

November 11, 1935

[Students Federation]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO THE WHITE HOUSE EXECUTIVE OFFICES
OF THE COMMITTEE FROM THE NATIONAL STUDENTS FEDERATION

November 11, 1935

I have written a few words I wanted to read to you, but I wish also you would read what I said out at Arlington about an hour ago. Some of you may have heard it.

On this anniversary of the Armistice, it is heartening to receive a delegation representing more than half a million students from American schools and colleges who are mobilizing today in the interest of peace. Instead of carrying on a meaningless and emotional demonstration, you are studying the economic and social causes of war, as outlined in the document you have just read to me. Perhaps you will succeed in making that word "mobilize," which all too frequently strikes a note of terror in the hearts of the people of Europe, a word of cheer and encouragement in the Americas. You know and I know that the settlement of international disputes can be attained by peaceful means and that there are specific examples of such success in the very recent history of the American Republics.

I particularly like your reference to the need of approaching the problem of maintaining peace in the spirit of sacrifice. The sacrifice that I, as President of the United States, have asked in my Proclamation of Neutrality, may well make unnecessary the supreme sacrifice that I, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, might otherwise some day be forced to ask.

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.

Now, that is well worth remembering, I think.

Your visit here today encourages me to believe that I have made it clear to the youth of America that their voice shall be heard and that all the branches of the Federal Government, including the White House, are ready at all times to counsel with you.

Recently, by executive order, I created the National Youth Administration for the purpose of dealing with your emergency relief problems and to assist, in conjunction with other agencies, in developing a long range program for the permanent welfare of youth. My interest in young people is of no recent origin -- I think, so far as personal feelings go, I do not feel very much older than any of you do -- because I have always recognized that the youth of today are our sole investment in tomorrow. Let us guard and nurture that investment so that it may pay rich dividends in the good things of life.

Let me talk off the record for a minute:

We people in this country today, so far as deep thinking goes, I think in the last two or three years we have progressed enormously in regard to international problems. We have a real spirit of peace and we have a real spirit of good-will towards our neighbors.

I don't suppose that anything has been as successful in recent years as the fact that we have sold to Latin America,

for the first time in history, the thought that we were not some big bad wolf trying to eat them up. Of course a lot of people have tried it before but there has always been a suspicion on the part of Latin Americans that the United States had some ulterior motive, and there was ground for that suspicion. In past years we have done all sorts of things. After all, they are a people of great pride. We should have respected that pride yet we have gone in and sent troops to Nicaragua, to Cuba, to Haiti and to Santo Domingo. In fact, that continued up until two years ago, giving them the idea that we had it in back of our minds to expand and take in their territory.

You will remember that the first Congress of my Administration came in in the summer of 1933. I had already outlined the policies of the good neighbor in my Inaugural Address. In August 1933 there were some very serious disturbances in Cuba. Naturally, you can imagine, there was a great deal of pressure on me. We had 4,000 or 5,000 Americans, all scattered over Cuba and there was great pressure on me to send the entire United States fleet down there and upon the least little incident, to land the troops. Well, I took a very long chance and did three things: First of all, I sent word to Americans that if they thought there was any danger up-country, they had better get out to a seaport. Then I sent a lot of small ships, coastguard vessels and destroyers, into all those ports and I gave orders

that they were not to do anything more than take Americans off the beach, if they wanted to be taken off the beach. At the same time I said to the Cuban authorities that they must cooperate with respect to the safety of Americans in the interior of Cuba.

That crisis lasted six weeks. As I remember it, not a single American was killed. At all times we had means there to take them off in case there was serious danger, such as fighting in the streets and so on.

Then there was another incident that showed South America that we meant what we said: I had made arrangements with the President of Haiti that instead of waiting a year to take the marines out of Haiti I would take them out right away. And we did do that. So, from these things, Latin America knows today that we have no motives or designs on South America. The result is that today we have a fine relationship with the South American countries.

Today there are not the same relations between Colombia and Paraguay but, by our example, we are helping to build up a spirit that will enable them to keep out of actual war. In these recent troubles we have managed to keep airplane manufacturers and rifle manufacturers from sending any munitions to those countries.

When we turn to the other side of the picture, the

world, it is a different thing because there they do not think of us as Latin Americans do. They think of us as people on the same Continent. What we can do to prevent over there the militaristic tendencies which are increasing every day that goes by, I do not know, except by the force of example. The more weight that has, the more it is going to help in the world picture. Whether they actually go to war or not or the thing blows over, our example there is going to have a tremendous influence.

We had word this morning from Ottawa that the trade agreement was going to be approved. That means a very large increase in our trade with Canada. Possibly in the course of two or three years our trade with Canada will double -- it will double our trade both ways. That will mean putting people to work. It means jobs for people. It means better prices for products. But, when the details of the agreement come out, it is certain that this or that particular group will say, "Good heavens, it is going to ruin us." Well, let us look into that: One of the items we are going to bring in under this agreement will probably be some agricultural product which will raise the total amount we buy from Canada from 2 per cent to 3 per cent of the total amount of the product that is consumed in this country. In other words, 97 per cent of the product will still be made at home. We are proceeding on the theory that if we bring in

another one per cent of this particular item, that it is going to stimulate trade so much that the consumption in this country of that particular item will go up a good deal more than one per cent. Take one item that my farmer friends in up-state New York are going to kick about -- cream for ice cream: I am giving you these details because they all relate to peace, every one of them. Some of these people will say, "My heavens, a million and a half gallons of cream will be allowed to come into this country on a 35 per cent basis instead of a 50 per cent basis." Now it is perfectly true that a million and a half gallons of cream or 6,000,000 quarts sounds like an awful lot, but actually that cream represents from one-half to three-quarters of one per cent of the cream consumed in this country. That is all; it is a drop in the bucket.

Now, here is the theory: There are a great many items but we can take them all together. If I give the Canadian farmers a chance to ship in a million and a half more gallons than they ship in today, it means our people are going to be able to sell a very large amount of other goods -- automobiles, shoes, etc. That is our theory, the more trade, the more employment.

Of course that all goes with the problem of peace. I hope very much that you will do all you can not only to study these problems but to understand the trade picture. If we confine our plans to the farmers in three counties in northern New York, we

are lost.

In establishing trade relations we are establishing peaceful relations with Canada and the other American Republics and perhaps, some day, European nations will see what we have done and will try to copy us.

It is good to see you and I hope you will try to keep in touch with me and let me know your problems. It is fine to see you.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Remarks of the President before the
Committee from the National Students' Feder-
ation, November 11, 1935.

H.M.K.

(B)

On this anniversary of the Armistice, it is heartening to receive a delegation representing more than 500,000 students from American schools and colleges who are mobilizing today in the interest of peace. Instead of carrying on a meaningless and emotional demonstration, you are studying the economic and social causes of war, as outlined in the document you have just read to me. Perhaps you will succeed in making that word "mobilize," which all too frequently strikes a note of terror in the hearts of the people of Europe, a word of cheer and encouragement in the Americas. You know and I know that the settlement of international disputes can be attained by peaceful means and that there are specific examples of such success in the very recent history of the American Republics.

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