# Franklin D. Roosevelt - "The Great Communicator" The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945 

Series 2: " You have nothing to fear but fear itself:" FDR and the New Deal

File No. 660

1933 November 18

Savannah, GA - Georgia Bicentennial

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Because my other state gave me the privilege of serving as the Honorary Chairman of the Celebration of this Bicentennial year of the founding of Georgia I have come to Savannah in an official capacity.

But I come here also because of all that Georgia means to me personally, through my long association with this State and also through the kinship which my wife and my children bear to the early settlers who participaied with Oglethorpe in the founding of civilization on this portion of the Atlantic Seaboard.

Apart from the ties of Colonial ancestry, I have additional kinship with the founders of the thirteen American colonies. It has been remarked of late by certain modern Tories that those who are today in charge of your National Government are guilty of great experimentation. If I read my history right, the same suggestion was used when Englishmen, protesting in vain against intolerable conditions at home, founded new colonies in the American wilderness, and when Washingtons and Adamses and Bullochs conducted another great experiment in 1776.

Three quarters of a year have passed since I left Georgia; during that time you have conducted a dignified and history teaching statewide celebration. During that same time the lives of the people of this commonwealth, like the lives of the inhabitants of the other states, have uniergone a great change.

I am hapiy in the thought that it has been a change for the better; that I come back to see smiles replacing gloom, to see hope replacing despair, to see faith restored to its rightful place.

While we are celebrating the planting of the Colony of Georgia, wer, we remember that if the early settlers had been
 coast, there would have been no Georgia today. It was the spirit of moving forward that led to the exploration of the great domain of fiedmont and mountains that drove the western border of the Colony to the very banks of the Mississippi River itself. In all those years of the pioneer, there were the doubting Thomases, there was the persistent opposition of those who feared change, of those who played the part of the mule who had to be goaded to get him out of the stable.

And that reminds me of a letter I received the other day from a man who congratulated me on my success up to the present time at least of making mules go along in the harness of the present day. At the end of the letter he gave me this warning: He said, "Oh, how persistent these modern mules can be! Watch them! Remember the man who said that at a mulets funeral he would bo on the safe side and stand at the head of the grave."

In coming for a two weeks' visit among you g my neighbors, I shall have opportunity to improve myself by reading of the makers of our history with the thought before me that although problems and terms change, the principles and objectives of American self-government remain the same. I have heard so much of so-called economics in recent weeks that it was refreshing the other day to have my friend, the Governor of New Hampshire, call my attention to a paragraph written a century ago by that father of economists, John Stuart Mill. He said,
"History shows that great economic and social forces flow like a tide over communities only half conscious of that which is befalling them. Wise statesmen foresee what time is thus bringing, and try to shape institutions and mold men's thoughts and purposes in accordance with the change that is silently coming on.
"The unwise are those who bring nothing constructive to the process, and who greatly imperil the future of mankind, by leaving great questions to be fought out between ignorant change on one hand, and ignorant opposition to change, on the other."

The saving grace of America lies in the fact that the overwhelming majority of Americans are possessed of two great qualities -- a sense of humor and a sense of proportion. With the one they smile at those who would divide up all the in the Nation on a per capita basis every Saturday night and at those who lament that they would rather adpounds and franes than dollars. With our sense of proportion we understand and accept the fact that
in one year we cannot cure the chronic illness that beset us for a dozen years, nor restore the social and economic order with equal and simultaneous success in every part of the Nation and in every walk of life.

It is thionate pioneering spirit and understanding perspective of the people of the United States which already is making itself felt among other nations of the world. The simple translation of the peaceful and neighborly purposes of the United States has already given to our sister American republics a greater faith in our professions of friendship than they have held since the time, over a century ago, when James Monroe encouraged them in their struggles for freedom. So, too, I have had an example of the effect of honest statement and simple explanation of the fundamental
American policy during the past week in Washington. For sixteen long years a nation, larger even than ours in population and extent of territory, has been unable to speak officially with the United States or to maintain normal relations. I believe sincerely that the most impelling motive that has

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lain behind the conversations which were successfully concluded yesterday between Russia and the United States was the desire of both countries for peace and for the strengthening of the peaceful purpose of the civilized world.

It will interest you to know that in the year 1809 the President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, wrote as follows to his Russian friend, Mons. Dashkoff: "Russiap and the United States being in character and practice essentially pacific, a common interest in the rights of peaceable nations gives us a common cause in their maintenance."

In this spirit of Thomas Jefferson, Mr. Litvinoff and I believe that through the resumption of normal relations the prospects of peace over all the world are greatly strengthened.

Furthermore, I am confident that in a State like Georgia, which had its roots in religious teachings and was the first state in which a Sunday School was established, there must be satisfaction to know that from now on any American sojourning among the great Russian people will be free to worship God in his own way.

It is perhaps especially significant that I should speak of the resumption of relations with Russia in the City from which a century ago the first transAtlantic steamship set out on its voyage to the old world.

I am glad to be back on Georgia soil. I am hurrying to Warm Springs with special interest, for I shall see a splendid new building, given to the cause of helping crippled children by the citizens of the State of Georgia. And I am hurrying back to my cottage there for the almost equally important objective of seeing to it that a prize Georgia turkey is put into the primest possible condition for the Thanksgiving Day feast.

On this Thanksgiving, I like to think that many more fathers and mothers and children will partake of turkey than for many years past. What a splendid thing it would be if in every community throughout the land, in celebration of this Thanksgiving -- and here in Georgia in celebration of the Bicentennial of the founding of the Colony -- every community would set as its Thanksgiving Day objective the providing of a Thanksgiving dinner for those who have not yet
been blessed by the returning prosperity sufficiently to provide their own.

Let me read to you in closing a message delivered a generation ago by a great son of a great Georgia mother, Theodore Roosevelt:
" "Materially we must strive to secure a
broader economic opportunity for all men so
that each shall have a better chance to show
the stuff of which he is made. Spiritually
and ethically we must strive to bring about
clean living and right thinking. We
appreciate that the things of the body are
important; but we appreciate also that the
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life is and ever must be the high individual
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## ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

November 18, 1933

## Mayor Campbell, Governor Talmadge, My Friends of Georgia and South Carolina:

I am glad to come back again to my own State, (applause) and because Georgia has given me the privilege of serving as the Honorary Chairman of the Celebration of this Bicentennial year of the founding of Georgia, I have come to Savannah in an official capacity.

But I come here also because of all that Georgia means to me personally, through my long association with this State and also through the kinship which my wife and my children bear to the early settlers who participated with Oglethorpe in the founding of civilization on this portion of the Atlantic Seaboard. (Applause)

I feel that apart from the ties of Colonial ancestry, I have additional kinship with the founders of the thirteen American colonies. It has been remarked of late by certain modern Tories that those who are today in charge of your National Government are guilty of great experimentation. And they are right. (Applause) If I read my history correctly, the same suggestion was used when Englishmen, two centuries ago, protesting in vain against intolerable conditions at home, founded new

Trarklin D. Roosevelt Library
Phis is a transcript made by the White House atenographor from his shor thand notes taken ct "? ne the speech was made. Underlinins indicates words extemporancously adied to the previously prepared reading cony tezt. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.
colonies in the American wilderness, as an experiment. And the same suggestion was used during the period in 1776 when the Washingtons, the Adamses, the Bullocks and other people of that time conducted another experiment.

Three quarters of a year have gone by since I left Georgia; during that time you have conducted a dignified and history-teaching State-wide celebration. During that time, the lives of the people of this Commonwealth, like the lives of the inhabitants of all the other States, have undergone a great change.

I am happy in the thought that it has been a change for the better; that $I$ have come back to see smiles replacing gloom, (applause) to see hope replacing despair, and to see faith restored to its rightful place. You good people have given me evidence of that this morning.

While we are celebrating the planting of the Colony of Georgia, we remember that if the early settlers had been content to remain on the coast, there would have been no Georgia today. It was the spirit of moving forward that led to the exploration of the great domain of Piedmont and the mountains that drove the western border of this Colony to the very banks of the Mississippi River itself. Yet, all through those great years of the pioneer, we must remember that there were the doubting Thomases, there was the persistent opposition of those who feared change, of those who wanted to let things alone.
(played the part of the muie who had to be goaded to get him out of the stable).

In coming for a two weeks' visit among you, my neighbors, I shall have opportunity to improve myself and my own perspective by reading of the makers of our history with the thought before me that although problems and terms of problems change, the princlples and objectives of American self-government remain the same. I have heard so much of (so-called) economics during the past few months (in recent weeks) that it was refreshing the other day to have my friend, the Governor of New Hampshire, call my attention to a paragraph written by one of the Dadides of all economists about a century ago (by that father of economists,) John Stuart Mill. He said this:
"History shows that great economic and social forces flow like a tide over communities only half conscious of that which is befalling them. Wise statesmen foresee what time is thus bringing and try to shape institutions and mold men's thoughts and purposes in accordance with the change that is silently coming on.
"The unwise are those who bring nothing constructive to the process, and who greatly imperil the future of mankind, by leaving great questions to be fought out between ignorant change on one hand, and ignorant opposition to change, on the other."
(Applause)
I sometimes think that the saving grace of America lies in the fact that the overwhelming majority of Americans are possessed of two great qualities -- a sense of humor and
a sense of proportion. With the sense of humor they smile good naturedly at those who would divide up all the money In the Nation on a per capita basis every Saturday night and smile equally at those who lament that they would rather possess pounds and francs than dollars. (Applause) And with that other quality, our sense of proportion, we understand and accept the fact that in the short space of one year we cannot cure a chronic illness that beset us for twelve years, nor restore the social and economic order with equal and simultaneous success in every part of the Nation and in every walk of life. But my friends, we are on our way. (Applause)

It is the pioneering spirit and understanding perspective of the people of the United States which already is making itself felt not only here but among other nations of the world. The simple translation of the peaceful and neighborly purposes of the United States has already given to our sister American republics a greater faith in professions of friendship than they have held since the time, a century ago, when James Monroe encouraged South America and Central America in their struggles for freedom. So, too, my friends, I have had a good example of the effect of honest statement and simple explanation of the fundamental American policy during the past week in Washington. For sixteen long years a nation, larger even than ours in population and extent of territory, has been unable to speak officially with the United States or to maintain normal
relations. I believe sincerely that the most impelling motive that has lain behind the conversations which were successfully concluded yesterday between Russia and the United States was the desire of both countries for peace and for the strengthening of the peaceful purpose of the civilized world. (Applause)

I think it will interest you to know that in the year 1809 the President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, wrote as follows to his Russian friend, Monsieur Dashkoff:
nRussia and the United States being in character and practice essentially pacific, a common interest in the rights of peaceable nations gives us a common cause in their maintenance."

And so in this spirit of Thomas Jefferson, Mr. Litvinoff and I have believed that through the resumption of normal relations the prospects of peace over all the world are greatly strengthened.

Furthermore, my friends, I am confident that in a State like Georgia, which had its roots in religious teachings and religious liberty, a state in which the first Sunday School was established, there must be satisfaction to know that from now on any American sojourning among the great Russian people will be free to worship God in his own way. (Applause)

It is perhaps equally especially significant that I should speak of the resumption of relations with Russia in the City from which over a century ago the first trans-Atlantic steamship set out on its voyage to the old world. (Applause)

I am glad to be back on Georgia soil. I am hurrying to Warm Springs with special interest, for I shall find there a splendid new building, given to the cause of helping crippled children by the citizens of the State of Georgia. (Applause) And I am hurrying back there to my cottage for the almost equally important objective of seeing to it that a prize Georgia turkey (laughter) is put into the primest possible condition for the Thanksgiving Day feast. (Applause)

On this Thanksgiving, I like to think that many more fathers and mothers and children will partake of turkey than they have in recent years. What a splendid thing it would be if in every community, in every State in the land, in celebration of this Thanksgiving -- and here in Georgia in celebration of the Bicentennial of the founding of the Colony -- every community would set as its Thanksgiving Day objective the providing of a Thanksgiving dinner for those who have not yet been blessed by the returning prosperity sufficiently to provide their own. (Applause)

Let me, in closing, read to you a very short passage from a message delivered a generation ago by a great son of a great Georgia mother, Theodore Roosevelt: (Applause) He said:
"Materially we must strive to secure a broader economic opportunity for all men so that each shall have a better chance to show the stuff of which he is made. Spiritually and ethically we must strive to bring about clean living and right thinking. We appreciate that the things of the body are important; but we appreciate also that the things of the soul are
immeasurably more important. The foundation stone of national life is and ever must be the high individual character of the individual citizen."

My friends, I count on that individual citizen, and on his character and on her character, to continue with me our American march of progress. (Applause, prolonged)

Nov. 18, 1933.

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But I come here alse because of all that Georgia means to me personally, through my long association with this State and also through the kinship which my wifo and my ohildren bear to the early settlers who participated with ogletherpe in the founding of civilization on this portion of the Atlantic Serloard.

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Throe quarters of a year have passed sinec I left Georgia; during that timu you havo conduct d a dignifiad and history taching statewide oolebration. During that same time, tho lives of the people of this Commenwerlth, like the lives of the inhabitants of the other statos, have undergone a great ohange.

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In coming for a two wecks' visit among you my neighbors; I shall have opportunity to improvo myself by roding of tho makers of our history with the thought before me that although problems and terms change, the principlos and ebjectives of American self-government remain the samo. I havo hoard so much of so-called oconomios in rocent wooks that it was rofreshing tho othor day to have my friond, the Gov rnor of New Hampshirc, onll my attention to a paragraph writton a century ago by that fathor of ecenomists, John Stuart kill. Ho said:
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On this Thanksgiving, I lik to think that many mors fathors and mothors and childron will pertako of turkoy then for meny yoars past. What $n$ splondid thing it would be if in ovory commenty throughout the land, in colobration of this Thanksgiving -- and horo in Foorgia in eolebration of the Ricontonninl of the founding of the Colony -- every ommunity would set ns its Thnnksgiving Dey objoctive tho providing of a Thonksgiving dinnor for those who hevo not yot been blessed by the returning prospority sufficiently to providu their own.

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$T$ is adidess must be Feja- in strict confidence until delivery actually is comenced. Please guard against premature publication.

Stephen Jarly, Assistant Secretary.

Becarse ry other state gave me the priviloge of serving as the Fonorary Chaiman of the Colebration of this Bicentennial year of the founding of Ceoria I have cone to Savannah in an official capacity.

But I come here also becanse of all that Georgia means to ne personally, through ny lone association With this State and al so through the kins ip Hic: it 1 io and cy cildron bear to the early settlers tho participated with Oclethorpe in the rounding of civilization on this po: tion of the tlantic Seaboard.

Apart frou the ties of Colonial ancestiy, Ihave additional kins:ip with the founders of the trirteen Aherican coloniss. It has been remarked on late by certain modern Torles that those tho are today in charge of our liational covermment are guilty of great bxporimentation. If I read $\bar{z} y$ histony richt, the sane suggestion pas used rien milishen, protesting in vain against intolerable contitions at hore, founded ner colonies in the American wilderness, and then "astuctons ant Adesises and Bullodss-conducted anotior gret experiment in $\mathbf{~} 7776$.

Three cua ters of a year have passer isince I left Georgia; dur in that time rou have conducte a cirnifie and history teaching stateride celebration. During that same time, the lives of the people of this Commomealth, like the lives of the inhabitants of'ti:e other states, lave undercone a zreat chance.

I an happr in the thourht that it has been a c: an er for the better; that I come back to see sniles replacing cloon, to see hope replacing ies air, to see faith restorec to its richtiul place. 1 ?

Tile wo are celebrating the planting of the colony of ceorgia, Te remonber that in tie ourly ettlers had seen content to remain on the coast, there vould, ave been no ceorija today. It was the spirit of movine forvare that led to the exploration of the great donain on piednont and mountains that drove the restem border of the Colony to the very banlos of the IIssissippi fiver itself. In all those $u$ ars of the pioneer, there were the coubting Thonases, there ras the persistent opposition of those tho feared change, of those io plajed the part os the ittle who hat to be coaried to get linn out of the stable.

In conin' for a tro rea, :st visit anong rou nit nei bors, I shall 5ave opportunity to 1irgove ayselif oy radins of the makers on our istory ith the thoucht berore te that althoug problems and terms chan e, the principles and objectives o: Alerican selfcoventuent ratain the sane. I have teard so much o: so-eelzed econo:lics in prount weilis that it was relreshing the otier day to ave iy $\hat{i}$ iend, the Covernor of Hev Mompshire, call my attention to a paragrain writen a contury ago by that iather of romoraists, John Stuart yill. Ine said: 6

Tisto: $y$ shons tiat great econome and social forces flow in'e a tice over commintios only half conscious o $\vec{i}$ that rhich is befalling then. "is states: ion roxesce riat time is thus bringine fand try to shape institutions and sold on's thou hts and purposen in accorcance itiz the clare that is silently cominc on.

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"The unvise are those so bxing notiline constructive to the process, and tho greatly imporil the future of mankind, by leaving great questions to be foujht out betrien i norant change on one hand, and icnorant opsosibion to c'ange, on the other."

The saving erace oil Allerica lies in the fact that the overWhelming :ajority of Americans are possessed of two great qualities -- a sense of humor and a sense of proportion. Tith the one they owill at those $\boldsymbol{7}$ o vould divide up all the money in the Nation on a per capita basis ever. Saturday niclit and at those who lament that they "ould rati en posscss pounds and francs than dollars. rith our sense of proportion e uncerstand and accent the fact that in the short syace of one "ear we camot cure tietecironic illness that buset us for/y degerr years, nos restore the social and economic order 7ith equal and simmitaneous sucoess in every part of the Hetion ane in evert alk of 2ire. o D fo ( 6 )

It is ti:e pioneerine spirit anc.understanding perspective of tize 300 plo of the Unitec States wich alroacy is mainine itself felt arlon ot or nations 0:? the rorld. The simple translation of the peacenul aild no1-iborly purposes of ti:e Unitec. States has already iven to $u$ sister Mexican republics a Greater aith in oun , 2 ofessions of sriencis than they have hele since tho time, orser a century aco, Hen Janes :lonroe encouraced then in their strusges rol freecon. So, too; I have had an example of the erect or bonest statonent ane simple explanation of the funcamental freeric $n$ policy dusin the past ree:: in lashington. For sixteen long years a natton, larfer even than ous in population and extont 0 territor, as beon unable to spaal ofricially with theUnitec tates ox tomaintain nomal relations. I beliove sincerely that the most impellin, zotive that has lain behind the conversations $\therefore 1 c h$ ere successfuly concludod jesterday bet een "ussia and the TnitaC jtates as to desire of both countries for poace and for the strangthenine of the peacerul purpose of the civilized 7orle.

It rill interast you to 1:now tiat in the rear leos t? e FresiCont $0:$ : Jifited States, Thories Jeiferson, irote as follows to 1s ussian frient, Ionsieur Daskinot:

Mussia ane tie Hinited states boiag in cliaracter ane practice ossentially pacific, a comon interest in the rights of peaceable nations cives $2 s$ a comion cause in thoir maintenance.

In tils spirit of omas Jeflerson, Ir. Iitvinof and I $\rightarrow$ belieue that tirourh the reswintion of cormal rolations the prospects $0:$ peace over all the orld are Greatly stroncthened.

Furthemore, I an comicont that in a state lite ceorgia, サi ich hec its roots in relifious teachings ank rasuthe Nivt state fil Wilich a sunca school as established, there must be satisfaction to ino that from nov on any irerican sojourning amon the creat fuscian people 111 be iroe to vors'ip cod in his oim vay.

It is perkaps especially si, hilicant that $I$ should speale of the resumption of relations ith Iussia in the City frot thich a contuxy aro the 21 mst tans-Atlantic steanslin set out on its voya e to the old orla.

I an Iod to be beck on ceotsin soil. I om hurrying to "amin sprins rith special interest, Por I shall see a spiendid ner buildine, siven o tho cause of elpibg crippled children by the cit zens of the state of coorcia. And I an hurryine back to my cottace thore ior the almost equally important objective of seeinc to it that a prize Georgia turkey is put into the primest moxi possible concition for tho Thanksiving Da* feast.

On this Than sifit g, I like to think that many more iathers and notiers and children ill partike of turkey than for why yeare mest. That a splendid thins it roul a be if in every community thouchout the lana, in celebration of this Thanksgiv ng -- and here in ceorgia in celebratin of the Bicontennial of the founding of the Colony..- every camunity rould set as its Thailtssiving Day objective the providing of a thanlesfive dinner for those wo have not yet been blessed by the returnins prosperity suficiently to provide tieir orm.

Let ine read to you in closing a Hessaje delivered a generation afo by a creat son of a Great Geoxfia mother, Theodore Roosevelt:

Haterially we must strive to secure a broader economic opportunity sor all on so that each shall have a better chence to sho the stuif of rivich ho is zade, Sniritually and et ically te must strive to $b$ in about clean living and si ht thincinc. "e aroreciass that the thines of the body ar important; but ro apreciote also that tie things of tie sowl are inaaurably nore inportant. The poundation stone of national li. is and ever must be the righ indivicu-l chazacter of tho indivicuel citizen."

