
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**

File No. 1182

1938 November 24

**Warm Springs, GA –
Thanksgiving Day Address and Remarks**

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
Also Extemporaneous Remarks of the President
At the Thanksgiving Dinner at Warm Springs Foundation
Warm Springs, Georgia
November 24, 1938

(Following is the prepared address, which was released to the Press and broadcast over the radio:)

We, the several hundred members of the Warm Springs' family, old and young, are gathered here again for our annual Thanksgiving dinner.

But, before we attack the turkey, I want to say a few words, not only to you but to many other people in every part of the country -- on this day of national thanksgiving.

First about Warm Springs itself. The physical picture draws nearer to completion each year. The ramshackle old buildings of twelve years ago have either been completely modernized or replaced by new fireproof structures; and when I got here the other day I was delighted to see the new schoolhouse and the new Medical Center rising above the ground.

I am glad we are to have a schoolhouse because we know that it is of the utmost importance to have the education of the mind keeping pace with the re-education of the muscles.

Then, too, medical science has made such great strides in the past (decade) ten or twelve years that the treatment of the after-effects of infantile paralysis calls for many new forms of hospital care in addition to the water exercises and swimming of the older days.

Today we have the tradition of work well done. We have also the same ideal of continuing progress, backed up by determina-

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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tion and courage, what we call the spirit of Warm Springs. We are looking forward to the time when we can take care of at least two hundred patients at (all) a time(s) -- or, in other words, treatment for about four hundred patients in (a) any given year.

Several years ago we expanded the work of Warm Springs by helping communities throughout the country to raise money for the care of their own infantile paralysis cases, and, through their generosity, to give financial help to the cause of research into the origin of the disease. Last year we took a further step by establishing the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis; and after January 30, 1939, we hope to have permanent Chapters of this National Foundation in all of the more than three thousand counties that make up the United States.

At (this) the time of the Birthday Celebration half of all the funds raised in each county will be retained in trust for the Chapters for local use and the other half of the fund raised will go to the National Foundation for the national fight against infantile paralysis.

This Thanksgiving Day we have much to be thankful for. I wish that all who hear my voice could be with us and see this gathering of old and young in the big dining room at Warm Springs. We are thinking not of ourselves alone but of tens of thousands of other children and grownups and wishing for them that they may be having an equally Happy Thanksgiving -- lots of turkey and lots of fixin's.

I have had many telegrams today -- Thanksgiving telegrams,
and there is one that I want to read to you from an old friend who
has helped Warm Springs in the past very greatly, Eddie Cantor, the

actor and comedian, and he gives me a thought that I think we all
are thinking of:

"May you and yours have a happy Thanksgiving.
I am thankful that I can live in a country where our
leaders sit down on Thanksgiving Day to carve up a
turkey instead of a Nation."

Now we will have the blessing said and after that we will
go to it.

(Following is the "Off the Record Address" delivered extem-
poraneously.)

I am very glad that you are glad that I am here. You are not gladder than I am to be with you members of the Warm Springs family after a lapse of two previous Thanksgivings, when I couldn't be here.

I think these parties get better each year that goes by. I am always thinking about the future -- all of us are. Tonight as I sat here I couldn't help but think -- and I was talking to Robbie about it (boy seated next to the President) -- regarding our problem. When we get up to two hundred patients here at one time, this dining room, which is only a very few years old, will have to be enlarged. Just think of that! Well, we were wondering just which way we would push it. This way, or that way or that way. Of course, it can't go that way (pointing) because that will interfere with what is going to be in time the loveliest campus of any college in the land, and I like to think of this as sort of a college which we all, old and young, attend.

At the same time, when I come to these Thanksgiving parties I think of the past. I think of the early years at Warm Springs a

long time ago -- fourteen years ago, when I first came -- fourteen years to me seems a very short time, but think of the people in this room who were not born fourteen years ago.

When I came down this year I learned of the death of two very old friends of mine, Mr. Persons and Mr. Colbert. A great many of you didn't even know them, and yet I remember a September of 1924, when I turned up here and occupied the only cottage, with one exception, that was open -- the hotel was closed. Everything was closed and most everything was falling to pieces. Most of the roofs leaked and when you went to bed at night it sounded like thunder, because the squirrels were rolling nuts overhead. And in those days it was pretty hard foraging for food. We didn't have any wonderful stores -- series of stores to go to as you have now. It was hard to get wood and food, and sometimes you had to travel ten miles to get a chicken for supper.

There were two people who were neighbors of ours, Mr. Parsons and Mr. Colbert, and almost every evening someone would knock on the door and then their heads would come around the door and say: "Do you need some kindling-wood? Can I get you some eggs tomorrow?"

They were that kind of neighbors and we are going to miss them a good deal.

You know this place would not have been possible if it had not been for that kind of reception and hospitality that I got. And I was all alone down here. Some of our neighbors had lived down here around Warm Springs all their lives. They were the kind of people who extended the kind of hospitality that made me want to

come back, and that is why the following spring I came back, and the influx of people began to arrive.

That is when Fred Botts was carried off the train -- yes, he was a man in those days! And we thought he was going to look like a skeleton, or die of tuberculosis before night. We didn't have any doctor down here and I acted as doctor. I didn't know what to do and so I fed him cream. It put flesh on him. We got him in the pool and he was scared to death, and in about a week he began to walk in the pool, and that is one of the things we discovered, and that is that people can walk in water when they cannot walk along on land. And that, you all know, has been increasing year by year.

The following year two more people came down. You have all heard, and most of you have known, our dear Dr. Hubbard, who left us this year. He and Miss Mahoney -- and I saw Miss Mahoney this past summer when I was out in Los Angeles, and she wanted me to give her affectionate regards to the Warm Springs family.

And then today I have had all these telegrams, one especially which I want to read to you, because it is from the president of this new National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, Basil O'Connor:

"Sorry unable to be with you. Give my regards to the Executives and the employees and all the patients of the Foundation, and keep a lot for yourself."

And so I am not going to make any more speech. All I can tell you is that I hope to be back again at the end of March or beginning of April, 1939, and most assuredly, unless something unforeseen turns up, I will be back with you a year from now.

It has been a wonderful evening, and each year I think
these parties get better and better, and now, carrying out a cus-
tom of, I think, twelve years, I am going over to the door and I
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NOVEMBER 24, 1938.

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

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But, before we attack the turkey, I want to say a few words, not only to you, but to many other people in every part of the country -- on this day of national thanksgiving.

First about Warm Springs itself. The physical picture draws nearer to completion each year. The ramshackle buildings of twelve years ago have either been completely modernized or replaced by ~~modern~~ ^{new} fireproof structures; and when I got here the other day I was delighted to see the new schoolhouse and the new Medical Center rising above the ground.

I am glad we are to have a schoolhouse because we know that it is of the utmost importance to have the education of the mind keeping pace with the re-education of the muscles.

Then, too, medical science has made such great strides in the past decade that the treatment of the after-effects of Infantile Paralysis calls for many new forms of hospital care in addition to the water exercises and swimming of the older days.

Today we have the tradition of work well done. We have also the same ideal of continuing progress, backed up by determination and courage. We are looking forward to the time when we can take care of at least two hundred patients at all times -- or, in other words, treatment for about four hundred patients in a given year.

Several years ago we expanded the work of Warm Springs by helping communities throughout the country to raise money for the care of their own Infantile Paralysis cases, and, through their generosity, to give financial help to the cause of research into the origin of the disease. Last year we took a further step by establishing the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis; and after January 30, 1939, we hope to have permanent chapters of this National Foundation in all of

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At the time of the Birthday Celebration half of all the funds raised in each county will be retained in trust for the Chapters for local use and the other half of the fund raised will go to the National Foundation ^{National} ~~for the fight~~ against Infantile Paralysis.

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**GEORGIA WARM SPRINGS FOUNDATION
WARM SPRINGS,
GEORGIA**

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
Warm Springs, Georgia
November 24, 1938

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Franklin D. Roosevelt

Original reading copy

PRESIDENT'S "OFF THE RECORD ADDRESS"
THANKSGIVING DINNER
WARM SPRINGS
NOVEMBER 24, 1938.

STATEMENTS FILE

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(OFF THE RECORD THANKSGIVING SPEECH)

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23rd - 1938, 3 o'clock,
noon

(21)

For release on delivery
expected about 7:00 P. M.,
November 24, 1938.

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STATEMENTS FILE

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Following paragraph added on delivery:

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"May you and yours have a happy Thanksgiving. I am thankful that I can live in a country where our leaders sit down on Thanksgiving Day to carve up a turkey instead of a Nation."

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