
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. 795

1935 August 24

**Radio Address to Young Democratic Clubs of
America Convention - Milwaukee, WI**

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE YOUNG
DEMOCRATIC CLUBS OF AMERICA, FROM THE
DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE

August 24, 1935

I am deeply sorry that I have had to forego the opportunity of accompanying my old friend, Senator Ryan Duffy, to Milwaukee to be with you, as I had planned, tonight. But the closing days of a far-reaching and memorable session of the Congress of the United States keep me here in Washington.

You doubtless know everything that I am going to say to you -- because starting as early as last Monday certain special writers of a few papers have given you a complete outline of my remarks. I have been interested and somewhat amused by these clairvoyants who put on the front page many days ago this speech, which, because of pressure of time, I could only think out and dictate this very morning.

Whatever his party affiliations may be, the President of the United States, in addressing the youth of the country -- even when speaking to the younger citizens of his own party -- should speak as President of the whole people. It is true that the Presidency carries with it, for the time being, the leadership of a political party as well. But the Presidency carries with it a far higher

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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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 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.

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A man of my generation comes to the councils of the younger warriors in a very different spirit from that in which the older men addressed the youth of my time. Party or professional leaders who talked to us twenty-five or thirty years ago almost inevitably spoke in a mood of achievement and of exultation. They addressed us with the air of those who had won the secret of success for themselves and of permanence of achievement for their country for all generations to come. They assumed that there was a guarantee of final accomplishment for the people of this country and that the grim spectre of insecurity and want among the great masses would never haunt this land of plenty as it had widely visited other portions of the world. And so the elders of that day used to tell us, in effect, that the job of youth was merely to copy them and thereby to preserve the great things they had won for us.

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heritage, spiritual and material, that comes down to us. There are lessons that it teaches that we abandon only at our own peril. "Hold fast to that which is permanently true," is still a counsel of wisdom.

While my elders were talking to me about the perfection of America, I did not know then of the lack of opportunity, the lack of education, the lack of many of the essential needs of civilization; that all these existed among millions of our people who lived not alone in the slums of the great cities and in the forgotten corners of rural America -- existed even under the very noses of those who had the advantages and the power of Government of those days.

I say from my heart that no man of my generation has any business to address youth unless he comes to that task not in a spirit of exultation, but in a spirit of humility. I cannot expect you of a newer generation to believe me, of an older generation, if I do not frankly acknowledge that had the generation that brought you into the world been wiser and more provident and more unselfish, you would have been saved from needless difficult problems and needless pain and suffering. We may not have failed you in good intentions but we have certainly not been adequate in results. Your task, therefore, is not only to maintain the best in your heritage, but to labor to

lift from the shoulders of the American people some of the burdens that the mistakes of a past generation have placed there.

There was a time when the formula for success was the simple admonition to have a stout heart and willing hands. A great, new country lay open. When life became hard in one place it was necessary only to move on to another. But circumstances have changed all that. Today we can no longer escape into virgin territory: we must master our environment. The youth of this generation finds that the old frontier is occupied, but that science and invention and economic evolution have opened up a new frontier -- one not based on geography but on the resourcefulness of men and women applied to the old frontier.

The cruel suffering of the recent depression has taught us unforgettable lessons. We have been compelled by stark necessity to unlearn the too comfortable superstition that the American soil was mystically blessed with every kind of immunity to grave economic maladjustments, and that the American spirit of individualism -- all alone and unhelped by the cooperative efforts of Government -- could withstand and repel every form of economic disarrangement or crisis. The severity of the recent depression, toward which we had been heading for a whole generation,

has taught us that no economic or social class in the community is so richly endowed and so independent of the general community that it can safeguard its own security, let alone assure security for the general community.

The very objectives of young people have changed. In the older days a great financial fortune was too often the goal. To rule through wealth, or through the power of wealth, fired our imagination. This was the dream of the golden ladder -- each individual for himself.

It is my firm belief that the newer generation of America has a different dream. You place emphasis on sufficiency of life, rather than on a plethora of riches. You think of the security for yourself and your family that will give you good health, good food, good education, good working conditions, and the opportunity for normal recreation and occasional travel. Your advancement, you hope, is along a broad highway on which thousands of your fellow men and women are advancing with you.

You and I know that this modern economic world of ours is governed by rules and regulations vastly more complex than those laid down in the days of Adam Smith or John Stuart Mill. They faced simpler mechanical processes and social needs. It is worth remembering, for example, that the business corporation, as we know it, did not exist in the days of Washington and Hamilton and Jefferson.

Private businesses then were conducted solely by individuals or by partnerships in which every member was immediately and wholly responsible for success or failure. Facts are relentless. We must adjust our ideas to the facts of today.

Our concepts of the regulation of money and credit and industrial competition, of the relation of employer and employee created for the old civilization, are being modified to save our economic structure from confusion, destruction and paralysis. The rules that governed the relationship between an employer and employee in the blacksmith's shop in the days of Washington cannot, of necessity, govern the relationship between the fifty thousand employees of a great corporation and the infinitely complex and diffused ownership of that corporation. If fifty thousand employees spoke with fifty thousand voices, there would be a modern Tower of Babel. That is why we insist on their right to choose their representatives to bargain collectively in their behalf with their employer. In the case of the employees, every individual employee will know in his daily work whether he is adequately represented or not. In the case of the hundreds of thousands of stockholders in the present day ownership of great corporations, however, their knowledge of the success of the management is based too often solely on a financial balance

sheet. Things may go wrong in the management without their being aware of it for a year, or for many years to come. Without their day to day knowledge they may be exploited and their investments jeopardized. Therefore, we have come to the recognition of the need of simple but adequate public protection for the rights of the investing public.

A rudimentary concept of credit control appropriate for financing the economic life of a nation of 3,000,000 people can hardly be urged as a means of directing and protecting the welfare of our Twentieth Century industrialism. The simple banking rules of Hamilton's day, when all the transactions of a fair-sized bank could be kept in the neat penmanship of a clerk in one large ledger, fail to protect the millions of individual depositors of a great modern banking institution. And so it goes through all the range of economic life. Aggressive enterprise and shrewd invention have been at work on our economic machine. Our rules of conduct for the operation of that machine must be subjected to the same constant development.

And so in our social life. Forty years ago, slum conditions in our great cities were much worse than today. Living conditions on farms and working conditions in mines and factories were primitive. But they were taken for granted. Few people considered that the Government had

responsibility for sanitation, for safety devices, for preventing child labor and night work for women. In 1911, twenty-four years ago, when I was first a member of the New York State Legislature, a number of the younger members of the Legislature worked against these old conditions and called for laws governing factory inspection, for workmen's compensation and for the limitation of work for women and children to fifty-four hours, with one day's rest in seven. Those of us who joined in this movement in the Legislature were called reformers, socialists, and wild men. We were opposed by many of the same organizations and the same individuals who are now crying aloud about the socialism involved in social security legislation, in bank deposit insurance, in farm credit, in the saving of homes, in the protection of investors and the regulation of public utilities. The reforms, however, for which we were condemned twenty-four years ago are taken today as a matter of course. And so, I believe, will be regarded the reforms that now cause such concern to the reactionaries of 1935. We come to an understanding of these new ways of protecting people because our knowledge enlarges and our capacity for organized action increases. People have learned that they can carry their burdens effectively only by cooperation. We have found out how to conquer the ravages of diseases that years ago were regarded

as unavoidable and inevitable. We must learn that many other social ills can be cured.

Let me emphasize that serious as have been the errors of unrestrained individualism, I do not believe in abandoning the system of individual enterprise. The freedom and opportunity that have characterized American development in the past can be maintained if we recognize the fact that the individual system of our day calls for the collaboration of all of us to provide, at the least, security for all of us. Those words "freedom" and "opportunity" do not mean a license to climb upwards by pushing other people down.

Any paternalistic system which tries to provide for security for everyone from above only calls for an impossible task and a regimentation utterly uncongenial to the spirit of our people. But Government cooperation to help make the system of free enterprise work, to provide that minimum security without which the competitive system cannot function, to restrain the kind of individual action which in the past has been harmful to the community -- that kind of governmental cooperation is entirely consistent with the best tradition of America.

Just as the evolution of economic and social life has shown the need for new methods and practices, so has the new political life developed the need for new political

practices and methods. Government now demands the best trained brains of every business and profession. Government today requires higher and higher standards of those who would serve it. It must bring to its service greater and greater competence. The conditions of public work must be improved and protected. Mere party membership and loyalty can no longer be the exclusive test. We must be loyal not merely to persons or parties, but to the higher conceptions of ability and devotion that modern government requires.

There was a day when political sages, or those who controlled them, took the attitude that anything new, or what they called "new-fangled", would lead to dire results. There is nothing new in those prophecies of gloom. I read these lines in a paper the other day -- a little poem entitled GOING TO THE DOGS:

My grandpa notes the world's worn cogs,
And says we're going to the dogs;
His granddad in his house of logs,
Swore things were going to the dogs;
His dad, among the Flemish bogs,
Vowed things were going to the dogs;
The caveman in his queer skin togs,
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But this is what I wish to state -
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I would be lacking in any sense of responsibility and lacking in elementary courage if I shared in such a hopeless attitude.

I, for one, am willing to place my trust in the youth of America. If they demand action as well as preachments, I should be ashamed to chill their enthusiasm with the dire prophecy that to change is to destroy. I am unwilling to sneer at the vision of youth merely because vision is sometimes mistaken. But vision does not belong only to the young.

There are millions of older people who have vision, just as there are some younger men and women who are ready to put a weary, selfish or greedy hand upon the clock of progress and turn it back.

We who seek to go forward must ever guard ourselves against a danger which history teaches. More than ever, we cherish the elective form of democratic government, but progress under it can easily be retarded by disagreements that relate to method and to detail rather than to the broad objectives upon which we are agreed. It is as if all of us were united in the pursuit of a common goal, but that each and every one of us were marching along a separate road of our own. If we insist on choosing different roads, most of us will not reach our common destination. The reason that the forces of reaction so often defeat the forces of progress is that the Tories of the world are agreed and united in standing still on the same old spot and, therefore, never run the danger of

getting lost on divergent trails. One might remark in passing that one form of standing still on the same spot consists in agreeing to condemn all progress and letting it go at that.

Therefore, to the American youth of all parties I submit a message of confidence, -- Unite and Challenge! Rules are not necessarily sacred -- Principles are. The methods of the old order are not, as some would have you believe, above the challenge of youth.

Let us carry on the good that the past gave us. The best of that good is the spirit of America. And the spirit of America is the spirit of inquiry, of readjustment, of improvement, above all a spirit in which youth can find the fulfillment of its ideals. It is for the new generation to participate in the decisions and to give strength and spirit and continuity to our Government and to our national life.

AUGUST 24 1936

.. The following address of the President to the Young Democratic Clubs of America, to be delivered by radio when the President speaks tonight from the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House, MUST BE KEPT FOR RELEASE and no portion, synopsis or intimation is to be published or given out in advance of delivery.

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I am deeply sorry that I have had to forego the opportunity of accompanying my old friend, Senator Ryan Duffy, to Milwaukee to be with you, as I had planned, tonight. But the closing days of a far-reaching and memorable session of the Congress of the United States keep me here in Washington.

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Our concepts of the regulation of money and credit and industrial competition, of the relation of employer and employee created for the old civilization, are being modified to save our economic structure from confusion, destruction and paralysis. The rules that governed the relationship between an

employer and employee in the blacksmith's shop in the days of Washington cannot, of necessity, govern the relationship between the fifty thousand employees of a great corporation and the infinitely complex and diffused ownership of that corporation. If fifty thousand employees spoke with fifty thousand voices, there would be a modern Tower of Babel. That is why we insist on their right to choose their representatives to bargain collectively in their behalf with their employer. In the case of the employees, every individual employee will know in his daily work whether he is adequately represented or not. In the case of the hundreds of thousands of stockholders in the present day ownership of great corporations, however, their knowledge of the success of the management is based too often solely on a financial balance sheet. Things may go wrong in the management without their being aware of it for a year, or for many years to come. Without their day to day knowledge they may be exploited and their investments jeopardized. Therefore, we have come to the recognition of the need of simple but adequate public protection for the rights of the investing public.

A rudimentary concept of credit control appropriate for financing the economic life of a nation of 3,000,000 people can hardly be urged as a means of directing and protecting the welfare of our Twentieth Century industrialism. The simple banking rules of Hamilton's day, when all the transactions of a fair-sized bank could be kept in the neat penmanship of a clerk in one large ledger, fail to protect the millions of individual depositors of a great modern banking institution. And so it goes through all the range of economic life. Aggressive enterprise and shrewd invention have been at work on our economic machine. Our rules of conduct for the operation of that machine must be subjected to the same constant development.

And so in our social life. Forty years ago, slum conditions in our great cities were much worse than today. Living conditions on farms and working conditions in mines and factories were primitive. But they were taken for granted. Few people considered that the Government had responsibility for sanitation, for safety devices, for preventing child labor and night work for

women. In 1911, twenty-four years ago, when I was first a member of the New York State Legislature, a number of the younger members of the Legislature worked against these old conditions and called for laws governing factory inspection, for workmen's compensation and for the limitation of work for women and children to fifty-four hours, with one day's rest in seven. Those of us who joined in this movement in the Legislature were called reformers, socialists, and wild men. We were opposed by many of the same organizations and the same individuals who are now crying aloud about the socialism involved in social security legislation, in bank deposit insurance, in farm credit, in the saving of homes, in the protection of investors and the regulation of public utilities. The reforms, however, for which we were condemned twenty-four years ago are taken today as a matter of course. And so, I believe, will be regarded the reforms that now cause such concern to the reactionaries of 1935. We come to an understanding of these new ways of protecting people because our knowledge enlarges

and our capacity for organized action increases.

People have learned that they can carry their burdens effectively only by cooperation. We have found out how to conquer the ravages of diseases that years ago were regarded as unavoidable and inevitable. We must learn that many other social ills can be cured.

Let me emphasize that serious as have been the errors of unrestrained individualism, I do not believe in abandoning the system of individual enterprise. The freedom and opportunity that have characterized American development in the past can be maintained if we recognize the fact that the individual system of our day calls for the collaboration of all of us to provide, at the least, security for all of us. Those words "freedom" and "opportunity" do not mean a license to climb upwards by pushing other people down.

Any paternalistic system which tries to provide for security for everyone from above only calls for an impossible task and a regimentation utterly uncongenial to the spirit of our

people. But Government cooperation to help make the system of free enterprise work, to provide that minimum security without which the competitive system cannot function, to restrain the kind of individual action which in the past has been harmful to the community -- that kind of governmental cooperation is entirely consistent with the best tradition of America.

Just as the evolution of economic and social life has shown the need for new methods and practices, so has the new political life developed the need for new political practices and methods. Government now demands the best trained brains of every business and profession. Government today requires higher and higher standards of those who would serve it. It must bring to its service greater and greater competence. The conditions of public work must be improved and protected. Mere party membership and loyalty can no longer be the exclusive test. We must be loyal not merely to persons or parties, but to the higher conceptions of ability and devotion that modern government requires.

There was a day when political sages, or those who controlled them, took the attitude that anything new, or what they called "new-fangled", would lead to dire results. There is nothing new in those prophecies of gloom. I read these lines in a paper the other day -- a little poem entitled GOING TO THE DOGS:

My grandpa notes the world's worn cogs,
And says we're going to the dogs;
His granddad in his house of logs,
Swore things were going to the dogs;
His dad, among the Flemish bogs,
Vowed things were going to the dogs;
The caveman in his queer skin togs,
Said things were going to the dogs;
But this is what I wish to state -
The dogs have had an awful wait.

I would be lacking in any sense of responsibility and lacking in elementary courage if I shared in such a hopeless attitude.

I, for one, am willing to place my trust in the youth of America. If they demand action as well as preachments, I should be ashamed to chill their enthusiasm with the dire prophecy that to change is to destroy. I am unwilling to sneer at the vision of youth merely because vision is sometimes mistaken. But vision does not belong only to the young.

There are millions of older people who have vision, just as there are some younger men and women who are ready to put a weary, selfish or greedy hand upon the clock of progress and turn it back.

We who seek to go forward must ever guard ourselves against a danger which history teaches. More than ever, we cherish the elective form of democratic government, but progress

under it can easily be retarded by disagreements that relate to method and to detail rather than to the broad objectives upon which we are agreed. It is as if all of us were united in the pursuit of a common goal, but that each and every one of us were marching along a separate road of our own. If we insist on choosing different roads, most of us will not reach our common destination. The reason that the forces of reaction so often defeat the forces of progress is that the Tories of the world are agreed and united in standing still on the same old spot and, therefore, never run the danger of getting lost on divergent trails. One might remark in passing that one form of standing still on the same spot consists in agreeing to condemn all progress and letting it go at that.

Therefore, to the American youth of all parties I submit a message of confidence, - Unite and Challenge! Rules are not necessarily sacred - Principles are. The methods of the old order are not, as some would have you believe, above the challenge of youth.

Let us carry on the good that the past gave us. The best of that good is the spirit of America. And the spirit of America is the spirit of inquiry, of readjustment, of improvement, above all a spirit in which youth can find the fulfillment of its ideals. It is for the new generation to participate in the decisions and to give strength and spirit and continuity to our Government and to our national life.

August 24, 1935.

MY FRIENDS OF THE YOUNG DEMOCRATIC CLUBS OF AMERICA:

I am deeply sorry that I have had to forego the opportunity of accompanying my old friend, Senator Ryan Duffy, to Milwaukee to be with you, as I had planned, tonight. But the closing days of a far-reaching and memorable session of the Congress of the United States keep me here in Washington.

You doubtless know everything that I am going to say to you — because starting as early as last Monday certain special writers of a few papers have given you ^{Complete} outline of my remarks. I have been interested and somewhat amused by these clairvoyants who put on the front page many days ago this speech, which, because of pressure of time, I could only think out and dictate ~~at~~ ^{very} this morning.

Whatever his party affiliations may be, the President of the United States, in addressing the youth of the country — even when speaking to the younger citizens of his own party — should speak as President of the whole people. It is true that the Presidency carries with it,

for the time being, the leadership of a political party as well. But the Presidency carries with it far higher obligation than this - the duty of analyzing and setting forth national needs and ideals which transcend and cut across all lines of party affiliation. Therefore, what I am about to say to you, members of the Young Democratic Clubs, is precisely - word for word - what I would say were I addressing a convention of the youth of the Republican Party.

A man of my generation comes to the councils of the younger warriors in a very different spirit from that in which the older men addressed the youth of my time. Party or professional leaders who talked to us twenty-five or thirty years ago almost inevitably spoke in a mood of achievement and of exultation. They addressed us with the air of those who had won the secret of success for themselves and of permanence of achievement for their country for all generations to come. They assumed that there was a guarantee of final accomplishment for the people of this country and that the grim spectre of insecurity and want among the great masses would never haunt this land of plenty as it had widely visited other portions of the world. And so the elders of

that day used to tell us, in effect, that the job of youth was merely to copy them and thereby to preserve the great things they had won for us.

I have no desire to underestimate the achievements of the past. We have no right to speak slightingly of the heritage, spiritual and material, that comes down to us. There are lessons that it teaches that we abandon only at our own peril. "Hold fast to that which is true," is still a counsel of wisdom. But we must be very certain that that which is true is a permanent truth and not a mere expediency, that is good for one day and not for another.

~~I did not know then but I know today that while~~
my elders were talking to me about the perfection of America,
~~I did not know whether~~ ~~of the~~
lack of opportunity, lack of education, lack of many of the
essential needs of civilization; ~~that~~ all these existed among
millions of our people who lived not along in the slums of
the great cities and in the forgotten corners of rural
America, ~~but~~ existed under the very noses of those who had
the advantages and the power of Government of those days.

I say ~~in all sadness~~ ^{from my} heart that no man of
my generation has any business to address youth unless he
comes to that task not in a spirit of exultation, but in

a spirit of humility. I cannot expect you of a newer generation to believe me, of an older generation, if I do not frankly acknowledge that had the generation that brought you into the world been wiser and more provident and more unselfish, you would have been saved ~~headless-pain-and-suffering~~, ^{middle difficult paths,} We may not have failed you in good intentions but we have not been adequate in results. Your task, therefore, is not only to maintain the best in your heritage, but to labor to ~~lift~~ from the shoulders of the American people some of the burdens that the mistakes of a past generation have placed there.

There was a time when the formula for success was the simple admonition to have a stout heart and willing hands. A great, new country lay open. When life became hard in one place it was necessary only to move on to another. But circumstances have changed all that. Today we can no longer escape ~~from our environments~~ ^{into virgin territory} we must master ~~all~~ ^{our environment}. The youth of this generation finds that the old frontier is occupied ^{but} and that science and invention and economic evolution have opened up a new frontier -- one not based on geography but on the resourcefulness of men applied to ^{and women} the old frontier.

The cruel suffering of the recent depression has taught us unforgettable lessons. We have been compelled by stark necessity to unlearn the too comfortable superstition that the American soil was mystically blessed with every kind of immunity to grave economic maladjustments, and that the American spirit of individualism all alone and unhelped by the cooperative efforts of Government could withstand and repel every form of economic disarrangement or crisis. The severity of the recent depression, toward which we had been heading for a whole generation, has taught us that no economic or social class in the community is so richly endowed and so independent of the general community that it can safeguard its own security, let alone assure security for the general community.

The very objectives of young people have changed. In the older days a great financial fortune was too often the goal. To rule through wealth, or through the power of wealth, fired our imagination. *This was the dream of the golden ladder - each individual for himself.*

It is my firm belief that the newer generation of America has a different dream. You place ~~more~~ emphasis on sufficiency of life, rather than a plethora of riches. You

think of the security for yourself and your family that will give you good health, good food, good education, good working conditions, and the opportunity for normal recreation and occasional travel. Your advancement, you hope, is along a broad highway on which thousands of your fellow men and women are advancing with you.

You and I know ~~else~~ that this modern economic world of ours is governed by rules and regulations vastly more complex than those laid down in the days of Adam Smith or John Stuart Mill. They faced ~~mainly~~ simpler mechanical processes and social needs. It is worth remembering, for example, that the business ~~co~~operation, as we know it, did not exist in the days of Washington and Hamilton and Jefferson. ^{Pi}~~Businesses~~ then were conducted solely by individuals or by partnerships in which every member was immediately and wholly responsible for success or failure. Facts are relentless. We must adjust our ideas to the facts of today.

Our concepts of the regulation of money and credit and industrial competition, ~~and~~ of the relation of employer and employee created for the old civilization are being modified to save our economic structure from confusion, destruction and paralysis. The rules that governed the relationship between an

employer and employee in the blacksmith's shop in the days of Washington cannot, of necessity, govern the relationship between the fifty thousand employees of a great corporation and the infinitely complex and diffused ownership of that corporation. If fifty thousand employees spoke with fifty thousand voices, there would be a modern Tower of Babel. That is why we insist on their right to choose their representatives to bargain collectively in their behalf with their employer. In the case of the employees, every individual employee will know in his daily work whether he is adequately represented or not. In the case of the hundreds of thousands of stockholders in the present day ownership of great corporations, however, their knowledge of the success of the management is based solely on a financial balance sheet. Things may go wrong in the management without their being aware of it for a year, or for many years to come. Without their ~~immediate~~ ^{too often} knowledge they may be exploited and their investments jeopardized. Therefore, we come to the public recognition of the need of simple ^{but} adequate public protection for the rights of the investing public.

Judimentary
A ~~simple~~ concept of credit control ~~applies~~ ^{have} *for*
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~~shape~~ the economic life of a nation of 3,000,000 people can hardly be urged as a means of directing and protecting the welfare

of our Twentieth Century industrialism. The simple banking rules of Hamilton's day, when all the transactions of a fair-sized bank could be kept in the neat penmanship of a clerk in one large ledger, fail to protect the millions of individual depositors of a great modern banking institution. And so it goes through all the range of economic life. Aggressive enterprise and shrewd invention have been at work on our economic machine. Our rules of conduct for the operation of that machine must be subjected to the same constant development.

And so in our social life. Forty years ago, slum conditions in our great cities were much worse than today. Living conditions on farms and working conditions in mines and factories were primitive. But they were taken for granted. Few people considered that the Government had responsibility for sanitation, for safety devices, for preventing child labor and night work for women. In 1911, twenty-four years ago, when I was first a member of the New York State Legislature, a number of the younger members of the Legislature worked against these old conditions and called for laws governing factory inspection, for workmen's compensation and for the limitation of work for women and children to fifty-four hours, with one day's rest in seven. Those of us who joined in this movement in the Legislature were called reformers, socialists,

and wild men. We were opposed by many of the same organizations and the same individuals who are now crying aloud about the socialism involved in social security legislation, in bank deposit insurance, in farm credit, in the saving of homes, in the protection of investors and the regulation of public utilities. The reforms, however, for which we were condemned twenty-four years ago are taken today as a matter of course. And so, I believe, will be regarded the reforms that now cause such concern to the reactionaries of 1935. We come to an understanding of these new ways of protecting people because our knowledge enlarges and our capacity for organized ~~action~~ ^{action} government increases. People have learned that they can carry their burdens effectively only by cooperation. We have found out how to conquer the ravages of diseases that years ago were regarded as unavoidable and inevitable. We must learn that many other social ills can be cured. ~~in the same way~~

A little bird has whispered to me that that delightful old soul, my friend Congressman Snell, the Leader of the Minority in the House of Representatives, has hired the radio to reply to me majestically and conclusively. I hope, therefore, ~~that he will~~ listen to this:

If let me emphasize, that
serious as have been the errors of unrestrained

individualism, I do not believe in abandoning the system of

individual enterprise. The freedom and opportunity that have characterized American development in the past can be maintained if we recognize the fact that the individual system of our day calls for the collaboration of all of us to provide, at the least, security for all of us. Those words "freedom" and "opportunity" do not mean a license to climb upwards by pushing other people down.

Any paternalistic system which tries to provide for security for everyone from above only, calls for an impossible task and a regimentation utterly uncongenial to the spirit of our people. But Government cooperation to help make the system of free enterprise work, to provide that minimum security without which the competitive system cannot function, to restrain the ~~bad~~ *kind* of individual action which in the past has been harmful to the community — that kind of governmental cooperation is entirely consistent with the best tradition of America.

Just as the evolution of economic and social life has shown the need for new methods and practices, so has the new political life developed the need for new political practices and methods. Government now demands the best trained brains of every business and profession. Government today requires higher and higher standards of those who would serve it. It must bring to its service greater and greater competence. The conditions of

public work must be improved and protected. Mere party membership and loyalty can no longer be the exclusive test. We must be loyal not merely to persons or parties, but to the higher conceptions of ability and devotion that modern government requires.

There was a day when political sages, or those who controlled them, took the attitude that anything new, or what they called "new-fangled", would lead to dire results. There is nothing new in those ~~decreasing~~ prophecies. I read these lines in a paper the other day — a little poem entitled GOING TO THE DOGS:

My grandpa notes the world's worn cogs,
And says we're going to the dogs;
His granddad in his house of logs,
Sword things were going to the dogs;
His dad, among the Flemish bogs,
Vowed things were going to the dogs;
The caveman in his queer skin togs,
Said things were going to the dogs;
But this is what I wish to state —
The dogs have had an awful wait.

k

I would be lacking in any sense of responsibility and lacking in elementary courage if I shared in such a hopeless attitude.

I, for one, am willing to place my trust in the youth of America. If they demand action as well as preachments, I should be ashamed to chill their enthusiasm with the dire prophecy that to change is to destroy. I am unwilling to sneer at the vision of youth merely because vision is sometimes mistaken.

mark A

But vision does not belong only to the young. ~~I~~, like you, am impatient of the attempts of ~~the past~~ ~~and they come~~ ~~to found upon the young and old in every realm of life -~~ ~~relatively journalism,~~ to put a weary, selfish and trembling hand upon the clock of progress and to turn it back.

The vast changes in the outlook of youth created by the combination of an infinitely better educational system on the one hand, and the bitter experiences of the depression during the past few years, on the other, have created a new kind of American youth, impatient of mere elderly preachments, intolerant of economic and political incompetence, determined upon a just division of responsibility and rewards.

9 We who seek to go forward must ever guard ourselves against a danger which history teaches. More than ever, we cherish the elective form of democratic government, but progress under it can easily be retarded by disagreements that relate to method and to detail rather than to the broad objective upon which we are agreed. It is as if all of us were united in the pursuit of a common goal, but each and every one of us were marching along a separate road of our own. If we insist on choosing different roads, most of us will not reach our common destination. The reason that the forces of reaction so often defeat the forces of progress is that the Tories of the world are agreed and united

13-

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I submit a message of confidence, "Unite and Challenge! Rules
are not necessarily sacred - Principles are. The methods of
the old order are not, as some would have you believe, above
~~the challenge of youth.~~

inquiry, of readjustment, of improvement, above all, a spirit
in which youth can find the fulfillment of its ideals. The
past we respect for what it gave us that is good, but it is for
the new generation to participate in the decisions and to give
strength and spirit and continuity to our Government and to our
national life.

~~measure~~ ~~the amount~~ the benefits ~~being~~ ~~which I have mentioned~~

3B

~~Exceeded from~~ ~~has~~ ~~been expended~~ ~~to the end of the last~~

fiscal year more than ~~7,800,000,000~~ ^{for the sum} in behalf of the veterans of the World War,
not including sums spent for home or work relief.

With our current annual expenditures of ~~\$600,000,000~~ ^{\$150,000,000} and the liquidation of

outstanding obligations under Term insurance and the payment of the ~~sums~~ ^{service certificates} it seems

The year 1945 ~~we will have expended~~ ^{\$} ~~13,500,000,000~~.

This is a sum equal to more than three-fourths of the entire cost of our participation
in the World War, and ten years from now most of the veterans
of that war will be nearly past the half century
~~mark~~.

A
P
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

There are millions of older people who have vision, just as there are some younger men and women who are ready to put a weary selfish or greedy hand upon the clock of progress and turn it back.

II

Let us carry on the good that the past gave us. The best of that good is the Spirit of America. And the Spirit of America is the spirit of inquiry, of readjustment, of improvement; above all a spirit in which youth can find the fulfillment of its ideals. It is for the new generation to participate in the decisions and to give strength and spirit and continuity to our Government and to our national life.

S

GOING TO THE DOGS.

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