

November 16, 1934

[Speech on TVA]

FDR Speech File

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Reading Copy

Address at Harrodsburg, Kentucky

Nov. 16, 1934

GOVERNOR LAFFOON, MY FRIENDS OF KENTUCKY:

We, pioneers of 1934, are come together today to honor the pioneers of a century and a half ago.

On my journey hither I have been reading once more of those thrilling days which saw the first peopling of these fair lands beyond the mountains and seized the perfect moment which destiny offered to our forebears to create these United States.

It has seemed to me in reading history that Harrodsburg can lay claim to having been the scene of more historical first things than any other spot I have ever known. It seems not enough that this delightful and historic place was the first permanent settlement well beyond the mountains; that here were the earliest pioneer homes; that here came the first school teacher and the first doctor; that here was the first court in the West; to this you must add many other firsts -- the first corn raised in Kentucky, the first peach stones and apple seeds planted, the first wheat field, the first grist mill and perhaps most important of all, the first spinning wheel.

That is why I am happy that in addition to paying tribute to the memory of George Rogers Clark who led his men from here to his great invasion and preservation of the inland empire to the United States, you are also honoring the men and women who made his expedition possible and who followed him with the permanency of home building.

It has come to be a generally accepted rule of civilized nations that mere discovery of new lands conveys no sovereignty; and, indeed, that mere conquest conveys but little better title. It is, after all, only the peopling of the wilderness which gives permanency in the form of an ordered society.

There is a very definite analogy between those days and ours. Upon the pioneers of these great stretches of the central west were forced new activities because of the circumstances of their surroundings. They were compelled to hew out a new path -- a path that was dependent not on the axe and the rifle alone, but upon their ability to govern themselves in new ways as well.

To most of the pioneers the necessities of the new life called for efforts and experiments to which they had not been accustomed in their earlier years in the more ordered civilization of the Atlantic Seaboard. Survival itself demanded immediate and new action.

I have called us who are here today "pioneers of 1934." I mean everything that the word "pioneer" implies. We, too, in these latter years throughout the length and breadth of our land have come to a realization of the pregnant fact that the accustomed order of our formerly established lives does not suffice to meet the perils and the problems which we are compelled to face. Again, mere survival calls for new pioneering on our part.

Some portion of the blood of the Colonists and the blood of the pioneers who worked their way, through the generations, across the mountains and across the plains and again across the mountains until they came to the Pacific -- that blood is present in very large part in the veins of millions of our people. More than that, the example and the spirit of these earlier Americans is present in the mind and the heart of all our population.

The events which we here celebrate were so vital in the extension of the new nation that it has been thought proper for Congress to commemorate them not only in the spirit of gratitude but in the spirit of emulation as an example to guide us in the conquest of new frontiers of the spirit that are neither physical nor geographical.

We are carrying on, we shall carry on the purposes of these men and women of Harrodsburg. They were hewing out a Commonwealth -- and I like that word "Commonwealth."

We, too, are hewing out a Commonwealth -- a Commonwealth of the States which we hope will give to its people more truly than any that has gone before, the fulfillment of security, of freedom, of opportunity and of happiness which America asks and is entitled to receive.

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SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

November 16, 1934

Senator Barkley, Governor Laffoon, and, after what your Senior Senator has said, I think I can say, "My Fellow Pioneers": (Applause)

We, pioneers of 1934, are come together today to honor the pioneers of a century and a half ago. On my journey hither I have been reading once more of those thrilling days which saw the first peopling of these fair lands beyond the mountains and seized the perfect moment which destiny offered to our forebears to create these United States.

It has seemed to me in reading history that Harrodsburg can lay claim to having been the scene of more historical first things than any (other) spot I have ever known, and as you know, I am very much in favor of first things. It seems not enough that this delightful and historic place was the first permanent settlement well beyond the mountains; that there were here (were) the earliest pioneer homes; that here came the first school teacher and the first doctor; that here was the first court (in) of the West; that seems not enough, to this you must add many other firsts -- the first corn raised in Kentucky (laughter and applause), the first peach (stones) trees and apple (seeds) trees planted, the

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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.

Senator Barker, Governor Latham, and other distinguished

Senator Barker has said, I think I can say, "My fellow

citizens": (Applause)

We, citizens of 1934, are come together today to

honor the pioneers of a century and a half ago. On this

journey which I have been reading once more of these thrilling

and days which saw the first peopling of these fair lands

beyond the mountains and raised the first moment which

leading others to our borders to create these United States.

It has seemed to me in reading history that

historians can lay claim to having been the home of more

historical first things than any (other) spot I have ever

known, and as you know, I am very much in favor of first things.

It seems not enough that this delightful and historic place

was the first permanent settlement well beyond the mountains;

that there were here (here) the excellent pioneer homes; that

here came the first school teacher and the first doctor; that

here was the first court (in) of the West; that here was the first court in the West;

now, to this you must add many other firsts -- the first

corn raised in Kentucky (laughter and applause), the first

peach (cherries) (cherries and apples) (cherries and apples) planted, the

first wheat fields, the first grist mill and perhaps most important of all, the first spinning wheel.

That is why I am happy that in addition to paying tribute to the memory of George Rogers Clark who led his men from here to his great invasion and preservation of the inland empire to the United States, you are also honoring the men and women who made his expedition possible and who followed him with the permanency of home building.

It has come to be a generally accepted rule of civilized nations that mere discovery of new lands conveys no sovereignty; and, indeed, that mere conquest conveys but little better title. It is, after all, only the peopling of the wilderness which gives permanency in the form of an ordered society.

There is a very definite analogy between these days and our days. Upon the pioneers of those great stretches of the central west were forced new activities because of the circumstances of their surroundings. They were compelled to hew out a new path -- a path that was dependent not on the axe and the rifle alone, but upon their ability to govern themselves in new ways as well.

To most of the pioneers the necessities of the new life called for efforts and experiments to which they had not been accustomed in their earlier years in the more ordered civilization of the Atlantic Seaboard. For them, survival

itself demanded immediate and new action.

I have called those of us who are here today "pioneers of 1934." And I mean everything that that word "pioneer" implies. We, too, in these latter years throughout the length and breadth of our land have come to a realization of the pregnant fact that the accustomed order of our formerly established lives does not suffice to meet the perils and the problems which today we are compelled to face. Again, mere survival calls for a new pioneering on our part. (Applause)

Some portion of the blood of the Colonists and the blood of the pioneers who worked their way, through generations, across the mountains and across the plains and again across the mountains until they came to the Pacific -- that blood is present in very large part in the veins of millions of our people today and, in even greater part, in the veins of those whom I see before me today. More than that, the example and the spirit of those earlier Americans is present in the mind and the heart of all our population.

The events (which we here) they celebrate today were so vital in the extension of the new nation that it has been thought proper for Congress to commemorate them not only in the spirit of gratitude but in the spirit of emulation as an example to guide us in the conquest of new frontiers of the spirit, frontiers of the spirit that are neither physical nor geographical.

We are carrying on, we shall carry on the purposes of these men and women of Harrodsburg. (Applause) They were hewing out a Commonwealth -- and I like that word "Commonwealth."

All over this Nation we (too) are hewing out a Commonwealth -- a Commonwealth of the States which we hope will give to its people more truly than any that has gone before, the fulfillment of security, of freedom, of opportunity and of happiness which America asks and which America is entitled to receive. (Prolonged applause)

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY

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November 16, 1934

Governor Laffoon, my friends of Kentucky:

We, pioneers of 1934, are come together today to honor the pioneers of a century and a half ago. On my journey hither I have been reading once more of those thrilling days which saw the first peopling of these fair lands beyond the mountains and seized the perfect moment which destiny offered to our forebears to create these United States.

It has seemed to me in reading history that Harrodsburg can lay claim to having been the scene of more historical first things than any other spot I have ever known. It seems not enough that this delightful and historic place was the first permanent settlement well beyond the mountains; that here were the earliest pioneer homes, that here came the first school teacher and the first doctor; that here was the first court in the West; to this you must add many other firsts -- the first corn raised in Kentucky, the first peach stones and apple seeds planted, the first wheat field, the first grist mill and, perhaps most important of all, the first spinning wheel.

That is why I am happy that in addition to paying tribute to the memory of George Rogers Clark who led his men from here to his great invasion and preservation of the inland empire to the United States, you are also honoring the men and women who made his expedition possible and who followed him with the permanency of home building.

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There is a very definite analogy between those days and ours. Upon the pioneers of these great stretches of the central west were forced new activities because of the circumstances of their surroundings. They were compelled to hew out a new path -- a path that was dependent not on the axe and the rifle alone, but upon their ability to govern themselves in new ways as well.

To most of the pioneers the necessities of the new life called for efforts and experiments to which they had not been accustomed in their earlier years in the more ordered civilization of the Atlantic Seaboard. Survival itself demanded immediate and new action.

I have called us who are here today "pioneers of 1934." I mean everything that the word "pioneer" implies. We, too, in these latter years throughout the length and breadth of our land have come to a realization of the pregnant fact that the accustomed order of our formerly established lives does not suffice to meet the perils and the problems which we are compelled to face. Again, mere survival calls for new pioneering on our part.

Some portion of the blood of the Colonists and the blood of the pioneers who worked their way, through the generations, across the mountains and across the plains and again across the mountains until they came to the Pacific -- that blood is present in very large part in the veins of millions of our people. More than that, the example and the spirit of these earlier Americans is present in the mind and the heart of all our population.

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We are carrying on, we shall carry on, the purposes of these men and women of Harrodsburg. They were hewing out a Commonwealth -- and I like that word "Commonwealth."

We, too, are hewing out a commonwealth -- a Commonwealth of the States which we hope will give to its people more truly than any that has gone before, the fulfillment of security, of freedom, of opportunity and of happiness which America asks and is entitled to receive.

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STATEMENTS FILE

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GOVERNOR LAFFOON, MY FRIENDS OF KENTUCKY:

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That is why I am happy that in addition to paying tribute to the memory of George Rogers Clark who led his

men ~~through~~^{to} here ~~to~~^{his} great preservation of ~~our~~^{the} inland empire to the United States, you are also honoring the men and women who made his expedition possible and who followed him ~~us~~ with the permanency of home building.

It has come to be ^agenerally accepted rule of civilized nations that mere discovery of new lands conveys no sovereignty; and, indeed, that mere conquest conveys but little better title. It is, after all, only the peopling of the wilderness which ~~settles in the long run~~^{gives permanency in the form of an ordered society.}

There is a very definite analogy between those days and ours. Upon the pioneers of these great stretches of the central west ~~were~~^{were} forced new ~~conditions~~^{activities} because of the circumstances of their surroundings. They were compelled to hew out a new path - a path that was dependent not on the ax and the rifle alone, but upon their ability to govern themselves in new ways as well.

To most of the pioneers the necessities of the new life called for efforts and experiments to which they had not been accustomed in their earlier years in the ^{more} ordered civilization of the Atlantic Seaboard. Survival itself demanded immediate and new action.

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^{and the spirit} ample of these earlier Americans is present in the mind and the heart of all our population.

We are carrying on, we shall carry on ~~in~~ the ^{heritage} ~~spirit~~ of these men and women of Harrodsburg. They were hewing out a Commonwealth - and I like that work "Commonwealth."

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STATEMENTS FILE

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We are carrying on, we shall carry on the purposes of these men and women of Harrodsburg.^(C) They were hewing out a Commonwealth -- and I like that word "Commonwealth."

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We, ~~too~~, are hewing out a Commonwealth -- a Commonwealth of the States which we hope will give to its people more truly than any that has gone before, the fulfillment of security, of freedom, of opportunity and of happiness which America asks and ^{is} entitled to receive.

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