

November 30, 1933

[Thanksgiving Address - Warm Springs]

FDR Speech File

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

Georgia Hall, Warm Springs, Georgia,
Thanksgiving Dinner, November 30, 1933

THE PRESIDENT: Members of the family of Warm Springs:

I suppose I have to have my chance at the press and so I will tell you now that there are certain papers in the United States that you need not read tomorrow because I am going to tell you now what the headlines are going to be tomorrow morning. They are going to say that Dr. Julian Boehn is going to be appointed Secretary of the Treasury (laughter) and that Gus Gennerth is going to head the Federal Reserve System (laughter).

I don't know what the number of this party is, the eighth or ninth, or something like that, but I go back to the days when there was Fred Botts and two or three other people here for Thanksgiving, when we had our Thanksgiving party down in what we call Wreck - I don't know that it is even called "Wreck" nowadays, but then I go back to the time in 1927, when a lot of you people here in the front part of the room were not even born - centuries ago - generations ago, in the days of your fathers and mothers. In 1927 we had 80 people at the Thanksgiving party and when, in 1928, we got up to 102 people, we all cheered. 1930, I think it was, in that first year of the great depression, we passed the 200 mark, and in 1931 we got up to 270 people. In 1932 we passed the 300 mark and we had 310 people who sat down in the old dining room for Thanksgiving evening. In 1932 - 310 people, and it was so many people that the old dining room sank three inches. And largely because of that physical fact Arthur Carpenter got cold feet. Arthur Carpenter said "we will never have another Thanksgiving in the old dining room."

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.

He was right. He was a prophet and we will never have another there, thank God, and that is why we are here tonight. We are because we made up our minds a year ago that we would never have another Thanksgiving party in that dangerous old dining room. What has happened? There are 370 people here tonight and I find that there is only one thing I never did provide for; I never happened to mention to Henry Toombs that he might have to have a bigger dining room than this one. We may have to in time - nobody can tell when - and if things go as fast in the next ten years as they have in the past ten years, Henry is going to be busy day and night building new buildings for us. I am not going to make any set and formal speech and because the hour is getting a little bit late, and we have a lot of people we want to look at, I am going to start introducing them now. First of all I am going to introduce to you the Granddaddy of Warm Springs, a very wonderful person who goes back to the Georgia of the days before the war, the war between the States - a very wonderful man who went north after that, and who, all his life, has been doing good to his fellow-men. He is the man who, a good many years ago, found that the old Warm Springs was about to pass out of the ownership that had held it for many years, and who came to its rescue and, after he had come to its rescue, he wrote to me about it. That is how I happened to come down here. As a result of that visit and as a result of the splendid cooperation that I had from the Granddaddy of Warm Springs, we are all here tonight. And so I know that you will be glad to see my old friend, that splendid American citizen, George Foster Peabody (applause).

And then in those old days - before you people were born (indi-

cating young folks in front of him) - 1925, and you all know the story, various people came down here and there wasn't any doctor. There wasn't any swimming pool and there wasn't any anything, except a few old cottages and, as you know, you had to go to bed in the dark because anybody on the outside could see you through the boards if you stayed in the light. In those days we started what was called the medical experiment, to see whether Warm Springs was going to be worth while. I couldn't swing it alone, and I found a very wonderful man from out in Chicago who dreamt the same dream that I did, and he came along. Through his generosity - more than generosity - through his faith and his belief in what we might accomplish, we held in the spring of 1926 what was called the Medical Experiment, and through that we sold the idea of Warm Springs to the Medical profession. The man who made possible that period of proving what we believed in was Henry Pope, one of our Trustees, and he is here with us tonight (applause).

And then, as time went on, we decided that we weren't just Georgia, or just the United States; we decided that we were the spirit of America in the broader sense of the word - the whole of the continent. We realized that there were a lot of cousins of ours who lived across the line, and a lot of people came down from Canada, among them a good friend of ours who has stayed by us through thick and thin, and who has spread the Gospel all through Canada, Leighton McCarthy (applause).

Of course, all of us who are old-timers, saw that we had to get in some youngsters, and so we have come down to what may be called the second generation of Warm Springs. Tomorrow at our Trustees Meeting we are going to elect a young man as Trustee who has done much for the

Foundation - done much in the same spirit for the Foundation as he has applied to the service he has accomplished for the government. He is a young man and an old friend of mine. He has given the right kind of spirit to his work for your country, and tomorrow, I am very glad to say, we are going to have a new Trustee, Jim Moffett, of New York (applause).

Then, I am coming back to a sort of side kick of mine. You know, things don't just happen, and bills just don't get paid, and accounts just don't get made up haphazard, and I was very fortunate in those past years in having as my law partner a man who is not only a good lawyer and, believe me, they are mighty rare, but also a man who understood what all this work was about, and who has given unselfishly and without pay - which is something that most lawyers don't do - a great deal of time and effort to keeping our books straight and proving to the public that we were a sound financial institution. More than that, he has given of his time and his influence and his money in showing the city of New York and the United States something about the ideals that we all have. My old friend, Basil O'Connor (applause).

In talking to you about the spreading of the story that has to go on from day to day, I don't suppose there is anybody in this country who has done more in the past to spread the story and who is doing more at the present time to spread the story, than Keith Morgan, and I am going to ask him to get up now - Keith (applause).

You have all heard a lot about the story of Warm Springs. In those old days, in the spring of 1926, everything depended on the way the experiment was started and, as you all know, it wasn't just a question of medical care, it isn't just a question of the exercises we all take, but

it is a question of the spirit of Warm Springs, and there is nobody in this room now who is more responsible for the spirit of Warm Springs than our old friend, Dr. Leroy W. Hubbard (applause).

Last week we had a party here - the christening of this Hall - Georgia Hall - and I said then what I am not going to repeat now, except the bare outline of the fact that we would not any of us be here tonight unless this section of Georgia and the State of Georgia had not only welcomed us with open arms but also done everything they could to assist us in our work. For a good many years we have had the vision of Georgia Hall, but it took our neighbor from over in Lagrange to make that dream come true. And so Cason Calloway, in all of the future days of the Warm Springs Foundation and of Georgia and of the country, is going to be known as the man who more greatly than any other started our dream to come true. Cason Calloway (applause).

I really should have introduced his partner in this great enterprise at the same time that I introduced him, because up in the first city of this State - in Atlanta - the man who so greatly helped Cason Calloway and made possible the completion of the Hall was Mr. Cator Woolford, and I am glad he has come back with us again tonight. (Applause)

I go back to a certain time of 1924, the time when everything was closed - even the old Inn - and it was pretty lonesome down here. All of the good people down in the Village were most kind and gave us every kind of hospitality. But outside of old Tom Lawley, who was running things here in the off season as well as the open season, there wasn't anybody up here on the old hill at all except the old postmaster, but all of a sudden, one afternoon, there came up to my cottage a very charming lady, and she said, "I am the owner of this property, or, rather, I was the owner up to

a very short time ago, because it was my family that owned and developed Warm Springs through all these years", and so we are happy in having the interest of the Davis family and the Wilkins family in the past, but also happy in having the continued interest that Miss Georgia Wilkins has given to this old property that she will always feel in her heart belongs to her. Miss Wilkins (applause).

You know, this work isn't just local. It covers a very wide area. It covers in its practical application the need of cooperation of science in this whole section of the United States. It needs the help of other hospitals and other institutions, so that we can carry out a rounded work down here. I am very happy that Dr. Hoke has made it possible for us to be affiliated with the Piedmont Hospital in Atlanta, and I am glad that Dr. Floyd McCrae is here tonight so that we can tell him a little bit of our appreciation of the splendid cooperation that the Piedmont Hospital is giving to our Foundation. Dr. McCrae (applause).

And now I am going to introduce to you another very old friend of mine. We have been working on a great variety of social problems, charitable problems, economic problems, and government problems, for I don't know how many years, and during all these years - I think it started a way back in 1927 - we have had his interest in the work that we were doing. But this is the first time that he has had a chance to come down here and see the work with his own eyes. You all know of him and you all know of the splendid contribution he has made to American life. Mr. Raymond Fosdick, of New York (applause).

And with him, as a guest, is a great builder - a man who built Radio City. A lot of people poked fun at Radio City and said that it would never be used and probably it would never have been used if the conditions

that prevailed up until a few months ago had continued (applause). But today, the builder of Radio City, Mr. John Harris, can feel justified, I believe, in the great work he has accomplished, and we are glad to have his interest in Warm Springs (applause).

A great many years ago a very delightful young couple, half American and half British, came down here. They have been coming almost all the time ever since, and we hope they will always come down here, Mr. and Mrs. Patterson. Mr. Patterson is making possible, through his kindness and his energy, a very wonderful concert that is going to be held in New York City in about ten days, a concert for the benefit of the Warm Springs Foundation. Mr. Patterson (applause).

Then, we have another problem. Nobody knows anything about the water, where it comes from or where it goes. All we know is that out of these hills come all kinds of waters. I often think of the fact that about five miles west of here there are white sulphur springs and black sulphur springs and yellow sulphur springs, and here we have our own Warm Springs, with magnesium and lime. Only about a mile east of here there is a spring that has nothing in it at all except that it is just plain water and very cold, and then about five miles further, there is another spring that has iron in it. Yet there has never been any scientific survey of this Pine Mountain region. I tried a number of years ago to get the U. S. Government interested in a geological survey of this mountain of ours, but I was told by the government that then existed in Washington, that there was nothing in the water anyway (laughter). But in the past few months I have been able, somehow, to persuade Washington (laughter) that there is something in water, and so the Geological Survey in Washington is co-operating with the State of Georgia, and we are starting a survey of what

lies under Pine Mountain. I am quite sure that we would all like to know something about it from the scientific point of view. The result is that this survey of the geology of Pine Mountain that Mr. Peabody and I have been talking about for years is about to be actually started - started under the direction of Dr. Hewitt, of the Federal Service, and Dr. Krickmay, the Georgia State geologist. We are going to find out something we have never known before. I am going to ask those two gentlemen to stand up (applause).

Now there are three old friends, and I know you won't forget who they are. Even in these past ten days that I have been here, any number of people have come to me and they have said that in history there have been some very wonderful architectural projects started in the United States, and when they have been completed they have served as lessons to generations to come - for instance, the University of Virginia has been widely copied throughout America. I think that we are very fortunate in having a Georgian, an old friend of ours, who has caught the spirit, not only of Colonial days, but the spirit of the future in the designing of what I believe will be an architectural gem that will be visited and written about and looked at for many generations to come. The man who is responsible for it is our old friend Henry Toombs, and he has got to get up whether he likes it or not (applause).

I don't know whether you know it, but the only reason I am doing all this talking tonight, is because Arthur Carpenter again had cold feet. (Laughter) But it gives me a chance to get back at him. A good many years ago there wasn't any head of things. Topsy ran Warm Springs. Well, we discovered a youngster down here who was fully capable of handling the job of running Warm Springs. He not only caught the spirit of Warm Springs,

but he gave a spirit of his own to the development of the place, and if it had not been for Arthur Carpenter, you and I would not be in this Hall tonight. And if it had not been for Arthur Carpenter there would not be any Warm Springs tonight, and whether he likes it or not, I am going to tell you quite frankly that Arthur Carpenter is my right bower, and if it were not for him, this place could not keep on going. Get up Arthur (applause).

Once upon a time there was a doctor (laughter). Thank God, a doctor with a sense of humor and with a heart. He suggested tonight, when we were seeing those tricks - when we were seeing those things disappear, that it would be wonderful if the medical profession could make things disappear from the human body as easily as Mr. Boehn made those things disappear on the stage. Magic cannot accomplish that result with the human body, but modern science comes pretty close to equalling magic. One of the men - one of the two or three men in the whole of the United States - carrying out scientific magic on human beings, who cure them and make them useful citizens, is the Surgeon in Chief of the Warm Springs Foundation. But it is not just a question of scientific skill. It is not just a question of expertness with a knife. It is just as much, I believe, a matter of the understanding of human nature - the understanding of what to try and what not to try. He is a man who is dear to my heart because he is not above a logical experiment (applause). He is also dear to my heart because in a larger percentage of cases than anybody else I know, his experiments work (applause). And with it all, I don't have to say any more to you people, young and old, about Dr. Hoke. He is our friend, and he understands the spirit of the place, and he understands what he can do and what he can accomplish, and that is why

I believe today that the Foundation is more greatly blessed in having him here than any other one thing. He has a vision, just as we have a vision, a vision of making Warm Springs not merely a place where we will take care of a comparatively limited number of people - which is all we can manage to take care of down here - but also a place where we can do good to a great many other people - a great many people who cannot come here. That is by proving, by our example, that the things we are doing are worth while, that they can be duplicated in other parts of the country, that we can be not merely an institution for therapy, for the care of the individual, but also an institution for education - education of the medical profession, education of families, of individuals, and of children. So that, in some way, in many ways, we can make our influence felt among hundreds of thousands of people in our country who, for one reason or another, need the kind of care we are providing here.

And as an indication of the interest of the Old World in the work we are doing here, we have present among us tonight Dr. Heertl, of Germany, who has come here to study our work, and make a scientific study of the waters.

And so, my friends, I think it is appropriate that in closing these introductions, I should again introduce to you a very old friend, who to me means more for the future of Warm Springs than any of the other people who are connected with our Institution, a man whom we recognize as a great leader, not only of American medicine, but of American progress - social progress and economic progress in every branch - Dr. Michael Hoke (applause).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - NOVEMBER 30, 1933.

STATEMENTS FILE

m. H. McIntyre,
Assistant Secretary to the President.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
GEORGIA HALL, WARM SPRINGS, GA.,
THANKSGIVING DINNER, Nov. 30, 1933.

Members of the family of Warm Springs:

I suppose I have to have my chance at the press and so I will tell you now that there are certain papers in the United States that you need not read tomorrow because I am going to tell you now what the headlines are going to be tomorrow morning. They are going to say that Dr. Julian ^{Boehn} ~~Bohn~~ is going to be appointed Secretary of the Treasury (laughter) and that Gus Gennerch is going to head the Federal Reserve System (laughter).

I don't know what the number of this party is, the eighth or ninth, or something like that, but I go back to the days when there was Fred Botts and two or three or other people here for Thanksgiving, when we had our Thanksgiving party down in what we call Wreck - I don't know that it is even called "Wreck" nowadays, but then I go back to the time in 1927, when a lot of you people here in the front part of the room were not even born - centuries ago - generations ago, in the days of your fathers and mothers. In 1927 we had 80 people at the Thanksgiving party and when, in 1928, we got up to 102 people, we all cheered. 1930, I think it was, in that first year of the great depression, we passed the 200 mark, and in 1931 we got up to 270 people. In 1932 we passed the 300 mark and we had 310 people who sat down in the old dining room for Thanksgiving evening.

In 1932 - 310 people, and it was so many people that the old dining room sank three inches. And largely because of that physical fact Arthur Carpenter got cold feet. Arthur Carpenter said "we will never have another Thanksgiving in the old dining room." He was right. He was a prophet and we will never have another there, Thank God, and that is why we are here tonight. We are because we made up our minds a year ago that we would never have another Thanksgiving party in that dangerous old dining room. What has happened? There are 370 people here tonight and I find that there is only one thing I never did provide for; I never happened to mention to Henry Toombs that he might have to have a bigger dining room than this one. We may have to in time - nobody can tell when - and if things go as fast in the next ten years as they have in the past ~~ten~~ years, Henry is going to be busy day and night building new buildings for us. I am not going to make any set and formal speech and because the hour is getting a little bit late and we have a lot of people we want to look at, I am going to start introducing them now. First of all I am going to introduce to you the Granddaddy of Warm Springs, a very wonderful person who goes back to the Georgia of the days before the war, the war between the States - a very wonderful man who went north after that, and who, all his life, has been doing good to his fellow-men. He is the man who, a good many years ago, found that the old Warm Springs was about to pass out of the ownership that had held it for many years, and who came to its rescue and, after he had come to its rescue, he wrote to me about it.

That is how I happened to come down here. As a result of the visit and as a result of the splendid cooperation that I had from the Granddaddy of Warm Springs, we are all here tonight. And so I know that you will be glad to see my old friend, that splendid American citizen, George Foster Peabody (applause).

And then in those old days - before you people were born (indicating young folks in front of him) - 1925, and you all know the story, various people came down here and there wasn't any doctor. There wasn't any swimming pool and there wasn't anything, except a few old cottages and, as you know, you had to go to bed in the dark because anybody on the outside could see you through the boards if you stayed in the light. In those days we started what was called the medical experiment, to see whether Warm Springs was going to worth while. I couldn't swing it alone and I found a very wonderful man from out in Chicago who dreamt the same dream that I did and he came along. Through his generosity - more than generosity - through his faith and his belief in what we might accomplish, we held in the spring of 1926 what was called the Medical Experiment, and through that we sold the idea of Warm Springs to the Medical profession. The man who made possible that period of proving what we believed in was Henry Pope, one of our Trustees, and he is here with us tonight (applause).

And then, as time went on, we decided that we weren't just Georgia, or just the United States; we decided that we were the spirit of America in the broader sense of the word - the whole of the continent. We realized that there were a lot of cousins of ours who lived across

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the line, and a lot of people came down from Canada, among them a good friend of ours who has stayed by us through thick and thin, and who has spread the Gospel all through Canada, Leighton McCarthy (applause).

Of course, all of ^{us} ~~you~~ who are oldtimers, saw that we had to get in some youngsters, and so we have come down to what may be called the second generation of Warm Springs. Tomorrow at our Trustees Meeting we are going to elect a young man as Trustee who has done much for the Foundation - done much in the same spirit for the Foundation as he has applied to the service he has accomplished for the government. He is a young man and an old friend of mine. He has given the right kind of spirit to his work for your country and tomorrow, I am very glad to say, we are going to have a new Trustee, Jim Moffett, of New York (applause).

Then, I am coming back to a sort of side kick of mine. You know, things don't just happen, and bills just ~~don't~~ get paid, and accounts just don't get made up haphazard, and I was very fortunate in those past years in having as my law partner a man who is not only a good lawyer and, believe me, they are mighty rare, but also a man who understood what all ^{this} ~~the~~ work was about, and who has given unselfishly and without pay - which is something that most lawyers ~~do not do - a great deal of time and effort to keeping our books~~ don't do - a great deal of time and effort to keeping our books straight and proving to the public that we were a sound financial institution. More than that, he has given of his time and his influence and his ~~money~~ money in showing the city of New York and the United States something about the ideals that we all have. My old

Basil O'conner (applause).

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You have all heard a lot about the story of Warm Springs. In those old days, in the Spring of 1926, everything depended on the way the experiment was started and, as you all know, it wasn't just a question of medical care, it isn't just a question of the exercises we all take, but it is a question of the spirit of Warm Springs, and there is nobody in this room now who is more responsible for the spirit of Warm Springs than our old friend, Dr. Leroy W. Hubbard (Applause)

Last week we had a party here -- the christening of this Hall -- Georgia Hall -- and I said then what I am not going to repeat now, except the bare outline of the fact that we would not any of us be here tonight unless this section of Georgia and the State of Georgia had not only welcomed us with open arms but also done everything they could to assist us in our work. For a good many years we have had the vision of Georgia Hall, but it took our neighbor from over in Lagrange to make that dream come true. And so Cason Calloway, in all of the future days of the Warm Springs Foundation and of Georgia and of the country is going to be known as the man who more greatly than any other started our dream to come true. Cason Calloway (Applause)

I really should have introduced his partner in this great enterprise at the same time that I introduced him because up in the first city of this State -- in Atlanta -- the man who so greatly helped Cason Calloway and made possible the completion of the Hall was Mr. Cator Woolford and I am glad he has come back with us again tonight. (Applause)

I go back to a certain time of 1924, the time when everything was closed -- even the old Inn ~~at~~ -- and it was pretty lonesome down here. All of the good people down in the Village were most kind and gave us every kind of hospitality. But outside of old Tom Lawley, who was running things here in the off season as well as the open season, there wasn't anybody up here on the old hill at all except the old postmaster, but all of a sudden, one afternoon, there came up to my cottage a very charming lady and she said "I am the owner of this property, or, rather I was the owner up to a very short time ago, because it was my family that owned and developed Warm Springs through all these years," and so we are happy in having the interest of the Davis family and the Wilkins family in the past, but also happy in having the continued interest that Miss Georgia Wilkins has given to this old property that she will always feel in her heart belongs to her. (Miss Wilkins - applause)

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And with him, as a guest, is a great builder - a man who built Radio City. A lot of people poked fun at Radio City and said that it would never be used and probably it would never have been used if the conditions that prevailed up until a few months ago had continued (applause). But today, the builder of Radio City Mr. John Harris, can feel justified, I believe, in the great work he has accomplished, and we are glad to have his interest in Warm Springs (applause).

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I don't know whether you know it, but the only reason I am doing all this talking tonight, is because Arthur Garnter again had cold feet. (Laughter) But it gives me a chance to get back at him. A good many years ago there wasn't any head or things.

Topsy ran Warm Springs. Well, we discovered a youngster down here who was fully capable of handling the job of running Warm Springs. He not only caught the spirit of Warm Springs, but he gave a spirit of his own to the development of the place, and if it had not been for Arthur Carpenter, you and I would not be in this Hall tonight. And if it had not been for Arthur Carpenter there would not be any WarmSprings tonight, and whether he likes it or not, I am going to tell you quite frankly that Arthur Carpenter is my right bower, and if it were not for him this place, this place could not keep on going. Get up Arthur. (applause)

Once upon a time there was a doctor (laughter) Thank God, a doctor with a sense of humor and with a heart. He suggested tonight when we were seeing those tricks - when we were seeing those things disappear, that it would be wonderful if the medical profession could make things disappear from the human body as easily as Mr. Boehn made those things disappear on the stage. Magic cannot accomplish that result with the human body, but modern science comes pretty close to equalling magic. One of the men - one of the two or three men in the whole of the United States - carrying out scientific magic on human beings, who cure them and make them useful citizens, is the Surgeon in Chief of the Warm Springs Foundation. But it is not just a question of scientific skill. It is not just a question of expertness with a knife. It is just as much, I believe, a matter of the

~~is~~ understanding of human nature - the understanding of what to try and what not to try. He is a man who is dear to my heart because he is not above a logical experiment (applause). He is also dear to my heart because in a larger percentage of cases than anybody else I know, his experiments work. (applause) And with it all I don't have to say anymore to your people, young or old, about Dr. Hoke. He is our friend, and he understands the spirit of the place, and he understands what he can do and what he can accomplish, and that is why I believe today that the Foundation is more greatly blessed in having him here than any other one thing. He has a vision, just as we have a vision, a vision ^{of} ~~xxx~~ making Warm Springs not merely a place where we will take care of a comparatively limited number of people - which is all we can manage to take care of down here - but also a place where we can do good to a great many other people - a great many people who cannot come here. That is by proving, by our example, that the things we are doing are worth while, that they can be duplicated in other parts of the country, that we can be not merely an institution for therapy, for the care of the individual, but also an institution for education - education of the medical profession, education of families, of individuals, and of children. So that, in some way in many ways, we can make our influence felt among hundreds of thousands of people in our country, who, for one reason or another, need the kind of care we are providing here.

And as an indication of the interest of the Old World in the work we are doing here, we have present among us tonight Dr. Heartl, of Germany, who has come here to study our work. and make a scientific study of the waters.

And so my friends, I think it is appropriate that in closing these introductions, I should again introduce to you a very old friend, who to me means more for the future of Warm Springs than any ~~of~~ the other people who are connected ~~with~~ with our Institution, a man whom we recognize as a great leader, not only of American medicine, but of American progress - social progress and economic progress in every branch - Dr. Michael Hoke. (applause)