

August 5, 1934

[Gloucester Park]

FDR Speech File

-0722

FOR THE PRESS

CAUTION: PLEASE OBSERVE RELEASE

August 5, 1934.

NOTE: This address of the President, to be delivered from Two Medicine Chalet, Glacier National Park, is released for publication in editions of newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 7:30 P.M., MOUNTAIN TIME -- 9:30 P.M. Eastern Standard Time -- SUNDAY, AUGUST 5, 1934.

Please safeguard against premature release.

STEPHEN EARLY

Assistant Secretary to the President.

- - - -

I have been back on the soil of the continental United States for three days after most interesting visits to our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Canal Zone and the Territory of Hawaii. I return with the conviction that their problems are essentially similar to those of us who live on the mainland and, furthermore, that they are enthusiastically doing their part to improve their conditions of life and thereby the conditions of life of all Americans.

On Friday and Saturday I had the opportunity of seeing the actual construction work under way in the first two national projects for the development of the Columbia River Basin. At Bonneville, Oregon, a great dam, 140 miles inland, at the last place where the river leaps down over rapids to sea level, will provide not only a large development of cheap power but also will enable vessels to proceed another 70 or 80 miles into the interior of the country.

At Grand Coulee, in north central Washington, an even greater dam will regulate the flow of the Columbia River, developing power and, in the future, will open up a large tract of parched land for the benefit of this and future generations. Many families in the days to come, I am confident, will thank us of this generation for providing small farms on which they will at least be able to make an honest and honorable livelihood.

Today, for the first time in my life, I have seen Glacier Park. Perhaps I can best express to you my thrill and delight by saying that I wish every American, old and young, could have been with me today. The great mountains, the glaciers, the lakes and the trees make me long to stay here for all the rest of the summer.

Comparisons are generally objectionable and yet it is not unkind to say from the standpoint of scenery alone that if many and indeed most of our American national parks were to be set down anywhere on the continent of Europe thousands of Americans would journey all the way across the ocean in order to see their beauties.

There is nothing so American as our national parks. The scenery and wild life are native and the fundamental idea behind the parks is native. It is, in brief, that the country belongs to the people; that what it is and what it is in the process of making is for the enrichment of the lives of all of us. Thus the parks stand as the outward symbol of this great human principle.

It was on a famous night, 64 years ago, that a group of men who had been exploring the Yellowstone country gathered about a campfire to discuss what could be done with that wonderland of beauty. It is said that one of the party, a lawyer from the State of Montana, Cornelius Hedges, advanced the idea that the region might be preserved for all time as a national park for the benefit of all the people of the Nation. As a result of that suggestion, Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872 by Act of Congress as a "pleasur^{ing} ground" for the people. I like that phrase because, in the years that have followed, our great series of parks in every part of the Union have become indeed a "pleasur^{ing} ground" for millions of Americans.

My old friend, Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior in the Wilson Administration, well described the policies governing the national park administration when he said:

"The policy to which the Service will adhere is based on three broad principles: First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our own time; second, that they are set apart for the use, observation, health and pleasure of the people; and, third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks."

The present National Park Service stands as an example of efficient and far-seeing governmental administration and to its former duties I added last year by transferring from other

departments many other parks, battlefield sites, memorials and national monuments. This concentration of responsibility has thus made it possible to embark on a permanent park policy as a great recreational and educational project -- one which no other country in the world has ever undertaken in such a broad way for protection of its natural and historic treasures and for the enjoyment of them by vast numbers of people.

Today I have seen some of the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps boys in this northwestern country. Of the three hundred thousand young men in these Camps, 75,000 are at work in our national parks. Here, under trained leadership, we are helping these men to help themselves and their families and at the same time we are making the parks more available and more useful for the average citizen. Hundreds of miles of firebreaks have been built, fire hazards have been reduced on great tracts of timberland, thousands of miles of roadside have been cleared, 2500 miles of trails have been constructed and 10,000 acres have been reforested. Other tens of thousands of acres have been treated for tree disease and soil erosion. This is but another example of our efforts to build, not for today alone but for tomorrow as well.

We should remember that the development of our national park system over a period of many years has not been a simple bed of roses. As is the case in the long fight for the preservation of national forests and water power and mineral deposits and other national possessions, it has been a long and fierce fight against many private interests which were entrenched in political and economic power. So, too, it has been a constant struggle to protect the public interest once cleared from private exploitation at the hands of the selfish few.

It took a bitter struggle to teach the country at large that our national resources are not inexhaustible and that, when public domain is stolen, a two-fold injury is done, for it is a theft of the treasure of the present and at the same time bars the road of opportunity to the future.

We have won the greater part of the fight to obtain and to retain these great public park properties for the benefit of the public. We are at the threshold of even more important a battle to save our resources of agriculture and industry against the selfishness of individuals.

The Secretary of the Interior in 1933 announced that this year of 1934 was to be emphasized as "National Parks Year." I am glad to say that there has been a magnificent response and that the number visiting our national parks has shown a splendid increase. But I decided today that every year ought to be "National Parks Year". That is why, with all the earnestness at my command, I express to you the hope that each and every one of you who can possibly find the means and opportunity for so doing will visit our national parks and use them as they are intended to be used. They are not for the rich alone. Camping is free, the sanitation is excellent. You will find them in every part of the Union. You will find glorious scenery of every character; you will find every climate; you will perform the double function of enjoying much and learning much.

We are definitely in an era of building, the best kind of building -- the building of great public projects for the benefit of the public and with the definite objective of building human happiness.

I believe, too, that we are building a better comprehension of our national needs. People understand, as never before, the splendid public purpose that underlies the development of great power sites, the improving of navigation, the prevention of floods and of the erosion of our agricultural fields, the prevention of forest fires, the diversification of farming and the distribution of industry. We know, more and more, that the East has a stake in the West and the West has a stake in the East, that the Nation must and shall be considered as a whole and not as an aggregation of disjointed groups.

May we come better to know every part of our great heritage in the days to come.

Facies Park



Aug. 5, 1939

1939

DRAFT

from R.M.

There is nothing so American as our national parks. The ⁱ
plant and animal life ~~that they conserve~~ is truly native. Little has
ever been introduced into them that comes from foreign soil. When, sixty
years ago, Yellowstone Park was established, it showed to the world a means
of enriching the national life through reserving for the use of the people
a great national possession. Moreover, the idea behind the parks is Ameri-
can. This idea is, in brief, that the country belongs to the people, not to
a special, privileged class, not to so-called protectors and conservators
of the people's rights, but truly to the people themselves. America belongs
to Americans. What it has and what it is in the process of making is for the
enrichment of the lives of all of us. The parks stand as the outward symbol
of this great human principle.

In ancient times, one of the most valued prerogatives of the
crown was the power of the king to convert any area that he desired into a
preservation for his own personal pleasure and use. This tendency was so
pronounced that the Barons at Runnymede considered as an important force upon
the King, a limitation in the Magna Carta upon the crown with regard to the

disposition of such lands. But this limitation of the King's power did not end the selfish use of the God-given resources of the land, because for centuries not only the King but the privileged classes found it possible to keep the people out of the choicest areas in England by the hard force of inhuman law. The privileged took what they wished; the commons sought a meagre satisfaction out of what remained.

The grotesqueness of this assumption of superiority is shown by the historic fact that a nobleman once prosecuted Shakespeare for trespassing on his game preserve. This nobleman is remembered only because of the distinction of the commoner whom the law permitted him to exclude from his private preserves.

It is a far cry from the Magna Carta to a famous night sixty-four years ago when a group of men who had been exploring the Yellowstone country gathered about a campfire to discuss what should be done with that wonderland of beauty. It is said that one of the group suggested that all file individual claims, one to take the geysers, another the canyons of the Yellowstone, and so on. Then Cornelius Hedges, a lawyer from the State of Montana, advanced the idea that individuals should forego personal gain in order that the region might be preserved for all time as a national park for the benefit of all the

people.

As a result of this suggestion Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872 by act of Congress as a "pleasuring ground" for the people. Within the next forty years a few other great parks were established.

Finally, in 1916, under the leadership of President Wilson, the National Park Service was created in the Department of the Interior for the purpose of maintaining and developing park areas. One of the most notable statements ever made by an American is contained in the discussion that Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of the Interior, incorporated in his statement of policies governing the National Park Administration:

"The administrative policy to which the new Service will adhere ~~now be announced. This policy~~ is based on three broad principles: First, that the national parks must be maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for the use of future generations as well as those of our own time; second, that they are set apart for the use, observation, health, and pleasure of the people; and third, that the national interest must dictate all decisions affecting public or private enterprise in the parks."

No aspect of American government has been guided by a more enlightened concept of the public interest or administered with greater care than the development of national parks. In the selection of new park areas

the strictest of principles is followed. To enjoy the distinction, a national park must not only be beautiful in an extraordinary sense, but must possess distinctive characteristics of its own that mark it out from other parks. Moreover, its beauty and distinction must entitle it to national recognition as distinguished from local ^{pride} ~~dominance~~ if it is to gain the status of a national park.

In the course of many years, however, the ~~parks~~ jurisdiction of the parks had become scattered throughout a number of separate Departments of the government. There was overlapping and confusion in responsibility. In order to remedy this situation and in the midst of many and diverse public burdens, Secretary Ickes, during his first year of office, found it possible to plan a complete reorganization of the National Park Service. By executive order on June 10, 1933, he transferred from the Navy Department to the Park Service a number of national military parks, national cemeteries, battlefield sites and several memorial sites. The order transferred from the Department of Agriculture several national monuments.

This concentration of responsibility has made it possible to conceive of a park policy in a true sense as a great recreational and educational project. No country in the world has ever undertaken such a broad

program for the protection of its natural and historic treasures as is now being formulated and developed through the National Park Service.

The Service now includes within its jurisdiction a vastly diversified and rich collection of national treasures. This extent and diversity are probably not generally known. The National Park Service administers twenty-four national parks, one national historical park, sixty-seven national monuments, eleven national military parks, ten battlefield sites, eleven national cemeteries and four miscellaneous memorials. These include land reservations comprising a total area of nearly fifteen million acres. They include such diverse natural beauties as Acadia in Maine with its granite mountains looking over the North Atlantic, the Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico, the active volcanoes of Hawaii, the hot springs of Arkansas, the Grand Canyon of Arizona, the great trees of California, the great Smokey Mountains of the South, and this great Glacier Park with its 250 glacier-fed lakes and its 60 glaciers. It includes the highest mountain of the American Continent, Mt. McKinley. Words fail to describe the aggregate splendors and wealth of this domain.

In our fight against the human losses of the depression we established the CCC and put more than ⁷⁵~~fifty~~ thousand men at work on our national parks. Here, under trained leadership, ~~the twin processes of human and natural resources~~

characters of men are saved and strengthened and the face of nature is made more useful and beautiful. There are nearly four hundred CCC camps under the supervision of the National Park Service, one hundred in the national parks and two hundred and seventy-two in state, county and metropolitan park areas.

These men have undertaken and brought to completion a vast number of projects. Hundreds of miles of fire-breaks have been built. Fire hazards have been reduced on hundreds of acres of land. Thousands of miles of roadside have been cleared, twenty-five hundred miles of trails and ten thousand acres have been reforested, more than one hundred thousand acres have been treated for disease. Tens of ~~hundreds~~ hundreds of acres have been given erosion control measures and landscape treatment.

While thousands of Americans everywhere are learning for the first time the advantages of seeking recreation in their own country, and the parks as recreational areas are becoming more and more popular, the recreational features of the parks are secondary to their educational uses. A wealth of materials furnishes the means of increasing knowledge. Plant and animal life are made secure in their native form.

~~I am told that~~ Our parks have saved a great American institution - the buffalo. The bears, too, are a delight to the tourists, except those who

insist upon becoming too familiar with them and get nipped and scratched in reproof. Do not worry about them, though. Follow a few simple national park rules, especially the one about not feeding bears from the hand. Properly disciplined, bears afford human beings much pleasure and not the least harm. Although our national park bears occasionally complain about too much regimentation and too much governmental interference with their business, most of them have learned that the regulation the government has provided for them and the fundamental protection they are now afforded from violence within their own ranks have given them the opportunity for much more peaceful living, much more profitable and secure, though lawful, adventuring, a longer life and a greater degree of internal satisfaction. Our park officials tell me that the bears are talking much less these days about regimentation and much more about co-operation.

And speaking of the diversified uses of the national parks, a story is told of the great Marshall Foch who visited several of our national parks after the War. Standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon, a mile above the Colorado River, he remarked to his guide, "What a place to bring a mother-in-law."

The care of the animals in the national parks embodies the true spirit of democracy. Deer, elk, moose, antelope and mountain sheep are

measurably protected from their enemies, the mountain lion (cougar) and the wolf. Even such smaller animals as the "picket pins", or ground squirrels, sit up and beg for food from the visitors.

Our national parks prove that it is possible under orderly conditions for large and small to share alike, with advantage to all.

The development of the national parks, giving impetus thirty years ago to the concept of the social use of the land, had its impact upon other national interests. Closely allied to this movement was the long fight for the preservation of national forests, water power, mineral deposits and other national possessions. It was a long and fierce fight that the champions of the public interest fought thirty years ago for this end. Private interests, entrenched with political and economic power, found it possible to prevail over the opposition of individual states, and even the national power found it difficult to protect the public interest from private exploitation.

More than thirty years ago, when Theodore Roosevelt became President, the first work that he took up was that of reclamation and forest preservation. As he tells it, a narrowly legalistic point of view obtained in the Federal government with regard to natural resources. The valuable national possessions were being disposed of in accordance with petty legal formalities

and, as President Roosevelt put it, "the habit of deciding, whenever possible, in favor of private interests against the public welfare was firmly fixed." The notion that national resources were inexhaustible still held sway and there was little official knowledge of their extent or value. Great water resources were dealt with not as a unified national problem, but as individual pork barrel prizes. The Bureau of Forestation was developed and vast forest reserves were set aside until, despite setbacks under administrations where private profit overshadowed the public interest, the nation is more than ever before in firm possession of its own treasures.

It was a long fight that we had to establish sound principles of public control. It took bitter fighting to teach the country at large the great principle that when public domain is stolen a twofold injury is done. It is not only stealing the treasure of the present, but barring the road of opportunity to the future. He who takes money without authorization is robbing the present and the past, but the man who takes away the opportunity of the people to use in the future those things that will contribute to their welfare is robbing not only the past and the present, but the future as well.

It is well in these days to turn back to some of the principles for which men fought in those days, and again I turn to the words of President

Roosevelt: "It is better for the government to help a poor man to ~~make~~ a living for his family than to help a rich man make more profit for his company."

The great battle to win these properties for the public has been practically completed. There lies before us the period of developing and using these properties for the benefit of the public. We are slowly establishing in our public lands and agricultural policy the further principle that a government which has for generations encouraged people to settle in the West to open up new lands, to stake their future upon the opportunities that may come to them in these lands, has a moral obligation to do everything within its power as a government to protect these people and their possessions. This means that insofar as the power of human effort and scientific discovery can be used by government to assist these people in their fight against the forces of nature, government must provide such assistance. This means that in the conservation of agricultural areas, wherever the short-sighted policies of private plunder and public enterprise have laid the foundation for destructive drought or flood, we must slowly, and even at great expense, seek to undo the wrong. It is a cowardly thing to stand in the face of natural obstacles and proclaim our incapacity to deal resolutely with these obstacles. We cannot perform miracles. No government and no administration can claim that. But what it

can do it should do in the spirit of cooperation and help that has made America what it is.

This great West that for generations has been the symbol of human adventure still calls for the doing of heroic deeds. It has been well said that while the age of individual adventure in the West is coming to a close, the period of national adventure, social adventure and cooperative adventure is just beginning. In the last analysis all national life is a great adventure.

Those who settled the Eastern coast asked for no promise of success. They asked for the privilege of trying. Those who built the highways of commerce East, West, North and South, sought no guarantees. And so those who built the fabric of our government were trying something new. What they were building was for the generous objective of a more ample common life, but the methods they pursued were human means. They demanded only the right to do the best they could. They made certain that ~~there~~ their objectives were sound and their motives pure. Human ingenuity with its defects and with its advantages was all that a wise Providence afforded them as a means of reaching their ends. And so in the spirit of America, which is the spirit of a great adventure ~~and~~ common living, we all must look to the future with confidence and courage.

ST §
To ~~L M H~~

add to paragraph on
C.C.C. - permanency of CCC

Insert ~~ed~~ in Glaciers
Speech a paragraph after
the CCC paragraph

From
T.R.

by Theodore Roosevelt

P. 292, Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter:

The practical common sense of the American people has been in no way made more evident during the last few years than by the creation and use of a series of large land reserves—situated for the most part on the great plains and among the mountains of the West—intended to keep the forests from destruction, and therefore to conserve the water supply. These reserves are, and should be, created primarily for economic purposes. The semi-arid regions can only support a reasonable population under conditions of the strictest economy and wisdom in the use of the water supply, and in addition to their other economic uses the forests are indispensablely necessary for the preservation of the water supply and for rendering possible its useful distribution throughout the proper seasons. In addition, however, to this economic use of the wilderness, selected portions of it have been kept here and there in a state of nature, not merely for the sake of preserving the forests and the water, but for the sake of preserving all its beauties and wonders unspoiled by greedy and short-sighted vandalism. What has been actually accomplished in the Yellowstone Park affords the best possible object-lesson as to the desirability and practicability of establishing such wilderness reserves. This reserve is a natural breeding-ground and nursery for those stately and beautiful haunters of the wilds which have now vanished from so many of the great forests, the vast lonely plains, and the high mountain ranges, where they once abounded.

322
Page 288, Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter, by Theodore Roosevelt:

.....Every believer in manliness, and therefore in manly sports, and every lover of nature, every man who appreciates the majesty and beauty of the wilderness and of wild life, should stike hands with the far-sighted men who wish to preserve our material resources, in the effort to keep our forests and our game beasts, game birds, and game fish--indeed, all the living creatures of prairie, and woodland, and seashore--from wanton destruction.

Above all, we should realize that the effort toward this end is essentially a democratic movement. It is entirely in our power as a nation to preserve large tracts of wilderness, which are valueless for agricultural purposes and unfit for settlement, as playgrounds for rich and poor alike, and to preserve the game so that it shall continue to exist for the benefit of all lovers of nature, and to give reasonable opportunities for the exercise of the skill of the hunter, whether ~~i~~ he is or is not a man of means. But this can only be achieved by wise laws and by a resolute enforcement of the laws. Lack of such legislation and administration ~~a~~ will result in harm to all of us, but most of all in harm to the nature lover who does not possess vast wealth.

(You may want to continue this paragraph on p. 329)

329 in edition of 1925