cover-all that saves you a lot of denying--

Q That is a good "quote", because it doesn't mean anything.

GOVERNOR: (Laughingly) Put it this way: that any discussion is highly premature.

Q Well, this story involves the possible creation of a new job. You can certainly say something about that, couldn't you? -- in view of your speeches in the past on economy.

GOVERNOR: No; I won't even say anything on that.

Q Do you care to make any comments -- (interrupted by) --

GOVERNOR: Entirely off the record, and just here between us boys and girls -- the whole thing was a very ingenious thing in somebody else's mind. It was news to me entirely.

BOB ALLEN: Well, Governor, isn't it a good idea? (Laughter)

(Off-the-record conversation about Clint Mosher,
Brooklyn Daily Eagle.)

Q Do you care to make any comment on the President's statement last night that in September you wrote a letter to L. S. of New York, saying that in this letter you preferred support to sponsor liquidating projects providing employment for -- (interrupted by) --

GOVERNOR: I don't care to comment. I don't want to say anything about it. As a matter of fact, that is not a correct quotation. It was part of a longer letter. You would have to read the whole thing together.

Q You mean that the President's quotation wasn't correct?

GOVERNOR: No; I mean that what you have got there wasn't correct. I haven't seen what the President said.

Q Wouldn't it be a good thing to give out that whole letter?

GOVERNOR: (Shaking his head and laughing) We have only got two weeks to go! There are more important things!

Q (Ernest Lindley) What are you going to talk about tomorrow, Governor?

GOVERNOR: I don't know, Ernest. I am going to get Ray Moley to come in tonight with a large amount of data -- masses of data -- to try to find out what I am going to talk about.

Q You don't mean to say it isn't all written?

GOVERNOR: (Smiling) I am going to make an honest effort to get it to you by four o'clock tomorrow afternoon. But, as I told you before, it is only a hope. It isn't a pledge.

Q Is there anything you want to say about your greeting today, and your feelings, after coming back down here? After all, a Democratic Presidential Candidate is rather a spectacle!

GOVERNOR: No; I don't think so. I have expressed what I have had to say already. I think that what you can say is that it is another breaking of precedent, as promised; and a very wonderful reception as we went down the line today.

Q What are you going to do after you get back to New York?

GOVERNOR: I am going up to Albany.

Q Aren't you going to New York City?

GOVERNOR: By the way, there was a long story in the Times.

Jim, I don't know where that came from. I am going to Headquarters on Wednesday to say "How-do-you-do" to everybody. I haven't been there yet. We get there at 8 A.M., and I am going down to Headquarters about 11, to say "Howdy-do" to everybody, and then go back to the house for luncheon, and then after lunch, about three, motor up to Hyde Park, and clean up whatever mail there is there, and have supper, and go on to Albany.

Q The same night?

GOVERNOR: Yes.

Q Aren't you going to have dinner?

GOVERNOR: I can't. I have to be in Albany, on the conference -- about an extra Session.

Q Is this an extra session of Congress, or the Legislature?

GOVERNOR: Just the Legislature.

Q You are going to Boston a bit later, aren't you?

GOVERNOR: That is still indefinite.

Q Are your plans definite after you get back to Albany Wednesday night?

GOVERNOR: I have four or five tentative plans from then until

the following Friday -- I mean the last Friday of all -- and then I go to the Academy of Music, in Brooklyn, and then Saturday, the Madison Square Garden Party.

Q Saturday -- before the election?

GOVERNOR: Yes.

Q Governor, how many more speeches will there be?

GOVERNOR: I don't know. After I get back, the speeches already scheduled are the Academy of Music and the Madison Square Garden speeches.

Q Do you contemplate making a speech in Jersey?

GOVERNOR: I probably won't do anything about that until I get back to Albany on Thursday morning -- I mean about making up a schedule.

Q Do you feel any doubt about the South, Governor?

GOVERNOR: (Smiling) Not at all.

Q Is there much doubt about the North?

GOVERNOR: (Laughing) Nor the West.

Q There was a report out at Marietta that even your trip to Georgia wasn't entirely necessary.

GOVERNOR: Well, you know -- and this is off the record -- that there were a lot of people who thought that my going out to the Coast wasn't necessary. I have been doing a lot of overruling.

Q Your "off the record" is too late.

(The Governor smiled.)

Q I heard a bet made in Atlanta today, or rather, the day before yesterday, that Mr. Hoover would not carry ten states.

GOVERNOR: What are the odds?

Q Even.

GOVERNOR: Are you getting some of that? (Laughing)

Q I know a better one than that: You can't pick five states that you will carry. Try to figure that one out. You can't pick five states -- that is, you have got to pick three out of the five.

GOVERNOR: The Literary Digest has never been wrong yet.

Q No, but they juggle it a lot.

Q Well, Governor, this campaign is practically over -- I mean, this swing is practically over. Do you want to give us a size-up of the two trips?

GOVERNOR: No; I will tell you why: Because, in the first place, tomorrow there will be a lot of people in here from all the five states that adjoin Georgia. The Florida people will be here. I think the Governor is coming up, and the Governor of Alabama is coming over; and Governor Norton is coming down from Tennessee, and Governor Blackwood is coming down from South Carolina. (Interrupted by) --

Q You don't think those fellows are going to surprise you at all, do you?

GOVERNOR: (Laughing) No! And then, on Tuesday morning, you see, I am going to Raleigh, and I am going to talk to the Governor.

Q How long do you plan to talk?

GOVERNOR: Fifteen minutes -- oh, no -- not that long -- that is all we plan to stay there. Then Governor Pollock is coming aboard, and also Governor Byrd. I don't think I need to do any resume -- (interrupted by) --

Q That would be a good story when we get back to Albany.

GOVERNOR: Yes.

Q This summarizing is kind of belated. I think everybody has done that for Saturday morning. (Interrupted by) --

GOVERNOR: I will tell you what you can print if you want to help dear old Warm Springs Foundation -- that is, to run somewhere in your story that the principal object of the Trustees' meeting was to take up the question that has come up, of the large increase among the people who want to come to Warm Springs that cannot afford to pay the actual cost -- the cost of the treatment.

Q What is the cost?

GOVERNOR: Forty-two dollars is the actual cost per week --

that includes board and lodging, and immediate treatment, and swimming, and going up and down, etc. -- everything except cigarettes and candy, etc. That is the actual cost. Of course, that is a great deal lower than most hospitals, but that is, with this depression, far beyond the means of a great many people -- in fact, a great number of increasing people. What we were talking about was increasing the patients' aid fund, which this year will run to about \$20,000, of aid given to different patients who cannot afford to pay the cost. And, really, that is inadequate. What we discussed was the possibility of increasing that patients' aid fund to \$50,000 a year.

Q How is that raised?

GOVERNOR: By going to all our friends and asking them to chip in.

Q Are you going to shoot for \$50,000?

GOVERNOR: Yes; we are going to shoot for \$50,000. What we are hoping is to start a campaign after election. We hope to raise more funds for this special patients' aid fund.

Q I understood you were going to come back to Warm Springs after election.

GOVERNOR: We have every year what we call the Trustees' Dinner Thanksgiving night, and I have been there every year now for the past eight years; so I am going down there for that. I will be down there, win or lose.

Q Win or lose?

GOVERNOR: Win or lose, yes.

Q How long will you be down there?

GOVERNOR: I don't know. It all depends -- it all depends --
two or three days, maybe a week.

Q Thank you very much!

GOVERNOR: Good-bye! It is good to see you!