

November 18, 1934

[Tupelo, Mississippi]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI

November 18, 1934

Senator Harrison, Governor Conner, Mr. Mayor, my  
friends:

I would not make a speech to you today because we  
are assembled on this glorious Sunday morning more as neighbors  
than as anything else.

I have had a very wonderful three days and everywhere  
that I have gone, the good people have come as neighbors to  
talk with me, and they have not come by the thousands -- they  
have come literally by the acres.

This is the first time in my life that I have had the  
privilege of seeing this section of the State of Mississippi.  
Many, many years ago, when Pat Harrison and I were almost boys,  
I got acquainted with his stamping ground down on the Gulf.  
Today I am especially glad to come into the northern part of  
the State.

Two years ago, in 1932, during the campaign, and again  
in January, 1933, I came through Kentucky -- through the  
Tennessee Valley -- and what I saw on those trips -- what I saw  
of human beings, made the tears come to my eyes. The great  
outstanding thing to me for these past three days has been the  
change in the looks on people's faces. It has not been only a  
physical thing. It has not been the contrast between what was  
actually a scarcity of raiment two years ago or a lack of food

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 Harrison, Governor Connor, Mr. Mayor,  
Friends:  
I would not make a speech to you today because we are assembled on this kitchen Sunday morning more as neighbors than as listening ears.  
I have had a very wonderful time here and everywhere that I have gone. The good people have come as neighbors to talk with me, and they have not come by the thousands -- they have come literally by the scores.  
This is the first time in my life that I have had the privilege of seeing this section of the State of Mississippi. Just, only years ago, when Pat Harrison and I were almost shot, I got acquainted with his steeple growing down on the Gulf. Today I am especially glad to come into the northern part of the State.  
Two years ago, in 1931, during the campaign, and again in January, 1933, I came through Kentucky -- through the Tennessee Valley -- and that I saw on those trips -- what I saw of human beings, made the years come to my eyes. The great outstanding thing to me for these past three days has been the change in the looks on people's faces. It has not been only a physical thing. It has not been the contrast between what was actually a scarcity of almost two years ago or a lack of food

two years ago -- the contrast between that and better clothing and more food today -- but it is a something in people's faces and I think you understand what I mean. There wasn't much hope in those days. People were wondering what was going to come to this country. And yet today I see not only hope but I see determination -- knowledge that all is well with the country and that we are coming back.

I suppose that you good people know a great deal more of the efforts that we have been making in regard to the work of the Tennessee Valley Authority than I do because you have seen its application in your own counties and your own towns and your own homes and, therefore, it will be like carrying coals to Newcastle for me to tell you about what has been done.

But perhaps in referring to it I can use you as a text -- a text that may be useful to many other parts of the Nation, because people's eyes are upon you and because what you are doing here is going to be copied in every state of the Union before we get through.

We recognize that there will be a certain amount of -- what shall I say? -- rugged opposition to this development, but I think we recognize also that the opposition is fading as the weeks and the months go by, fading in the light of practical experience.

I cite certain figures for the benefit of the gentlemen of the press, who have come hither from many climes. I am told

that from March of this year, when you started using TVA power, the consumption of power for residential purposes has risen from 41,000 kilowatts to 89,000 kilowatts -- an increase of 126%. I understand that from the financial point of view, in spite of various fairy tales that have been spread in other parts of the country, your power system is still paying taxes to the municipality. That is worth remembering. Furthermore, that as a whole it is a remarkable business success.

I talk about those figures first because it has been so often wrongly alleged that this yardstick which we are using could not be applied to private businesses because a government yardstick receives so many favors; that it is let off from paying this and paying that and paying the other thing. Well, we are proving in this Tennessee Valley that by using good business methods we can instruct a good many business men in the country.

And there is another side of it. I have forgotten the exact figures and I can't find them in this voluminous report at this moment, but the number of new refrigerators that have been put in -- that means something besides just plain dollars and cents. That means a greater human happiness. Electric cookstoves and all the other dozens of things which, when I was in the Navy, we used to call "gadgets" -- we are making it possible, all of us working together, to improve human life through the introduction of things that aren't especially new so

far as invention is concerned, but things which are becoming more and more necessities in our American life in every part of the country.

And I have been interested this morning in seeing these new homesteads -- not just the buildings, not just the land that they are on, not just the excellent landscaping of the trees among which those homes have been set, but especially the opportunities that those homes are giving to families to improve the standard of living.

And finally, my friends, there is one thing about all that you are doing here in Tupelo, that they are doing in Corinth, that they are doing in Athens and Norris, and the various other places where accomplishment can be seen today -- aye, the most important thing of all I think is that it is being done by the communities themselves. This is not coming from Washington -- it is coming from you. You are not being Federalized. We still believe in the community; and things are going to advance in this country exactly in proportion to the community effort. This is not regimentation -- it is community rugged individualism. It means no longer the kind of rugged individualism that allows an individual to do this, that or the other thing that will hurt his neighbors. He is forbidden to do that from now on -- and it is a mighty good thing. But he is going to be encouraged in every known way from the National Capitol and the state

capitol and the county seat to use his individualism in co-operation with his neighbors' individualism so that he and his neighbors both may improve their lot in life.

Yes, I have been thrilled by these three days -- thrilled in the knowledge not only of practical accomplishment but thrilled also in the belief -- the deep-seated belief on my part that the people of this Nation understand what we are trying to do, are cooperating with what we are trying to do and have made up their minds that we are going to do it.

And so, in saying "Goodbye" to you for a short time -- because I am coming back -- I ask all of you, throughout the length and breadth of the Tennessee Valley and those areas which form an economic portion of that Valley -- I ask you all to remember that the responsibility for success lies very largely with you, that the eyes of the nation are upon you and that I, for one, am confident that you are going to give to the Nation an example which will be a benefit not only to yourselves but to the whole one hundred and thirty millions of Americans in every part of the land.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stenographic Report of the

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

Tupelo, Miss., Nov. 18, 1934.

Senator Harrison, Governor Connor, Mr. Mayor,  
my friends:

I would not make a speech to you today because we are assembled on this glorious Sunday morning more as neighbors than as anything else.

I have had a very wonderful three days and everywhere that I have gone, the good people have come as neighbors to talk with me, and they have not come by the thousands -- they have come literally by the acres.

This is the first time in my life that I have had the privilege of coming into this section of the State of Mississippi. Many, many years ago, when Pat Harrison and I were almost mere boys, I got acquainted with his stamping ground down on the Gulf and I am especially glad to come into the northern part of the State.

Two years ago, in 1932, during the campaign, and again in January, 1933, I came down through Kentucky -- through the Tennessee Valley -- and what I saw on those



trips -- what I saw of human beings, made the tears come to my eyes. The great outstanding thing to me for these past three days has been the change in the looks on people's faces. It has not been only a physical thing. It has not been the contrast between what was actually a scarcity of raiment two years ago or a lack of food two years ago -- the contrast between that and better clothing and more food today -- but it is a something in people's faces and I think you know what I mean. There wasn't much hope in those days. People were wondering what was going to come to this country. And yet today I see not only hope but I see determination -- knowledge that all is well with the country and that we are coming back.

I suppose that you good people know a great deal more of the efforts that we have been making in regard to the work of the Tennessee Valley Authority than I do because you have seen its application in your own counties and your own towns and your own homes and, therefore, it will be like carrying coals to Newcastle for me to tell you about what has been done.

But perhaps in referring to it I can use you as a text -- a text that may be useful to many other parts of the Nation, because people's eyes are upon you and because what you are doing here is going to be copied in every state of the Union before we get through.

We recognize that there will be a certain amount of -- what shall I say? -- rugged opposition to this development, but I think we recognize also that the opposition is fading as the weeks and the months go by, fading in the light of practical experience.

I cite certain figures for the benefit of the gentlemen of the press, who have come hither from many climes. I am told that from March of this year, when you started using TVA power, the consumption of power for residential purposes has risen from 41,000 kilowatts to 89,000 kilowatts -- an increase of 126%. I understand that from the financial point of view, in spite of various fairy tales that have been spread in other parts of the country, your power system is still paying taxes to the municipality. That is worth remembering. Furthermore, that as a whole it is a remarkable business (PP) success. I talk about those figures first because it has been so often alleged that this yardstick which we are using could not be applied to private businesses because a government yardstick receives so many favors; it is let off from paying this and paying that and paying the other thing. Well, we are proving in this Tennessee Valley that by using good business methods we can instruct a good many business men in the country.

And there is another side of it. I have forgotten the exact figures and I can't find them in this voluminous report at this moment, but the number of new refrigerators that have been put in -- that means something besides just plain dollars and cents. That means a greater human happiness. Electric cookstoves and all the other dozens of things ~~which~~ which, when I was in the Navy, we used to call "gadgets" -- we are making it possible, all of us working together, to improve human life through the introduction of things that aren't especially new<sup>d</sup> so far as invention is concerned, but things which are becoming more and more necessities in our American life in every part of the country.

And I have been interested this morning in seeing these new homesteads -- not just the buildings, not just the land that they are on, not just the excellent landscaping of the trees among which those homes have been set, but especially the opportunities that those homes are giving to families to improve the standard of living.

And finally, my friends, there is one thing about all <sup>you</sup> that<sup>are</sup> doing here in Tupelo, that they are doing in Corinth, that they are doing in Athens and Norris and the various other places where accomplishment can be seen today -- aye, the most important thing of all I think is that it is being done by the communities themselves. This isn't coming from Washington -- it is coming from you.

No PP

You are not being Federalized. We still believe in the community and things are going to advance in this country exactly in proportion to the community effort. This is not regimentation --- it is community ~~ing~~ rugged individualism. It means no longer the kind of rugged individualism that allows an individual to this, that or the other thing that ~~may~~ <sup>will</sup> hurt his neighbors. He is forbidden to do that from now on ~~and~~ -- and it is a mighty good thing. But he is going to be encouraged in every known way from the National Capitol and the state capitol and the county seat to use his individualism in cooperation with his neighbors' individualism so that he and his neighbors both may improve their lot ~~of~~ in life.

Yes, I have been thrilled by these three days -- thrilled in the knowledge not only of practical accomplishment but thrilled also in the belief -- the deep-seated belief on my part that the people of this Nation understand what we are trying to do, are cooperating with what we are trying to do and have made up their minds that we are going to do it.

And so, in saying "Goodbye" to you for a short time -- because I am coming back -- I ask all of you, throughout the length and breadth of the Tennessee Valley and those areas which form an economic portion of that Valley -- I ask you all to remember that the responsibility for success lies very largely with you, that the eyes of the

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Mar 1934

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - M. H. McIntyre  
Assistant Secretary to the President.

Stenographic Report of the  
EXTEMPORANEOUS ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
Tupelo, Miss., November 18, 1934.

Senator Harrison, Governor Connor, Mr. Mayor, my friends:

I would not make a speech to you today because we are assembled on this glorious Sunday morning more as neighbors than as anything else.

I have had a very wonderful three days and everywhere that I have gone, the good people have come as neighbors to talk with me, and they have not come by the thousands -- they have come literally by the acres.

This is the first time in my life that I have had the privilege of seeing this section of the State of Mississippi. Many, many years ago, when Pat Harrison and I were almost boys, I got acquainted with his stamping ground down on the Gulf. Today I am especially glad to come into the northern part of the State.

Two years ago, in 1932, during the campaign, and again in January, 1933, I came through Kentucky -- through the Tennessee Valley -- and what I saw on those trips -- what I saw of human beings, made the tears come to my eyes. The great outstanding thing to me for these past three days has been the change in the looks on people's faces. It has not been only a physical thing. It has not been the contrast between what was actually a scarcity of raiment two years ago or a lack of food two years ago -- the contrast between that and better clothing and more food today -- but it is a something in people's faces and I think you understand what I mean. There wasn't much hope in those days. People were wondering what was going to come to this country. And yet today I see not only hope but I see determination -- knowledge that all is well with the country and that we are coming back.

I suppose that you good people know a great deal more of the efforts that we have been making in regard to the work of the Tennessee Valley Authority than I do because you have seen its application in your own counties and your own towns and your own homes and, therefore, it will be like carrying coals to Newcastle for me to tell you about what has been done.

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I cite certain figures for the benefit of the gentlemen of the press, who have come hither from many climes. I am told that from March of this year, when you started using TVA power, the consumption of power for residential purposes has risen from 41,000 kilowatts to 59,000 kilowatts -- an increase of 126%. I understand that from the financial point of view, in spite of various fairy tales that have been spread in other parts of the country, your power system is still paying taxes to the municipality. That is worth remembering. Furthermore, that as a whole it is a remarkable business success.

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# STATEMENTS FILE

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(3)

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