

August 27, 1938

[Home of Moses Smith - Hyde Park, NY]

FDR Speech File

1169

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.

... of all the things that I have done in my life, I think that the most important thing that I have done is to have helped to bring about the formation of the United Nations. I think that the United Nations is the most important thing that has ever happened in the world since the beginning of time. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of self-determination. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of equality. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of peace. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of justice. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of freedom. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of democracy. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of human rights. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of international law. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world peace. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world justice. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world freedom. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world democracy. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world human rights. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world international law. I think that the United Nations is the only organization that has ever been formed that is based on the principle of world peace, world justice, world freedom, world democracy, world human rights, world international law.

However, he not only found a burrowing shrimp on an island called Socorro, two or three hundred miles off the coast of Mexico, but it also turned out to be a new species of burrowing shrimp, so we called it the Schmiddy Shrimp.

Then we went down to the Galapagos Islands. You have read stories of German baronesses going down there and committing murders and finally being murdered. We supposed that going down on the Equator the weather would be warm. Actually, we nearly froze to death because down there, about five hundred miles from the coast of Ecuador, there is a cold current called the Humboldt Current, which is just the opposite of our warm Gulf Stream on the Atlantic Coast. That Humboldt Current comes up from the Antarctic regions and passes through the Galapagos Islands, bounces off them and disappears in the middle of the Pacific. The result was that we had to sleep under blankets every night.

However, it was a grand cruise, a real holiday and notable for the fact that during the entire trip we, in the party, wrote our own newspaper stories. That is why they were so good. (Laughter) We gave them a great deal of fine historical and -- what is the word? -- piscatorial information which the press has never printed before.

Then, on the way back, of course we stopped at Panama and I had a chance to see the greatest, to my mind far and away the greatest, engineering work in the world. I was very lucky because in 1912 when I was in the State Senate, at the close of the session I went down to Panama before they let the water into the Canal, and on that trip I saw the famous Cut through the mountain, and from the top of it it looked as if the trains, great huge trains of dump cars, loco-

motives, steam shovels, they looked like gnats in the middle of this great Cut. Today of course the water is in it and you get no idea of the labor that it took to build that Canal.

Incidentally, I was very happy to note that the American defenses of the Canal had improved very much since I was there three years before. We are getting airplanes and submarines and antiaircraft guns and various other things to try to make reasonably certain that in case of war, which we are all trying to avoid in every possible way, we will still be able to maintain the link of the Panama Canal between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Then when I got back to the Continental part of the United States, I went down to my old stamping ground in Georgia and again heard of what they call "politics." And I have been hearing about it ever since. That is one reason why that little foundation up there on top of the hill, that John Mack referred to, is gradually evolving into a house, the object being to have some place in the United States where they won't talk politics.

Incidentally, I got an admission out of the Mayor. He was looking at those stone walls, permanent walls, going up and he said, in a sort of reminiscent way, "You know that is the only building that I have inspected in all these years that had not been partly paid for by the Federal Government." However, as we all know, the contribution that the Federal Government is making through the W.P.A. and the P.W.A. is not only putting people to work, but it is helping every community in the United States to get things which they otherwise could not afford to have. It is true in the greatest city of the Nation, New York, and it is true in the greatest county of the

Nation, Dutchess.

And right along that line I hope -- let me see, there are about five weeks to go -- I hope very much that we taxpayers in Hyde Park are going to be saved, our pocketbooks, about \$300,000. If we do not decide to save that \$300,000. within the next five weeks, by agreeing on some plan to take care of the four or five hundred school children in these districts for whom we have not got adequate facilities -- if we do not do it in the next five weeks, we will be just out of pocket \$300,000. as taxpayers and, eventually, we taxpayers in the town of Hyde Park will have to put up the whole \$300,000. That is a very simple situation.

If the people in this township were made to realize that there are nine school districts affecting 2400 or 2500 children for whom we need accommodations, I am sure that the Democratic processes that we all believe in will so work in the next five weeks that we will be able to get a school project for the township across and save about \$300,000. to our own pockets. Now that, I take it, is just what you and I would call common sense, and I believe that the people, I hope the people who run the school districts and the voters who have to pass on the proposition will vote some way, I don't care how, will vote somehow to save us that money.

That, perhaps, is the old Dutch coming out in me or maybe it is the old Scotch Irish coming out of me, but anyway I think most people in this town agree that we have got to do something for the children of this town, from almost every part of the town, to give them better educational facilities.

One thing I am glad of is that from now until after election

day I expect to spend the greater part of my time here in Hyde Park. Of course I will make occasional trips to Washington to see that the Government continues as it ought to continue, but I will spend the rest of the time back here where we live.

It is fine to see you again. I greatly appreciate and all the family appreciates these meetings of the Club at Moses Smith's and, as it has been well said, I hope they will continue for many, many years to come.

I might add to the suggestion that has been made about the "Heaven" across the river, that I am very confident that the people in that heaven in Ulster County will be good neighbors to us in Dutchess County. (Applause)

And so I echo the hope that all of us, without exception, will be back here again in the summer of 1939.

I might add one thing with respect to the Mayor of New York and his wife (Mayor LaGuardia): I hope that some day they buy a farm in Dutchess County and become neighbors of ours, too.