
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. 709

1934 June 4

**Message to Congress –
Control & Development of Water Resources**

RECORDS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE
RECORD GROUP 46

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT
OF JUNE 4, 1934
RELATING TO
FLOOD CONTROL

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON: 1955

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

On February 2, 1934, by resolution, the Congress requested me to report on "a comprehensive plan for the improvement and development of the Rivers of the United States, with a view of giving the Congress information for the guidance of legislation which will provide for the maximum amount of flood control, navigation, irrigation, and development of hydro-electric power."

Pursuant thereto I requested the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior, War, Agriculture and Labor to advise on the development of a water policy and on the choice of projects. I am sending herewith copies of their report, together with separate letters from the Secretary of War and the Secretary of Labor, and also:

- (1) List of Technical Advisory Committees of the President's Committee.
- (2) Review of reports of Technical Sub-Committees on water flow.
- (3) Review of report of Technical Sub-Committees covering additions in the Arid Section, prepared by the Bureau of Reclamation.
- (4) Seven reports of Technical Sub-Committees covering various regions.

I ask that the Congress bear in mind certain obvious facts relating to these reports:

- (1) That the time for the preparation of these reports was extremely limited.
- (2) That the subject is one of enormous magnitude, covering the whole of the United States.
- (3) That the Resolution of the Congress, covering the subjects of flood control, navigation, irrigation, and development of hydro-electric power, automatically opened the door to all inter-related subjects which come under the general head of land and water use. This broader definition brings to our attention very clearly such kindred

problems as soil erosion, stream pollution, fire prevention, reforestation, afforestation, marginal lands, stranded communities, distribution of industries, education, highway building, home building, and a dozen others.

(4) All of the reports were based primarily on information already at hand and further study is strongly recommended.

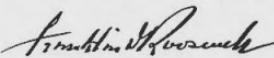
(5) For the purpose of making a preliminary test, I requested a wholly tentative trial selection of ten specific projects. As I had expected, the report strongly doubts the advisability of recommending these projects, on the ground that any selection at this point must necessarily omit many meritorious projects which further analysis may show to be preferable.

(6) The reports of the Technical Sub-Committees, covering various areas, are of definite value. But before any work is done, it is obvious that a competent coordinating body must go over all of these reports, as well as reports on other projects and produce a comprehensive plan.

In view of the above, I, therefore, suggest that the Congress regard this message and the accompanying documents as merely a preliminary study and allow me, between now and the assembling of the next Congress, to complete these studies and to outline to the next Congress a comprehensive plan to be pursued over a long period of years. Further legislative action on this subject at this session of the Congress seems to me, therefore, unnecessary.

I expect before the final adjournment of this Congress to forward to it, a broader outline of national policy in which the subject matter of this message will be presented in conjunction with two other subjects also relating to human welfare and security.

We should proceed toward a rounded policy of national scope.



THE WHITE HOUSE
June 4, 1934.

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On February 2, 1934, by resolution, the Congress requested me to report on "a comprehensive plan for the improvement and development of the Rivers of the United States, with a view of giving the Congress information for the guidance of legislation which will provide for the maximum amount of flood control, navigation, irrigation, and development of hydro-electric power."

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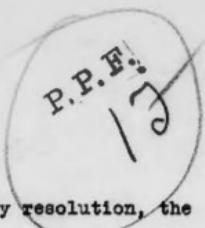
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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE

June 4, 1934.



Hannigan?

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~~communicating~~

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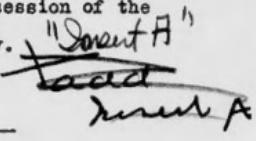
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- (4) All of the reports were based primarily on information already at hand and ~~the Committee~~ further study, is strongly recommended. ^{What} ^{study?}
- (5) ^{for the purpose of} ^{a preliminary} ~~With the thought of~~ ^{test,} I requested ~~the Committee~~ to make a wholly tentative trial selection of ten specific projects. As I had expected, the ~~Committee~~ strongly doubts the advisability of recommending these projects, on the ground that any selection at this point must necessarily omit many meritorious projects which further analysis may show to be preferable.

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(Draft A) see on p. 3

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Draft A

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June 4, 1934.