July 11, 1938 [Train Platform - Chillicothe, Childress & Clarendon, Texas] 1155

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL, EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
From the Rear Platform of his Special Train
Chillicothe, Texas
July 11, 1938, 2.45 P.M.

I am glad to see you all.

I have a good deal the advantage over many other people because I travel so much around the country that I know the map of the United States.

I have been very much interested in seeing this particular part of the State. I have never come through here and I am greatly interested in seeing these fine crops around here. It is pretty good crop country from all that I can see and, as you know, I am very much interested in the problem of water, water for those sections of the country that are not directly supplied with it.

I believe that I know, because of my studies, the water problem, the rivers and the rainfall in almost every county of the United States and that is why, through all the country that I am seeing today, I am taking a special interest in the problem of keeping water from running off down to the sea before it has served every possible use it can be put to for the population of the country. It is a big job and it is going to last a couple of more generations before we see our way to using all of the water that is now going to waste, but we will come to it. So you can rest assured that I am completely water conscious.

It is good to see you all. I wish I had time to motor through this country and see it better than I can from the train. I wish, too, that I could take the time to get acquainted with some of you personally. Thank you very much.

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.

INFORMAL, EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
From the Rear Platform of his Special Train
Childress, Texas
July 11, 1938, 3.45 P.M.

(There were about 5,000 people in the audience.)

MY FRIENDS:

I am glad to come out to West Texas. I am glad to come out to Marvin Jones' district. Tom Connally and I have been kidding him on this train, wondering whether when we came into the home district of the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, whether we would find agriculture was a whole lot better here than in any other place in the country. (Applause)

Marvin says that you are doing pretty good.

I have been very much interested in coming through this end of Texas. I have never been through here before. But I have been fairly familiar with it in a good many ways because, in the last six years, I have had to get a good deal of first-hand knowledge about the problems of every part of the country.

I am very glad to know that you are all water conscious. I hope the day will come -- it will take a long time to do it -- I hope the day will come when every drop of water that falls out of the heavens will serve the highest use, the best use possible for mankind before it gets down into the Gulf of Mexico. (Applause)

We are learning a lot; we know more about all these problems today than we did ten years or twenty years ago. Back in the East there are a good many people who laugh about the Dust Bowl, they laugh about the efforts on the part of man to change nature.

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I wish they could come out and see the people who live in this country and who are making good in this country.

That is why we in Washington, thinking in national terms, are doing everything that we possibly can to make every area of the United States a better place to live in, to give a greater security not only to this generation but to the children who are going to follow us in the days to come.

It has been fine to be here with you today. I wish I could come through sometime and take a little bit more time to see things at first hand. Many thanks.

INFORMAL, EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
From the Rear Platform of his Special Train
Clarenden, Texas
July 11, 1938, 5.25 P.M.

(There were about 1,000 people in the audience.)

I am very glad to get into Marvin Jones' district. I have been hearing about it about once a week for five and one-half years. (Applause)

I am glad of another thing. Away east of here, on the Hudson River where I live and down in Washington, there have been occasions in the last few years when the sun has been darkened in the middle of the day, darkened by topsoil from the Panhandle. I would much rather see the topsoil of the Panhandle stay right here than have it move east. (Applause)

That is one reason why all of us are thinking a lot about the problems out here where you have not got as much rain as there is in other parts of the country. We do not want your soil to leave here, because it is fine soil. We want to keep all the water that comes out of the heavens right here for the improvement of your soil and the growing of crops.

That is one of the major problems we have before us in Washington. And, remember one thing, it is not just your problem because your prosperity here in Western Texas is very vital to the rest of the Nation. If you people are not prosperous, it hurts the farms, it hurts the farm population and the city population in every other part of the country. If you people out here are prosperous, not just one year out of seven but seven years out of seven, that means more for the prosperity

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of the rest of the country. It gives you purchasing power and it means that you can contribute your share to the national wealth and the national good. It is in that spirit that we people in Washington, in the last five years, have been looking at all of these problems as national problems because they all tie in together in every part of the land.

I am glad to take this opportunity to be here in a portion of Texas that I have never seen before and I hope to come back some day and see more of you. (Applause)