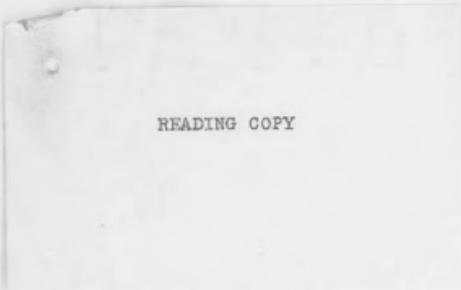


July 11, 1936

[Theborough Bridge Dedication]

FD.R. Speech File

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READING COPY

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT AT THE TRIBOROUGH BRIDGE DEDICATION
NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 11, 1936, 12 NOON

Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land. than Not much more one hundred years ago, my own great-grandfather owned a farm in Harlem close to the Manhattan approach to this bridge.

In the older days there was no need for a great structure connecting Long Island and Manhattan and the mainland; and even if a vast population had needed it, human ingenuity and engineering skill could not have built it.

Some of us who are charged with the responsibilities of government pause from time to time to ask ourselves whether human needs and human invention are going to change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generation that has passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs -- needs created by hitherto undreamed

of conditions -- it is also because growth in human knowledge labels now as needs many things which in the olden days we did not think of as needs.

For instance, no one used to protest against the dumping of sewage and garbage into our rivers and harbors. No one used to protest that our schoolhouses were badly ventilated and badly lighted. No one used to protest because there were no playgrounds for children in crowded tenement areas. No one used to protest against firetraps or factory smoke.

In those days government was not interested in helping to provide bathing beaches and swimming pools and recreational areas; nor had those who toil conceived the thought that they were entitled to at least one day of rest in seven and an annual vacation.

There are a few among us who still, consciously or unconsciously, live in a state of constant protest against the daily processes of meeting modern needs. Most of us are willing to recognize change and to give it reasonable and constant help.

Government itself, whether it be that of a city or that of a sovereign state or that of the union of states, must, if it is to survive, recognize change and give to new needs reasonable and constant help. Government itself cannot close its eyes to the pollution of waters, to the erosion of soil, to the slashing of forests, any more than it can close its eyes to the need for slum clearance and schools and bridges. Government itself is, of necessity, more complex because all life is more complex. The machinery of government and the cost of government under Mayor Seth Low in 1901 would not serve the essential needs of the people of the city in the days of Mayor LaGuardia in 1936. People require and people are demanding up-to-date government in place of antiquated government, just as they are requiring and demanding Triborough bridges in the place of ancient ferries.

This Triborough Bridge was neither in its conception nor in its building a matter of purely local concern. Nation, state and city, each in its own way, has contributed to the gigantic undertaking. It will serve the people in all the boroughs of this largest of cities; it will serve the people of

Long Island, of up-State New York and our neighbors of Connecticut and New Jersey; and it will serve the hundreds of thousands of those living in all the other states and in foreign countries, who visit New York on matters of business and of pleasure.

At a time of great human suffering the construction of this bridge was undertaken among the very first of the tens of thousands of projects launched by states and counties and municipalities and financed in part with Federal funds.

You, Governor Lehman, and you, Mayor LaGuardia, are personally familiar with this great array of public improvements. You know of the other tunnels and bridges, of the sewage disposal programs, of the schoolhouse and hospital construction, of the additions and repairs to public buildings and public enterprises of every kind. Because of your deep personal interest in all of this work, you have visualized its progress in every part of the nation. I am grateful to both of you for the cooperation you have given me as President of the United States.

And I am grateful to you, the workers, skilled and unskilled, here at the site and those in the mills and shops many miles distant, without whose strong arms, willing hands and clear heads there would be no celebration here today.

May the Triborough Bridge, in the years to come, justify our efforts and our hopes by serving truly the city, the state and the nation.

FEBRUARY ELEVEN THIRTY A.M.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEDICATION
OF THE TRIBOROUGH BRIDGE
NEW YORK, N. Y.
July 11, 1936

Governor Lehman, Mayor LaGuardia, Secretary Ickes, Commissioner Moses, ladies and gentlemen:

Many of you who are here today, old people like myself, can remember (that) when (you) we were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated (as) farm land. A little further back but not much more than (one) a hundred years ago, my own great-grandfather owned a farm in Harlem, right across there (indicating), close to the Manhattan approach (to) of this bridge. But I am quite sure, Bob Moses, that he never dreamed of the bridge.

In the older days there was no need for a (great) structure like this connecting Long Island and Manhattan and the mainland; and even if a vast population in those days had needed it, human ingenuity and engineering skill could not have built it.

Some of us who are charged with the responsibilities of government pause from time to time to ask ourselves whether human needs and human inventions are going to change as (greatly) rapidly in the generations to come as they have changed in the generation that has passed.

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.

... the speech. I have had much trouble, and
I am still having trouble, about understanding what
and what you want and who may be right
and what (was) made (was) redundant now. I have still
not you are right in this industry and safety has been
(is) everything else means has been said to be addressed
and when does not the (is) subject remain. And what
harm your (is) company can do you want to know if (was)
what (information) goes automatically without any
and any (is) damage suffered or not
and the damage done by (is) damage suffered and other
related

... not been in any event any such sort of
in which your (is) company did will undergo (was)
anything but a little less planning and less detail
and the (information) about (is) before had even said it
it will say that since there will not
be anything but a little less planning and less detail
going on the (information) about has been said to go
and of course not in either (is) or some of
them, and says nothing but it (is) and you do

It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs -- needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions -- it is also because growth in human knowledge labels (now) things as needs (many) today, things which in the olden days we did not think of as needs.

For (instance) example, it was not so long ago that no one used to protest against the dumping of sewage and garbage into our rivers and harbors. No one used to protest that our schoolhouses were badly ventilated and badly lighted. No one used to protest because there were no playgrounds for children in crowded tenement areas. No one used to protest against firetraps (or) and factory smoke.

In those days government was not interested in helping to provide bathing beaches, (and) swimming pools and recreational areas; nor had those who toiled in those days conceived the thought that they were entitled to at least one (day of) day's rest in seven (and) or entitled to an annual vacation.

There are a few among us, luckily a few, luckily only a few, who still, consciously or unconsciously, live in a state of constant protest against the daily processes of meeting modern needs. Most of us, I am glad to say, are willing to recognize change and to give it reasonable and constant help. (Applause)

Government itself, whether it be that of a city or that of a sovereign state or that of the union of states, must, if it is going to survive, recognize change and give to new needs reasonable and constant help. Government itself cannot close its eyes to the pollution of waters, to the erosion of soil, to the slashing of forests, any more than it can close its eyes to the need for slum clearance and schools and bridges. Government itself is, of necessity, more complex because all life is more complex. The machinery of government and the cost of government under, for example, Mayor Seth Low in 1901 would not serve the essential needs of the people of the city of New York in the days of Mayor LaGuardia in 1936. Yes, people require and people are demanding up-to-date government in place of antiquated government, just as they are requiring and demanding Triborough bridges in the place of ancient ferries.

This (Triborough) Bridge was neither in its conception nor in its building a matter of purely local concern. Nation, state and city, each in its own way, has contributed to the gigantic undertaking. And it will serve the people not only in all the boroughs of this largest of cities; it will serve also the people of Long Island, of up-State New York and our neighbors of

Connecticut and New Jersey; and it will serve the hundreds of thousands of those living in all the other states and in foreign countries, who visit New York on matters of business and (of) pleasure. And so you see that the United States has an interest and a stake in this bridge.

At a time of great human suffering the construction of (this) the bridge was undertaken among the very first of the tens of thousands of projects launched by states and counties and municipalities and financed in part with Federal funds.

You, Governor Lehman, and you, Mayor LaGuardia, are personally familiar with this great array of public improvements. You know of the other tunnels and bridges, of the sewage disposal programs, of the schoolhouse and hospital construction, of the additions and repairs to public buildings and public enterprises of every kind. Because of your deep personal interest in all of this work, you have visualized its progress in every part of the nation. I am grateful to both of you for the cooperation you have given me as President of the United States. (Applause)

And I am grateful to you, the workers, from the top, from the members of the commission itself and the engineers, all the way down the ladder. I am grateful to you, the workers, skilled and unskilled, here at the

site and those workers in the mills and shops many miles distant, without whose strong arms, willing hands and clear heads there would be no celebration here today.

May the Triborough Bridge, in the years to come, justify our efforts and our hopes by (serving) truly serving the city, the state and the nation.
(Prolonged applause)

STATEMENTS FILE
Shorthand by Kanner

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New York, New York
July 11, 1936

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered at the dedication of the Triborough Bridge, MUST BE HELD IN STRICT CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

Release upon delivery.

Please safeguard against premature release.

STEPHEN EARLY
Assistant Secretary to the President

Many of you who are here today can remember ~~that~~ when ¹⁹⁰⁰ we were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated ~~as~~ farm land. Not much more than ~~a~~ hundred years ago, my own great-grandfather owned a farm in Harlem, close to the Manhattan approach to this bridge.

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