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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1932 November 5

New York City, NY – Madison Square Garden Rally

ADDRESS OF GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT ON DEMOCRATIC PROBLEM

of GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT ON DEMOCRATIC PROBLEM

at Madison Square Garden
Saturday evening, November 5, 1932

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT: Tonight we close the campaign. Our additional case has been stated and made. In every home, to every individual, in every part of our wide land, full opportunity has been given to hear that case, and to render honest judgment on Tuesday next.

From the time that my airplane touched ground at Chicago, up to the present, I have consistently set forth the doctrine of the present day democracy. It is the program of a party dedicated to the conviction that every one of our people is entitled to the opportunity to earn a living, and to develop himself to the fullest measure consistent with the rights of his fellowmen.

You are familiar with that program. You are aware that it has found favor in the sight of the American electorate. The movement comes not from the leaders of any group, of any faction, or even of any party. It is the spontaneous expression of the aspirations of millions of individual men and women. These hopes, these ambitions, have struggled for realization in different ways, on the farms, in the cities, in the factories, among business men and in the homes. These have found at length a common meeting ground in the Democratic program.

Tonight we set the seal upon that program. After Tuesday, we go forward to the great task of its accomplishment and, we trust, to its fulfillment.

There can be only one great principle to guide our course in the coming years. We have learned the lesson that extravagant advantage for the few, ultimately depresses the many. To our cost we

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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
was prepared reading opy text. Words in
prepared reading opy text. Words in
parentheses are words that were omitted
when the speech was delivered, though
they appear in the previously prepared
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have seen how, as the foundations of the false structure are undermined, all come down together. We must put behind us the idea that an uncontrolled, unbalanced economy, creating paper profits for a relatively small group, means or ever can mean prosperity.

Exactly four years ago, on a similar occasion, the Democratic Party, in closing its campaign, stigmatized the condition, then called "Prosperity," in truly prophetic language with the label "False Prosperity." You know now, and America knows the justice of that label. The reasoning then was as simple as is the analysis now. While the families upon our farms are in want, there can be no safety for the families of the workers in our cities.

There is an interdependence in economics, just as there is a brotherhood in humanity. Loss to any, is loss to all.

Today we struggle against the inevitable result of wandering after false gods. Confident in the sinew and fibre of American life, we know that our losses are <u>not</u> beyond repair. We know that we can apply to the great structure we have built, our power of organization, our fertility of mind and the intelligence and the foresight needed to make that structure more serviceable. We refuse to be oppressed by baseless fears that our firesides are to become cold or that our civilization will disappear. We know that by the united efforts of us all, our fear can be dissipated, our firesides protected, our economic fabric reconstituted and our individual lives brought to more perfect fulfillment.

In that united effort, I make bold to include not only you, the members of my own party; not only the great independent masses who seek relief from an administration which has served them ill; not only the liberal-minded elements in all parts of the country who have joined in creating the program we are proud to offer; but also the men and women in the ranks of the Republican Party, whose interests must also be ours.

The next administration must represent not a fraction of the United States, but all of the United States. No resource of mind or heart or organization can be excluded in the fight against what is, after all, our real enemy. Our real enemies are hunger, want, insecurity, poverty and fear. Against these there is no glory in a victory only partisan.

The genius of America is stronger than any candidate or any party. This campaign, hard as it has been, has not shattered my sense of humor or my sense of proportion, — I still know that the fate of America cannot depend on any one man. The greatness of America is grounded in principles and not on any single personality. I, for one, shall remember that even as President. Unless by victory, we can accomplish a greater unity toward liberal effort, we shall have done little indeed.

Let us turn from consideration of leadership and think of the loyal voters who constitute the great army that has brought us to the gate of victory. Let us give thought to the men and women in the ranks. There are many millions of them. What have they in mind? Why have they enlisted?

There is among you the man who is not bound by party lines. You vote according to your common sense and your calm judgment after hearing each party set forth its program. To you I say that the strength of this independent thought is the great contribution of

the American political system. You, and millions like you, have appraised the Democratic program, and have rallied to its standard.

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There is among you the woman — you who knows that women's traditional interests — welfare, children and the home — rest on the broader basis of an economic system which assures her or her husband of a job. The old expression that "a woman's place is in the home" has a wider meaning today. Your interests may be in your home, but you now know that they are no longer disassociated from the interests of the State. Into your home, for instance, comes electricity. What you pay for it is largely determined by the attitude of your government. Your family budget must provide for a tax bill as well as for your baby's clothes. And you know now that your baby's clothes are apt to depend upon the amount of taxes your family pays. You who have had the clarity of vision to trace many of your private problems back to their roots in government policy, best appreciate the program we lay before you.

There is among you the man in business or in trade who has heard the cry that change was a fearful thing but who, unafreid, has decided to change. You know now that when things are going wrong, only partisan prejudice and stupidity can countenance a continuance. You know now that the logical remedy for mistaken policy is a change in policy. You have decided to make this change. You have decided to put the conduct of affairs into other hands.

All of you, consciously or not, have helped shape the policies of the Democratic Party in this, its war on human suffering. Your own experiences and your own fears and your own problems — all have written themselves into our program. There is something of you in all of us.

There is among you the man who has been brought up in the good American tradition to work hard and to save for a rainy day. You have worked hard. You have stinted yourself to save. You now find your savings gone. You now find your job gone. Your resentment comes not from discontent alone but from a feeling of deep injustice. You have joined us not because of discontent, but because in our program you find the hope that this cannot come again. We have not enticed you with offers of magic, nor lured you with vain promises. We have given you the hope of a better ordered system of national economy. We have pledged you our word and our will to do.

There is among you the man who has been brought up to believe that a livelihood could always be wrung from the soil by willing labor. You have broken your back in your efforts to make the soil produce. And when you have gathered your harvest you have found that harvest worthless. In bewilderment, you have learned that when you had something to buy the cost was great; but when you had something to sell, the price was low — or the price was nil. For years you have endured this until at length the mounting tide of debt has threatened your very home. You have entered our ranks. No promised cure-all led you there. You came because by careful analysis you were convinced where your difficulty lay.

You knew that your difficulties were beyond your individual control to prevent or cure. Our plan offered to you a mobilization of the resources of government to bring to you the fruits which your labor deserved.

There is among you the man who has been able to save something from this wreck. You have joined our ranks because you, too, have come to realize the falsity of the 1928 economics and to look for your safety in a new and stronger philosophy of constitutional government.

All of you, in all places, in all walks of life, have joined in proving that only by a true conception of the interdependence of the American economic system, can there be hope of safety and security for all.

Today there appears once more the truth taught two thousand years ago — that "no man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself; but living or dying, we are the Lord's and each others!."

It may be said, when the history of the past few months comes to be written, that this was a bitter campaign. I prefer to remember it only as a hard-fought campaign. There can be no bitterness where the sole thought is the welfare of America.

It is with this spirit and in this spirit that I close the campaign. I believe that the best interests of the country require a change in administration. Every sign points to that change. But I would have you realize that the strength of the country is the strength of union. Let us restore that strength.

It was said at the close of the World War that "America had come of age." After that War, we had a unique opportunity to build permanently for America. That opportunity we did not grasp.

But even in our mistakes we have learned how strength can best be used to the common benefit of us all. The millions of unchronicled heroes who by self-denial and patience have carried this nation through this economic crisis must give us new hope. We can and will bring to the problem of the individual the maturity of the united effort of a nation come of age. America, mature in its power, united in its purpose, high in its faith, can come and will come, to better days.

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From the Papers of Samuel I. Rosenman

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FINAL DEMOCRATIC RALLY

held at

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE TAMMANY HALL SPEAKERS' BUREAU,

John A. Mullen, Chairman, Saturday night, November 5th, 1932, 8:00 P.M.

Addresses broadcast
by WABC
WOR
Nat'l Hookup of
Golumbia Broadcasting
WEAF

HON. ROYAL S. COPELAND, Presiding.

SPEAKERS: HON. ROYAL S. COPELAND

HON. JOSEPH T. HIGGINS

HON. M. WILLIAM BRAY

HON. JOHN J. BENNETT, JR.

HON. MORRIS S. TREMAINE

HON. IRWIN STEINGUT

HON. JOHN P. O'BRIEN

HON. ROBERT F. WAGNER

HON. HERBERT H. LEHMAN HON. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

HON. ALFRED E. SMITH.

(At the conclusion of Lieutenant Governor Lehman's address, Governor Rooseveht came on the platform and was greeted with prolonged applause, waving of flags, and dropping of pieces of paper from the balconies. Then Hon. Alfred E. Smith came on the platform and the demonstration was repeated, The three candidates had repeated pictures taken of them at the rostrum.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I present to you the next President of the United States, Governor Franklin E. Roosevelt.

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO START HIS SPEECH BUT THE DEMONSTRATION STILL CONTINUED. He then pointed to the microphone as an indicate of the radio time.

HON. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT: Senator Copeland and my friends of New York and of America: Tonight we close the campaign. Our case has been stated, and our case has been made. In every home, to every individual, in every part of our wide land, full opportunity has been given to hear that case and to render honest judgment on Tuesday next. (Applause).

From the time that my airplane touched ground at Chicago, up to the present day, I have consistently set forth the doctrine of the present@day democracy of the United States.(Applause).It is the program of a party dedicated to the conviction that every one of our people is entitled to the opportunity to earn a living, (applause), and to develop himself to the fullest measure consistent with the rights of his fellow men.

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Tonight we get the seal upon that program. After Tuesday, we go forward to the great task of its accomplishment, and, I trust, to its fulfilment. (Applause).

There can be only one great principle to guide our course in the coming year. We have learned the lesson that extravagant advantage for the few, ultimately depresses the many. (Applause). To our cost, we have seen how, as the foundations of the false structure are undermined, all come down together. So we must put behind us the idea that an uncontrolled, unbalanced economy, creating paper profits for a relatively small group, means or ever can mean true prosperity.

(End of take.)

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Today you and I struggle against the inevitable result of wandering after false gods. Confident in the sinew and fibre of American life, we know nevertheless that are losses are not beyond repair. We know that we can apply to the great structure that we have built, our power of organization, our fertility of mind and the intelligence and the foresight needed to make that structure more serviceable. We refuse to be oppressed by baseless fears, fears that our firesides are to become cold, that our civilization will disappear. We know that by the united effort of all, our fear can be dissipated, our firesides can be protected, our economic fabric can be reconstituted and our

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It is with this spirit, my friends, and in this spirit, that I close the campaign of 1932. I believe that the best interests of the Nation require a change in administration. (Applaus.). Every sign points to that, (applause) --yes, every sign points to that change. But I would have you realize that the strength of the country is the strength of union. Let us restore that strength.

It was said at the close of the World War that "America had come of age". After that war, we Americans had a unique opportunity to build permanently for our country. That opportunity we did not grasp.

But even in our mistakes we have learned how strength can best be used to the common benefit of all. The millions of unchronicled heroes in every part of the land, who by selfpdenial and patience have carried this nation through this economic orisis, give us new hope. We can, we will, bring to the problem of the individual, the maturity of the united effort of a nation that has come of age. America, mature in its power, united in its purpose, high in its faith, American can come, America will come, to better days. (ERODONGED APPLAUSE).

END OF ROOSEVELT'S SPEECH.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not surprised xx this great and enthusiastic audience likes to give expression to its thoughts and we have --

(Cries from the gallery "We want Al.Smith".)

THE CHAIRMAN(Continuing) -- There is a common holding that the people never make mistakes. I doubt the truth of this saying. It is true, wheneve are fully informed, that we know that the