

July 9, 1938

[Wister, McAlester & Shawnee, Oklahoma]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL, EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

Wister, Oklahoma

July 9, 1938, 12.05 P.M.

(From the rear platform of his special train.)

I am glad to come to Wister. I have never been in this part of the State before. I have been reading a great deal about the Wister Dam and I am glad that the National Government, with your help, is going ahead with it. (Applause)

As you know, this project here is just one of a great many national projects intended to use water to save land and to develop power. All over the United States this particular Administration has been trying to think about the future and, in thinking about the future, to help the people of the present day. Gradually, we are beginning to harness all of the water that falls out of the heavens and on to the land so that before it gets down to the sea it will have served every possible purpose, the improvement of land and the prevention of soil erosion, the improvement of forestry, the development of reclamation and irrigation projects, the development of power and the prevention of floods.

In this whole national picture, as you know, your Government is spending a great deal of money, but we think, looking towards the future, that that money is well spent and will come back to our people many hundreds times over.

I wish I could see this particular project. One of my jobs in Washington is to study maps and reports and on this particular little cruise that I am going to take in the Pacific and back

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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.

I am glad to have the opportunity to discuss with you the progress of the work of the National Industrial Conference Board. I have been reading a report of the Board which was published in the United States Government Printing Office. It is a very interesting and helpful report. It is a report of the work of the Board during the past year. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial relations. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial production. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial distribution. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial consumption. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial research and development. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial education. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial training. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial health and safety. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial labor relations. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial management. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial economics. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial law. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial ethics. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial art and design. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial science and technology. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial history and tradition. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial culture and values. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial philosophy and religion. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial politics and government. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial international relations. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial world peace and cooperation. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial human progress and well-being. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial hope and faith. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial love and compassion. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial justice and equity. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial freedom and democracy. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial dignity and respect. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial honor and integrity. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial courage and strength. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial wisdom and knowledge. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial truth and honesty. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial goodness and kindness. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial beauty and grace. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial peace and harmony. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial love and unity. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial hope and faith. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial love and compassion. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial justice and equity. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial freedom and democracy. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial dignity and respect. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial honor and integrity. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial courage and strength. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial wisdom and knowledge. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial truth and honesty. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial goodness and kindness. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial beauty and grace. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial peace and harmony. It is a report of the work of the Board in the field of industrial love and unity.

through the Panama Canal, I have two great big boxes of papers, reports of all kinds that I, in my spare moments when I am not fishing, am going to study and try to get familiar with at first hand.

As you know, I do like to see the projects themselves but one of the penalties of having a somewhat large executive job in Washington is that I cannot see them all with my own eyes. Some day perhaps I will be able to come back here and see the Wister Dam when it is finished. In the meantime, good luck to you.

IMPROMPTU, EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

McAlester, Oklahoma  
July 9, 1938, 12.50 P.M.

(From the rear platform of his special train. The President was introduced by Senator Thomas.)

This is a familiar scene. I am glad to be back in McAlester and some day I hope to be able to get off the train and see something of this town. I had never come through the eastern part of the State before and I have been much interested in all that I have seen. I am glad to be here with your Congressman and my two old friends, Senators from Oklahoma.

As you know, I have been tremendously interested in the past six years, or longer than that, in the development and the protection of our natural resources.

It may be interesting to you, who once mined coal in this section, to hear a little story that was told to me by one of the greatest power engineers in the United States. I said to him, "Of course we are developing our oil, we are developing our water power, but isn't it true that the use of power all over the country is increasing with great rapidity? Are we going to have enough natural resources for the future?" And he said something to me that I had not known before, that the use of electrical power will probably double once every eight or nine years, in other words, that the average citizen, the average household, is going to use power of one kind or another much more greatly not only in the cities but on the farms, and also, of course, in the growing number of industries and factories. I said to him, "Well, where are we going to



get it from?" He said, "Do you realize that in some parts of the United States, southeastern Kansas, eastern Oklahoma, corners of Texas, there are great underlying beds of coal under the ground, enough tonnage there to last the population of the United States for half a thousand years to come? And," he said, "inevitably, when we come to it, we will produce from those natural resources that are not being tapped today."

I could not help but think of that in coming through a part of the United States that has great undeveloped coal beds and undoubtedly some of you young people may live to see the day when this coal is being turned into power. I hope to see that day come myself.

As you know, this is purely a trip of inspection. I may, occasionally, mention a few words of politics, but, of course, not in a partisan way. I am seeking what most of the people of this country are seeking, judging by the elections of 1930 and 1932 and 1934 and 1936, to maintain a liberal Government in the Nation's capital. And my boys would say, "We are going places" and I want to keep on going places. (Applause)

It is good to see you and I hope to come back and visit with you again a little while longer.

INFORMAL, IMPROVISED REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT

Shawnee, Oklahoma

July 9, 1938, about 4.15 P.M.

(The President spoke from the rear platform of his special train. There were about 3,000 in the audience. The President was introduced by Senator Thomas.)

MY FRIENDS:

I am in the middle of a very distinguished gathering on this car platform, the Governor of the State and both of the United States Senators and a flock of Congressmen and last, but not least, my small boy Elliott.

Elliott and I have an inferiority complex because we are the runts of the Roosevelt family. I am only six feet one and a half and he is only six feet two, but all the others are a lot taller than that.

I am glad to come into this part of the State because I have never been here before, and I am very glad to see the fine progress that has been made. I can remember as a very small boy when this State was called Indian Territory, and I can remember the pictures in the weekly magazines, when I was a small boy, of people lined up along the border, waiting for the bugle to blow, and then the rush would begin. And now see what has happened.

We are all proud of Oklahoma, proud of the great development that has been made here, and we are equally proud of the fine future that lies ahead of this State.

I am glad to learn more about it at first hand, and from all I have seen it makes me want to come back here just as soon as I can.