

August 3, 1934

[Bonneville, Oregon]

FDR Speech File

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INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

Bonneville, Oregon

August 3, 1934

Governor Meier, my friends of Oregon and Washington: There is an old saying that "seeing is believing" and that is why I came here today.

Until today I have never been familiar with more than the lower course of the Columbia River, but as far back as 1920 I had the privilege of coming out through these states -- through all of the great Northwest and I conceived at that time the very firm belief that this wonderful valley of the Columbia was one of the greatest assets, not alone of the Northwest but of the United States of America. Back there, fourteen years ago, I determined that if I ever had the rank or the opportunity to do something for the development of this great River Basin and for the territory that surrounds it, I would do my best to put this great project through.

Yes, "seeing is believing." Over a year ago, when we first established the principle of commencing great public works projects in every part of the Union, I became firmly convinced that the Federal Government ought immediately to undertake the construction of the Bonneville Dam and the Grand Coulee Dam, and so we got started. General Martin reminded me, as we were driving out here, that it

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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 added extemporaneously to the previously prepared reading copy. Text in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, although they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

INTERNAL REMARKS OF THE SPEECH

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was only on the 26th day of September last year -- ten months ago only -- that the definite allocation of money for the Bonneville project was made by me at the White House, and I think we have gone a long way in less than a year.

It has been my conception, my dream, that while most of us are alive we would see great sea-going vessels come up the Columbia River as far as the Dalles and it was only this morning that the Secretary of War told me of a new survey that is being made by the Army Engineers. From that survey I hope it will be found to be, in the part of wisdom, to enlarge these locks so that ocean-going ships can pass up as far as the Dalles. And, when we get that done and moving, I hope that we can also make navigation possible from the Dalles up, so we may have barge transportation into the wheat country.

I am reminded a good deal of another river, with a problem somewhat similar -- a river on which I was born and brought up -- the Hudson. It was only a comparatively few years ago -- within the past ten years -- that through the action of the Federal Government the channel of the Hudson River was so deepened that Albany, 140 miles from the sea, was made a seaport. You have a very similar case on the Columbia. In the same way in the State of New York, above Albany, you meet the rapids and the falls of the Mohawk. It was over a hundred years ago that Dewitt Clinton,

a Governor of New York, built what was called "Clinton's Ditch," the Erie Canal, and carried through the possibility of navigation by barge from the sea to the Great Lakes. And so I believe that the day will come on the Columbia when we will not only extend sea-going navigation far back into the continent but, at the end of sea navigation, we will be able to extend barge transportation still further back far north into the State of Washington and far into the State of Idaho. That is a dream my friends, but not an idle dream, and today we have evidence of what man can do to improve the conditions of mankind.

There is another reason for the expenditure of money in very large amounts on the Columbia -- in fact there are a good many reasons. While we are improving navigation we are creating power, more power, and I always believe in the old saying of "more power to you." I don't believe that you can have enough power for a long time to come and the power we will develop here is going to be power which for all time is going to be controlled by the government.

Two years ago, when I was in Portland, I laid down the principle of the need of government yardsticks so that the people of this country will know whether they are paying the proper price for electricity of all kinds. The Government can create yardsticks. At that time one had already been started on the Colorado River. Since then two other yardsticks have been undertaken, one in the

Tennessee Valley, one here on the Columbia River, and the fourth, the St. Lawrence, is going to be started.

In this northwestern section of our land, we still have the opening of opportunity for a vastly increased population. There are many sections of the country, as you know, where conditions are crowded. There are many sections of the country where land has run out or has been put to the wrong kind of use. America is growing. There are many people who want to go to a section of the country where they will have a better chance for themselves and their children -- and there are a great many people who have children and need room for growing families. As a Roosevelt I am thinking about growing families.

Out here you have not just space, you have space that can be used by human beings -- a wonderful land -- a land of opportunity -- a land already peopled by Americans who know whither America is bound -- people who are thinking about advantages for mankind, good education and above all the chance for security; the chance to lead our own lives without wondering what is going to happen to us tomorrow; security for old age, security against the ills and the accidents that come to people and, above all, security to earn your own living.

Today I have seen a picture I knew before only in blueprint form. So far as topography goes, it conforms to the blueprints and the chief engineer of this project tells me that nothing stands in the way of its being com-

pleted on time, on schedule and according to plan.

Within three years, I hope the Bonneville Dam will be an actual fact and, as a fact, it will from then on militate very greatly to the benefit of the lives, not only of the people of Oregon and Washington but of the whole United States.

I know you good people are heart and soul behind this project and I think most of you are heart and soul behind what your Government is trying to do to help the people of the United States. I wish I might stay here and survey everything in detail but, as you know, I have been on a long voyage and the sailor man doesn't stay put very long in one place.

I have been so much interested during this wonderful drive here that I have delayed things all along the road. That is why I am an hour late. Now I have to go to the train.

I want to tell you from the bottom of my heart what a privilege it is to come here and see this great work at first hand. May it go on with God's blessing and with your blessings.

Aug. 3, 1934

Form 14

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PRESS TELEGRAM

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Yes, "seeing is believing." Over a year ago, when we first established the principle of commencing great public works projects in every part of the Union, ~~I~~ I became firmly convinced that the Federal Government ought ~~to~~ immediately <sup>to</sup> undertake the construction of the Bonneville Dam and the Grand Coulee Dam, and so we got started. General Martin reminded me, ~~then~~ <sup>as</sup> we were driving out here, that it was only on the 26th day of September last year -- ~~only~~ <sup>only</sup> ten months ago -- that the definite allocation of money for the Bonneville Project was made by me at the White House, and I think we have gone a long way in less than a year.



# Postal Telegraph-Cable Company

## PRESS TELEGRAM

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It has been my conception, my dream, that while most of us are alive we would see great seagoing vessels come up the Columbia River as far as the Dalles, <sup>and</sup> ~~It~~ was only this morning that the Secretary of War told me of a new survey that is being made by the Army Engineers. From that survey I hope ~~that~~ it will be found to be, in the part of wisdom, to enlarge these locks ~~over here~~ so that ocean going ships can pass up as far as the Dalles. And, when we get that done and moving, I hope that we can also ~~enlarge the~~ make possible navigation from the Dalles up, so ~~that~~ we <sup>may</sup> ~~can~~ have barge transportation into the wheat country.

I am reminded a good deal of another river, with a problem somewhat similar -- a river on which I was born and brought up -- the Hudson. It was only a comparatively few years ago -- within the past ten years -- that through the action of the Federal Government the channel of the Hudson River was so deepened that Albany, 140 miles from the sea, was made a seaport. ~~going up the~~ You have a very similar case on the Columbia. In the same way in the State of New York, above Albany, you meet the rapids and the falls of the Mohawk. It was over a hundred years ago that Dewitt Clinton, a Governor of New York, built what was called "Clinton's ~~Mill~~ Ditch", the Erie Canal, and carried the possibility of navigation by barge through from the sea to the Great Lakes. And so I believe that the day will come on the Columbia when we will not only extend seagoing navigation far

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### PRESS TELEGRAM

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back into the continent but, at the end of sea navigation, we will be able to extend barge transportation still further back far north into the State of Washington and far ~~into~~ into the State of Idaho. That is a dream my friends, but not an idle dream, and today we have evidence of what man can do to improve ~~the~~ the conditions of mankind.

There is another reason for the expenditure of ~~the tax~~ ~~money~~ money in very large amounts on the Columbia -- in fact there a good many reasons. While we are improving navigation we are creating power, more power, and I always believe in the old saying of "more power to you." I don't believe that you can have enough power for a long time to come and the power ~~that~~ we ~~are~~ <sup>will</sup> develop here is going to be power which for all time is going to be controlled by government.

Two years ago, when I was in Portland, I laid down the principle of the need of government yardsticks so that the people of this country will know whether they are paying the proper price for electricity of all kinds, ~~and I conceived the idea~~ <sup>The government can</sup> ~~create yard sticks.~~ <sup>already</sup> ~~that the government can create yardsticks.~~ One has ~~already~~ been started on the Colorado River. Since then two other yardsticks have been undertaken, one in the Tennessee Valley, one here on the Columbia River, and the fourth, the St. Lawrence, is going to be started.

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## PRESS TELEGRAM

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~~And this the last reason that I felt to be of vast importance, is the fact that in this northwestern section of our land we still have the opening of the opportunity for a vastly increased population. There are many sections of the country, as you know, where conditions are crowded. There are many sections in the Country where land has run out or has been put to the wrong kind of use. America is growing. There are many people who want to go to a <sup>section</sup> ~~part~~ of the country where they will have a better chance for themselves and their children -- and there are a great many people <sup>who</sup> ~~that~~ have ~~lost~~ children and need ~~some~~ room for growing families. As a Roosevelt I am thinking about growing families. Out here you have not just space, you have space that can be used by human beings -- a wonderful land -- a land of opportunity -- a land already peopled by Americans who know ~~that~~ whether America is bound -- people who are thinking about advantages for mankind, good education, ~~and above all~~ and above all the chance for security, the chance to lead our own lives without wondering what is going to happen to us tomorrow, security for old age, security against the ills and the accidents that come to people and, above all, security to earn your own living.~~

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## Postal Telegraph-Cable Company

## PRESS TELEGRAM

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I know ~~that~~ you good people are heart and soul behind this project and I think ~~that~~ most of you are heart and soul behind what your Government is trying to do to help the people of the United States. I wish ~~that~~ I might stay here and survey everything in detail but, as you know, I have been on a long voyage and the sailor man doesn't stay put very long in one place. I have been so much interested <sup>during</sup> this wonderful drive ~~in~~ here ~~that I cannot~~ ~~be~~ ~~forthwith~~, that I have delayed things all along the road, ~~and~~ <sup>now</sup> that is why I am an hour late, <sup>to</sup> but I have to go ~~at~~ get the train.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Miss Meredith

For files. Revised by the President.



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR THE PRESS

Aug. 3, 1934.

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