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**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**

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**File No. 1010**

**1936 November 2**

**Hyde Park, NY - Election Eve Radio Address**

RADIO SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

HYDE PARK, N. Y.

NOVEMBER 2, 1936.

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MY FRIENDS:

I have come home to my own county to vote with my fellow-townsmen. My people have voted here in Dutchess County for more than a century. I cast my first vote here in 1903.

Tomorrow fifty-five million Americans are eligible to vote. I hope that all of those fifty-five million will vote.

I like to think of these millions as individual citizens from Maine to the southern tip of California, from Key West to Puget Sound - farmers who stop their fall plowing long enough to drive into town with their wives - wage earners stopping on the way to work or the way home - business and professional men and women -- town and city housewives - and that great company of youth for whom this year's first vote will be a great adventure.

Americans have had to put up with a good many things in the course of our history. But the only rule we have ever put up with is the rule of the majority. That is the only rule we ever will put up with. Spelled with a small "d" we are all democrats.

In some places in the world the tides are running against democracy. But our faith has not been unsettled. We believe in democracy because of our traditions. But we believe in it even more because of our experience.

Here in the United States we have been a long time at the business of self-government. The longer we are at it the more certain we become that we can continue to govern ourselves — that progress is on the side of majority rule — that if mistakes are to be made we prefer to make them ourselves and to do our own correcting.

When you and I stand in line tomorrow for our turn at the polls we will stand in a line which reaches back across the entire history of our nation.

Washington stood in that line and Jefferson and Jackson and Lincoln. And in later days Cleveland stood there and Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. All these — in their day — waited their turn to vote. And rubbing elbows with them — their voting equals — is a long succession of American citizens whose names are not known to history but who, by their vote, helped to make history.

Every man and every woman who has voted in the past has had a hand in the making of the United States of the present. Every man and woman who votes tomorrow will have a hand in the making of the United States of the future. To refuse to vote is to say: "I am not interested in the United States of the future."

We who live in a free America know that our democracy is not perfect. But we are beginning to know also that - in self-government as in many other things - progress comes from experience. People do not become good citizens by mandate. They become good citizens by the exercise of their citizenship and by the discussions, the reading, the campaign give-and-take which help them make up their minds how to exercise that citizenship.

Not only are people voting in larger numbers this year. They also know more this year than ever before about the real issues. They are thinking for themselves. They listen to both sides. They no longer accept at face value opinions or even statements from newspapers, from political spokesmen and from the so-called leaders of their communities. They insist on checking up.

I doubt if there was ever more down-right political intelligence at the average American fireside than there is today.

For a century and a half we have had here free education and a free press, free public forums and a free pulpit. For more than a decade we have had a free radio. The American citizen of 1936, therefore, is a product of free institutions. His mind has been sharpened by the exercise of freedom. That is why I have no fear - either of the threats of demagogues or the ambitions of dictators. Neither can get far or long thrive among a people who have learned to think for themselves and who have the courage to act as they think.

This year they have thought things through to a point where the eternal simplicities mean more than the fuzz-buzz of technical talk. They know that the important thing is the spirit in which government will face problems as they come up and the values it will seek to preserve or to enhance. At bottom those are the things that count.

Still another thing heartens me. This year, not only are more people voting, not only have people thought things through more carefully; but more people in all parties have assumed the obligation of citizens to get out and work in the political processes by which democracy maintains itself.

Nearly six months ago I said: I make this specific recommendation - that each and every one who is interested in obtaining the facts and in spreading those facts abroad, each and every one of you interested in getting at the truth that lies somewhere behind the smoke-screen of charges and counter-charges of a national campaign, constitute yourself a committee of one."

Hundreds of thousands have responded to that suggestion. Tonight I salute those committees of one - not only with personal gratitude but with the gratitude of a democracy that can only function if its people are willing to take honorable part in it.

And I also commend those who have worked in a similar honorable way in the opposition. They too have helped the public understand the issues before it, and that is a service to democracy.

I confidently look forward to their continued cooperation in the service of democracy. On Saturday night I said that "there should be no bitterness or hate where the sole thought is the welfare of the United States of America." That applies to men and women in all parties. It is true, tonight, on the eve of election. It will be true after the election.

Whoever is elected tomorrow will become the President of all the people. It will be his concern to meet the problems of all the people with an understanding mind and with no trace of partisan feeling.

Any President should welcome any American citizen or group of citizens who can offer constructive suggestions for the management of government or for the improvement of laws.

Society needs constant vigilance and the interest of individual men and women.

And when you go to the ballot box tomorrow, do not be afraid to vote as you think best for the kind of a world you want to have. There need be no strings on any of us in the polling place.

A man or woman in the polling booth is his or her own boss. There once was a time when the ballot was not secret. That is not so today. How a citizen votes is the citizen's own business. No one will fire you because you vote contrary to his wishes or instructions. No one will know how you vote. And don't let anyone intimidate you or coerce you by telling you otherwise. In the polling booth we are all equals.

It is an experience in responsibility and humility to be permitted, as President, to know and share the hopes and the difficulties, the patience and the courage, the victories and the defeats of this great people.

Sometimes men wonder overmuch what they will receive for what they are giving in the service of a democracy - whether it is worth the cost to share in that struggle which is a part of the business of representative government. But the reward of that effort is to feel that they have been a part of great things - that they have helped to build --- that they have had their share in the great battles of their generation.

However large or small our part, we can all feel with Theodore Roosevelt who said: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumphs of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither defeat nor victory."

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*  
(Original reading copy)

Franklin D. Roosevelt - A citizen's

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
BROADCAST FROM HIS HYDE PARK HOME  
Election Eve, November 2, 1936, 11.00 P. M.

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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.

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Four years ago when I accepted the Democratic nomination in Chicago, I said: "I pledge you, I pledge myself to a new deal for the American people. This is more than a political campaign, it is a call to arms. Give me your help not to win votes alone, but to win in this crusade to restore America to its own people."

In 1932 the American people were in a mood to begin that crusade. They have begun it- well. In 1936 the American people are in a mood to finish that crusade. They will finish it. We meet upon the eve of their victory.

But it is most fitting that, on this eve of victory, we should make clear, both to our friends and to those who have opposed us, that we appreciate to the full the solemn obligations imposed upon those who are entrusted with the people's power of self-government.

And so tonight I propose to state again the fundamental purposes and principles for which we have been fighting. These will guide us in fulfilling ~~xxx~~ the official obligations first conferred upon us four years ago and soon to be again renewed.

It would be useless to review tonight the many petty issues raised during the campaign, particularly by those anxious to avoid or to obscure real and

The captains and the kings departed. The experts in government fled.

Forced to take care of themselves the plain people reverted to the native in-

stincts of democracy. They acted as simply, as directly, as democratically as

~~anywhere~~  
at a frontier disaster one hundred years ago. Out of their own resources they

~~in their own~~  
gave to themselves. They went straight to the bottom of things where democracy

lives. They took care of their starving; their home owners; their bank de-

positors; their wandering youth; the farmers who produce their food supply; the

wage earners who tend their machines; the independent business men who make

~~commercial life possible. They conserved the Nation's resources that belong~~  
~~to all men. They did not act with more than another~~  
to all. They brought a new democratic common sense of credit and purchasing

power to the understanding of the economic system. They ~~had~~ reestablished the

~~most~~ right of working men like all other men to associate together in promotion

of their legitimate interests. They insisted, like Andrew Jackson, on public

and not private control of finance that affects the public. They did all these

P. 4.  
the plain people always have  
the right of man

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The destinies of the American people are not deeply involved in a seasonal decline in the price of cheddar cheese, even though a presidential candidate may think it safer to discuss the price of cheddar cheese than to explain why the greatest monopolists in the country proclaim him the ideal leader of an anti-monopoly crusade.

The destiny of America is involved in the continuing progress of agriculture and industry. But there is little in the way of a vital issue presented by a presidential candidate who proposes to aid agriculture and industry by re-experimenting with old programs under new labels, and who, with the joyous confidence of inexperience, proclaims that he can do the job much more cheaply and quickly than those who have had years of training and experience in actually doing the job.

The destiny of America is involved in the preservation of the health and dignity of the American people for whom private enterprise cannot yet find useful employment. But there is nothing in the way of a vital issue presented by a presidential candidate who offers to feed the starving by re-enacting the miracle of the loaves and fishes without having to tax anybody.

The destiny of America will not be determined by those petty issues of political patronage or political graft which are raised in every campaign by the party of the opposition against the party in power -- although we may properly point out that the record of twelve years of Democratic administration from 1912 to 1920 and from 1932 to 1936 compares very favorably with the sciled and sordid record made by the Republican Party in the twelve years from 1920 to 1932. Our democratic banner bears no greasy, oily stains of corruption in high places; nor has it ever led the Nation in a vast inglorious defeat. On the contrary it was under that banner that the American people marched to victory -- first in the World War and then in the war against the Depression.

But what is important tonight is to realize that in every presidential campaign we have an opportunity to see -- to make -- the ebb and flow of great tides of public opinion on the mighty forces struggling to dominate our lives. Here we have an opportunity to determine where each citizen should exert his little separate strength in order to create the great power of a united effort to advance the general welfare.

Our problems of today are but the continuance of the problems of our ancestors. When men began to live together in communities they found that

government was necessary to unite them in efforts for the common good. In this recognition of their common interests men were drawn together. The instinct of true democrats of the generous-warm-hearted men of peace and good will is to stick together. The genius of democracy is cooperation. The nature of democracy is neighborliness. The wisdom of democracy is that each man gains strength and freedom and security from the strength and freedom and security of his fellows. The feeling for union that makes cooperation possible, the passion for equality of opportunity that makes democracy possible, are an omnipresence brooding in our sky.

But in separate ambitions, in individual striving for power and comfort and security, cold and selfish men have always sought to escape from obligations of service to their fellow-men-to establish personal power over their fellow-men; and thus the forces of disunion and oligarchy have been bred within every community.

Always the problem of leadership has been to save the union, to save democracy. When our Colonial ancestors had to fight the Indians they built forts and stockades and organized armies and fought together for the common good. But when they worked in the fields or in the shops or sailed the high seas

they were working for themselves and sought the greatest possible freedom of individual action. Then they found they were faced with increasing controls of their government and their lives from overseas, controls which they resented. They united to fight for freedom. They united the individuals within each colony. They united the colonies in a confederation. They stood together and fought together until they achieved independence. Then the forces of disunion again sought to break down their national unity into the disunity of separate states. The problem was easy to see then -- disunion, sectionalism was geographical.

The genius of George Washington and that far-seeing group of men who wrote the Constitution of the United States again welded a dissolving union into a nation. The United States of America was born.

But for decade after decade the struggle went on between the forces that draw men together in a united effort for the common good and the forces of disunion that drive them apart, that create and emphasize class interests and special privileges and local and sectional interests.

In the days of Jefferson, New England threatened secession because the interests of the Union as a whole required him to try to keep out of a

war in which the temporary profits of New England merchants would involve us. And although Thomas Jefferson has been proclaimed the foe of federalism and its philosophy of a strong nation, the truth of history is that Jefferson, by making the federal government the instrument of the general welfare and not the mere guardian of property interests, strengthened and unified the nation and defeated the gathering forces of disunion.

In the days of Jackson, a little Sea Coast oligarchy ~~refused~~ to recognize the frontier as full partner in the Union because the frontier refused to recognize the privileges of a banking oligarchy. When Jackson fought the national bank; and fought against the concentration of economic and financial power in a few hands, he likewise was uniting in support of a national government those masses of the people who would be driven away from supporting any government that served with such favoritism the interests of a privileged few.

Lincoln faced more secession, more disunion again to preserve the power of a little oligarchy of planters. And this time it took war itself to end once and for all the constant threat of political disunion.

But in the place of geographical sectionalism grew more subtle lines of cleavage of our unity and our democracy. The new ~~power~~ power of the machine,

the rapid exploitation of a newly-opened Continent, brought possibilities of a new sectionalism and a new slavery -- a sectionalism not of geographic empires but of economic empires, a slavery not recognized by statute law but dictated by economic fact. Careless of our democracy and of our union, eager to subdue a Continent in a hurry, we let new tyrants grow in our midst, let them trample gentler men who did not have the ruthless competitive instinct, let them amass far more power over other men than that which Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln ever had to fight.

With that power came new kinds of disunion. We have seen uprisings of oppressed industrial workers. We have seen revolt spreading through the farming areas. We have seen conflicts growing between the owners of wealth and those who must borrow and use the property of others. These are all forces of disunion operating steadily to drive us apart, operating to obscure for us the vision of our common destiny.

Against these forces of disunion there arose in this Nation at the end of the last century a strong movement affecting both major political parties -- the Progressive movement with its great leaders in the Republican Party such as Theodore Roosevelt and Robert M. LaFollette, and in the Democratic Party

such leaders as William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson.

*Rant*  
Each in his own way fought the instinctive struggle of our union and our democracy against forces of disunion and oligarchy that would make us into two nations -- a nation of the governing class -- and a nation of the governed.

In the confusion of politics, in the clash of personalities, it was not always clear that these leaders were working toward a common end; that they had their eyes fixed upon the same goal; that they were striving to unite the American people in a government dedicated and devoted to the universal interests of the masses of the people rather than the localized interest of self-constituted feudal princeplings, a government of people drawn together by powerful common interests and capable of resisting the forces of disunion, whereby, through separate and selfish interests, men are being driven apart.

That surge of democracy spent itself in the war which we thought we fought for the sake of democracy in a world whose instincts we learned too late were not democratic. We went through the tragic <sup>unreal</sup> twelve years of a sordid, speculative, recklessly gained and ill-distributed prosperity. Headless of the warnings of history, heedless of the protests of scientists and idealists, heedless of the inevitable day of reckoning, preoccupied with the

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It would be useless to review tonight the many petty issues raised during the campaign, particularly by those anxious to avoid or to obscure real and

profound issues.

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Lincoln faced more secession, more disunion again to preserve the power of a little oligarchy of planters. And this time it took war itself to end once and for all the constant threat of political disunion.

But in the place of geographical sectionalism grew more subtle lines of cleavage of our unity and our democracy. The new ~~power~~ power of the machine,

the rapid exploitation of a newly-opened Continent, brought possibilities of a new sectionalism and a new slavery -- a sectionalism not of geographic empires but of economic empires, a slavery not recognized by statute law but dictated by economic fact. Careless of our democracy and of our union, eager to subdue a Continent in a hurry, we let now tyrants grow in our midst, let them trample gentler men who did not have the ruthless competitive instinct, let them amass far more power over other men than that which Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln ever had to fight.

With that power came new kinds of disunion. We have seen uprisings of oppressed industrial workers. We have seen revolt spreading through the farming areas. We have seen conflicts growing between the owners of wealth and those who must borrow and use the property of others. These are all forces of disunion operating steadily to drive us apart, operating to obscure for us the vision of our common destiny.

Against these forces of disunion there arose in this Nation at the end of the last century a strong movement affecting both major political parties -- the Progressive movement with its great leaders in the Republican Party such as Theodore Roosevelt and Robert M. LaFollette, and in the Democratic Party

such leaders as William Jennings Bryan and Woodrow Wilson.

Each in his own way fought the instinctive struggle of our union and our democracy against forces of disunion and oligarchy that would make us into two nations -- a nation of the governing class -- and a nation of the governed.

In the confusion of politics, in the clash of personalities, it was not always clear that these leaders were working toward a common end; that they had their eyes fixed upon the same goal; that they were striving to unite the American people in a government dedicated and devoted to the universal interests of the masses of the people rather than the localized interest of self-constituted feudal princeplings; a government of people drawn together by powerful common interests and capable of resisting the forces of disunion, whereby, through separate and selfish interests, men are being driven apart.

That surge of democracy spent itself in the war which we thought we fought for the sake of democracy in a world whose instincts we learned too late were not democratic. We went through the tragic twelve years of a sordid, speculative, recklessly gained and ill-distributed prosperity. Reedless of the warnings of history, heedless of the protests of scientists and idealists, heedless of the inevitable day of reckoning, preoccupied with the

illusion of a living, we rode, as a Nation, Hell-bent for happiness.

Nine mocking years with the golden calf and three long years of the scourge!

Nine crazy years at the ticker and three long years in the breadlines! Nine

mad years of mirage and three long years of despair!

The captains and the kings departed. The experts in government fled.

Forced to take care of themselves the plain people reverted to the native in-

stincts of democracy. They acted as simply, as directly, as democratically as

at a frontier disaster one hundred years ago. Out of their own resources they

gave to themselves. They went straight to the bottom of things where democracy

lives. They took care of their starving; their home owners; their bank de-

positors; their wandering youth; the farmers who produce their food supply; the

wage earners who tend their machines; the independent business men who make

commercial life possible. They conserved the Nation's resources that belong

to all. They brought a new democratic common sense of credit and purchasing

power to the understanding of the economic system. They ~~had~~ reestablished the

right of working men like all other men to associate together in promotion

of their legitimate interests. They insisted, like Andrew Jackson, on public

and not private control of finance that affects the public. They did all these

things with full observance of the ancient liberties of freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of the ballot. And having preserved that freedom of the ballot, they do not propose to surrender it now to the intimidation which the labor spy puts in their pay envelope.

They have gone far in their program to reassert the essential unity of the American people, the essential equality of opportunity of American democracy to restore America to its own people.

Today we are in the midst of that program -- Washington's program, Jefferson's program, Jackson's, Lincoln's, Roosevelt's, Wilson's program. Now that we are past the confusion of the crisis we can see a little more clearly where it is aiming. What is it aiming for? In the fewest words -- a civilized, Christian commonwealth. It is trying to build a commonwealth in which the central theme shall really be the freedom of the individual -- the utmost freedom of as many individuals as is possible. It repudiates an era in which the concept of liberty was minimum of interference with the ruthless competitive instinct -- with the ambition of a few men to build themselves empires of personal power, to ride rough shod like the Juggernaut over the great mass of peaceful, non-competitive men who have other joys in life than the tooth and

claw. It repudiates the kind of individual freedom which is built upon disregard for the personal sufferings of others.

It is not trying to eliminate healthy competition from a world where men like to struggle, where they achieve by struggling and where the whole community profits by their struggles. It realizes that the dangers to individualism that come from collectivism are no more welcome than the dangers that come from regimentation to the will of a powerful few.

But it does seek the individual and the community strength that comes from a Christian, middle-of-the-road philosophy of intelligent cooperation -- that maintains a fair competitive struggle so far as it sharpens the wits and increases the productive facilities of the individual, and stops the unfairness of competition where it results in unnecessary pain and suffering and agony and defeat for others. Men does not live by bread alone. Pride and humiliation are factors in political peace and economic stability. A little wider diffusion of a master's status in our population might be worth a theoretical few percent in the cost of goods.

I am not afraid that making our economic system accord with morality and justice will make us a Polynesia, a weak nation. The real strength of this

nation -- the strength with which it has moved mountains and can move still greater ones -- has come from the patient, cooperative efforts of the average man of good will multiplied millions of times -- from the sacrificing patriotism that has felt that it serves justice in serving America.

I do not believe there can be a patriotic nation -- I do not believe there can be a great nation -- whose economic and political realities do not accord with the moral and religious instinct of its people. In his Farewell Address to his countrymen, George Washington said: "Morality is a necessary spring of popular government... and let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

That I believe with every instinct in me.

As we go forward a reunited democratic people into the second stage of this crusade -- we are hoping to build a nation strong because it has listened, in its unity as well as in its individualism, to the Prophet Micah -- "What more doth the Lord require of thee than to do justice and to love mercy, and to

walk humbly with thy God."

We are not ashamed that we prefer the liberty of the sheep to the liberty of the wolf. We glory that we fight against the cold-blooded corsair the battle of the warm-hearted, generous, gentle men of good will who exemplify the neighborliness of a simple democracy. We are not afraid -- we remember that the pike-men of the plain people have always beaten Rupert's horse.

We have made mistakes -- but we are sure that in this honest cause mistakes honestly acknowledged will be forgiven us. Another Roosevelt who fought the same fight and made his mistakes before we puts into my mouth the words with which I want to close this campaign:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither defeat nor victory."

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THIRI RAST  
Nov 2, 1936

All my life I have been interested in America's great problem -- making democracy work. And at bottom that means making more and more people take a personal interest in the operations of Government — Federal, State and local, <sup>and</sup> take an active part in the selection of those who are to represent them in the direction of public affairs.

There have been great ebbs and flows in the amount of interest which the average man has taken in the affairs of our government. When we started to be a democracy in 1776, for example, I don't suppose there was a man or woman in the country to whom the Continental Congress was not a very close personal concern. But from the Civil War until a few years ago the proportion of the population that even took the trouble to vote persistently declined. Of those eligible to vote in the Presidential election of 1924, only 56% actually voted. In the last few years that proportion has been climbing rapidly. It was 70% in the 1932 campaign. This year, whether it helps me or ~~hurts me~~, I hope it <sup>not</sup> breaks the record.

Democracy is the only form of government whose central theme is the individual — to keep him as free as possible — to develop to the full the potentialities of his personal life. It is no accident that most of the great contributions to civilization have come out of societies that were essentially

-2-

democratic. But Democracy's very emphasis on individual, creates a corresponding danger that what is everybody's business may become nobody's business — and that men may neglect the public welfare in their absorption in personal affairs.

It is because of this that democracy, undoubtedly the best form of government, becomes at times the most difficult to operate. But it is heartening to those with faith to remember that when forces of disunion or sectionalism or class antagonism threaten democratic processes, the truly democratic instinct of our population senses the danger and the people alarm themselves to a new interest in public affairs. I trust that instinct of the American people to preserve their democracy when they vote in such tremendous numbers. And so I am delighted that the registration figures promise that a greater proportion than ever before of the American people are going to vote tomorrow.

But there is more than a mystical faith in numbers to make me believe that tomorrow's decision will be a wise decision. Not only are people voting in larger numbers this year. They also know more this year than ever before about the real issues. They are thinking for themselves. They want to hear both sides. They no longer accept opinions or even statements of fact from newspapers, from political leaders and from the so-called heads of their

communities. They have thought things through to a point where below the fuzz-buzz of technical talk about finance and banking and budgets and economics, they see <sup>and are</sup> the ~~the~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~eternal simplicities~~ — the underlying philosophies of government of the major political parties. They know that what counts is that central philosophy, — that in this complicated world, conditions to a large extent have to be met as they arise — that the important thing is the spirit in which government will face problems as they come up and the values it will seek to preserve or to enhance. No Administration is honest with its people if it pretends to show them months and years in advance, a chart of every move it expects to make. No people can be honest with themselves if they believe that possible. But <sup>they will tell</sup> people can tell whether an Administration will be warm-hearted or cold-blooded. At bottom that is what counts. And this year the people know it.

Still another thing heartens me. This year, not only are more people voting, not only have people thought things through more carefully; but more people than ever before are assuming the obligation of the citizen to get out and work in the political processes by which democracy maintains itself.

<sup>about the right to buy</sup>  
<sup>and will meet with ty-some mitigation law carrying its blessings to all classes</sup>

at the Jackson Day Dinner nearly six months ago I said to my friends:  
"I make this specific recommendation that each and every one who is interested  
in obtaining the facts and in spreading those facts abroad, each and every  
one of you interested in getting at the truth that lies somewhere behind  
the smoke-screen of charges and counter-charges of a national campaign, con-  
stitute yourself a committee of one." Hundreds of thousands have responded  
to that suggestion. ~~Immigrant~~ Tonight I salute those committees of one and all  
the workers supporting the campaign of our Administration — not only with  
personal gratitude but with the gratitude of a democracy that can only function  
if its people are willing to take part in it.

And as President of the United States, ~~I~~ command those who have worked  
in a clean and honorable way on the other side. They have helped the public

understand the issues before it, and that is a service to democracy.

*I happen  
to be  
responsible  
for the  
success  
of the  
depression  
and the  
people  
have  
been  
helpful  
in  
getting  
it over.*

There is also another group whose services to democracy are sometimes over-

looked, who have been particularly important in the last four years. They are  
the ones who have been willing to assume the almost thankless jobs of participa-  
tion in the day-by-day solutions of the problems of government — those who  
have worked in the Federal, State and local governments alike to insure the

success of the policies with which the Administration has fought the depression.

There have always been men in every local community who would persuade  
it for its own good to cooperate with the Federal Government's efforts to work  
by building a bridge or a sewer, who would form farmers' county committees to  
administer the AAA program, who would persuade State Legislatures to adopt  
legislation which supported and fitted into ours, who would work out the  
problems of local banks and of local credit situations --- who would serve on  
local advisory committees. *Then, too, I thank for the country and for myself,*

Back in the Athenian democracy which was the mother of all democracies,  
a man was measured and measured himself by the degree to which he participated  
in public affairs. We need some part of that measure in American democracy  
today. Society's need for the constant vigilance and interest of individual  
men and women is the same as it was two thousand years ago.

And when you go to the ballot box tomorrow, don't be afraid to be a citizen  
of democracy, to vote as you think best for the kind of a world you want  
to have. There once was a time when the ballot was not secret. That is not  
so today. No one will know how you vote. No one will fire you because he  
knows that you voted contrary to his wishes or instructions. And don't let  
anyone intimidate you or coerce you by telling you otherwise. You have the

same vote as every other citizen regardless of how much money you have or how big a job you hold down. Tomorrow, as on Judgment Day, all men are truly equal.

There are those who say that on tomorrow's vote hangs the safety of America. I do not believe that. I do not believe that the fate of anything as great as the American democracy can be decided by the election of one man.

I have no belief in panaceas and almost none in sudden ruin. I believe with Montesquieu that if the chance of a battle — I may add, the passage of a law — has ruined a state, there was a general cause at work that made the state ready to perish by that single battle or law. The kind of world that we want may be postponed by an election and there may be more difficult battles ahead but democracy will never be wholly lost because it lies too deep in the hearts of the American people

Men who keep double-entry books, who wonder over-much what they will receive for what they are giving may wonder whether it is "common sense" to bear up under the heat and the burden of struggling with men and the affairs of men. They need to learn that the reward of the effort is the effort itself— the feeling that in a generation whose great problem is to make democracy

*most significant*

work they have been among the builders — that they have been a part of great things — that they have not run away to some ivory tower when the great battles of their generation were being fought. It is the greatest and most humbling experience life can offer a man to be permitted to know and to share the hopes and the difficulties, the patience and the courage, the victories and defeats of this greatest of the world's peoples.

The reward of everyone who participates *in this experience* is to feel within himself the thought expressed by Theodore Roosevelt \_\_\_\_\_ years ago: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great ~~mathematics~~ enthusiasm, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither defeat nor victory."

*DRAFT*

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

HYDE PARK, N. Y.

NOVEMBER 2, 1936/

MY FRIENDS:

I have come home to my own county to vote with my fellow-towners. My ~~ancestors~~<sup>people</sup> have voted here in Dutchess County for more than a century. I cast my first vote here in 1903.

Tomorrow fifty-five million Americans are eligible to vote. ~~Whether or not people~~ <sup>The people want to</sup> ~~are not ready to~~ <sup>I hope</sup> ~~my~~ ~~advantage as candidate, I hope -~~ ~~as president~~ that all of those fifty-five million will vote.

[It is an encouraging sign that in recent elections the percentage of our voting citizenship has been steadily increasing.]

I like to think of these millions as individual citizens from Maine to the southern tip of California, from Key West to Puget Sound - farmers who stop their fall plowing long enough to drive into town with their wives - wage earners stopping on the way to work or the way home - business and professional men and women - ~~and~~ town and city housewives - and that great company of youth for whom this year's first vote will be a great adventure.

Americans have had to put up with a good many things in the course of our history. But the only rule we have ever put

up with is the rule of the majority. That is the only rule we ever will put up with. Spelled with a small "d" we are all democrats.

In some places in the world the tides are running against democracy. But our faith has not been unsettled. We believe in democracy because of our traditions. But we believe in it even more because of our experience.

Here in the United States we have been a long time at the business of self-government. The longer we are at it the more certain we become that we can continue to govern ourselves — that progress is on the side of majority rule — that if mistakes are to be made we prefer to make them ourselves and to do our own correcting.

When you and I stand in line tomorrow for our turn at the polls we will stand in a line which reaches back across the entire history of our nation.

Washington stood in that line and Jefferson ~~and~~  
~~—~~Hay~~ and Sulhoun~~ and Jackson and Lincoln. And in later days Cleveland stood there and Theodore Roosevelt ~~and Bryan~~ and ~~—~~Tulane~~~~ and Woodrow Wilson. All these — in their day — waited their turn to vote. And rubbing elbows with them — their voting equals — is a long succession of American citizens ~~— men~~  
~~—~~and women~~~~ whose names are not known to history but who, by their

vote, helped to make history.

Every man and every woman who has voted in the past has had a hand in the making of the United States of the present. Every man and woman who votes tomorrow ~~will~~ <sup>will have</sup> a hand in the making of the United States of the future. To ~~voted~~ <sup>to have</sup> to vote is to say: "I am not interested in the United States of the future."

We who live in a free America know that our democracy is not perfect. But we are beginning to know also that - in self-government as in many other things - progress comes from experience. People do not become good citizens by mandate. They become good citizens by the exercise of their citizenship and by the discussions, the reading, the campaign give-and-take which help them make up their minds how to exercise that citizenship.

Not only are people voting in larger numbers this year. They also know more this year than ever before about the real issues. They are thinking for themselves. They want to ~~hear~~ <sup>face</sup> both sides. They no longer accept opinions or even statements ~~of~~ <sup>at face value</sup> from newspapers, from political ~~leaders~~ <sup>opinions</sup> and from the so-called ~~leaders~~ <sup>men</sup> of their communities. They insist on checking up.

They I doubt if there was ever more down-right political intelligence at the average American fireside than there is today.

For a century and a half we have had here free education and a free press, free public forums and a free pulpit. For more than a decade we have had a free radio. The American citizen of 1936, therefore, is a product of free institutions. His mind has been sharpened by the exercise of freedom. That is why I have no fear - either of the threats of demagogues or the ambitions of dictators. Neither can get far, or thrive long among a people who have learned to think for themselves and who have the courage to act as they think.

*This year*  
They have thought things through to a point ~~where~~ <sup>where</sup> below  
~~from more than~~ the fuzz-buzz of technical talk, ~~they~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> eternal simplicities.  
1

They know that the important thing is the spirit in which government will face problems as they come up and the values it will seek to preserve or to enhance. At bottom those are the things that count.

Still another thing heartens me. This year, not only are more people voting, not only have people thought things through more carefully; but more people ~~than ever before~~ in all parties have assumed the obligation of ~~the~~ citizens to get out and work in the political processes by which democracy maintains itself.

Nearly six months ago I said: I make this specific recommendation - that each and every one who is interested in

getting obtaining the facts and in spreading those facts abroad, each and every one of you interested in getting at the truth that lies somewhere behind the smoke-screen of charges and counter-charges of a national campaign, constitute yourself a committee of one."

Hundreds of thousands have responded to that suggestion. Tonight I salute those committees of one - not only with personal gratitude but with the gratitude of a democracy that can only function <sup>honorable</sup> if its people are willing to take part in it.

And as President of the United States, I also commend <sup>honorable</sup> in the opposition those who have worked in a similar way ~~on the other side~~. They too have helped the public understand the issues before it, and that is a service to democracy.

I confidently look forward to their continued cooperation in the service of democracy. On Saturday night I said that "there ~~should~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>no</sup> sole ~~strength~~ <sup>in</sup> the ~~welfare~~ <sup>of</sup> the ~~people~~ <sup>A</sup> ~~United States of America~~ <sup>be-the</sup> ~~same~~ <sup>side</sup>." That applies to men and women in all parties. It is true, tonight, on the eve of election. It will be true after the election.

*is elected*  
Whoever becomes President of the United States tomorrow <sup>will</sup> become the President of all the people. It will be his concern to meet the problems of all the people with an understanding mind and with no trace of partisan feeling.

Any President of the United States should welcome ~~at the~~  
~~States~~ any American citizen or group of citizens who ~~have~~ offer  
constructive suggestions ~~to~~ for the management of government  
or for the improvement of ~~the~~ laws.

Back in the Athenian democracy which was the mother of  
all democracies, a man was measured and measured himself by the  
degree to which he participated in public affairs. We need some  
part of that measure in American democracy today. Society ~~needs~~  
<sup>The</sup> constant vigilance and interest of individual men and  
women. ~~is the same as it was two thousand years ago.~~

<sup>do not</sup>  
And when you go to the ballot box tomorrow, don't be  
afraid to be a citizen of democracy, to vote as you think best for  
the kind of a world you want to have. There need be no strings  
on any of us in the polling place.

A man or woman in the polling booth is his or her own  
boss. There once was a time when the ballot was not secret. That  
is not so today. How a citizen votes is the citizen's own business.  
No one will fire you because you vote contrary to his ~~wishes~~ or  
instructions. No one will know how you vote. And don't let anyone  
intimidate you or coerce you by telling you otherwise.

*In the polling booth we are all equals.*

It is a great and a humbling experience to be permitted, <sup>as</sup> in responsibility and honor,

as President, to know and share the hopes and the difficulties, the patience and the courage, the victories and the defeats of this great people.

Sometimes men wonder overmuch what they will receive for what they are giving in the service of a democracy - whether it is worth the cost to ~~take a~~ share in the struggle ~~with men and the~~ <sup>in</sup> which is a part of the business of government, ~~affairs of men~~. But the reward of that effort is to feel that they have been a part of great things - that they have been ~~among the~~ <sup>highly to</sup> ~~They have had their share in~~ building ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> great battles of their generation, ~~were~~ ~~being fought they were there.~~

However large or small their part, they can all feel with Theodore Roosevelt: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumphs of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither defeat nor victory." .....