

January 30, 1939

[National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis]

FDR Speech File

Dwight D.

*Rutherford S. B. Jr.
Jan 21, 1939*

I like to think that the celebrations being held from one end of the country to the other tonight are an indication of the national determination to wage unending warfare against a national peril.

The enemy we are fighting can be annihilated only by the concerted effort of the nation as a whole -- an effort of which the celebrations tonight are an eloquent and powerful witness.

We are all engaged in a campaign which, because of special circumstances, requires that our effort shall be nationwide, unified and continuous. Infantile paralysis is an enemy which neither slumbers nor sleeps. It lurks in hidden places and strikes without warning whether the victim be child, or youth, or man or woman of mature years. ~~Actions to exterminate~~
~~paralysis regardless of age, environment, or sex.~~

~~Because it is an enemy only a nationwide campaign~~
~~waged without ceasing will bring its downfall.~~ I emphasize the importance of a nationwide, continuous campaign because experience tells us that epidemic diseases can be stamped out only through carefully directed work on a nationwide scale. We need, therefore, the cooperation of every state and county, every city and town, every hamlet and crossroads community in this work. Only by such cooperation has tuberculosis been brought under control in our lifetime. Only by the same concerted action will the scourge of infantile paralysis be stamped out.

I should like to say just a word ~~more~~ about the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Not yet two years old it is a mature and efficient organization working industriously to perform its functions with but one objective -- the banishment of infantile paralysis. ~~Concentrating its efforts~~
~~into one single cause.~~ Last year the National Foundation received all of the net proceeds of the birthday parties for its national work.

This year we are making a change in the allocation of the funds.

Fifty percent of the net proceeds of tonight's parties will go to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. But the remaining fifty percent will be spent in the communities where the money is being raised. The funds will be administered through county chapters of the National Foundation. These chapters will be composed of those chairmen who have worked so hard to make this year's drive the success we all anticipate, and those other members of the communities whose association with medicine, public health activities and other agencies, give them special equipment to supervise infantile paralysis relief work in local communities. While the county chapters extend local assistance to victims, especially those who are without funds, the National Foundation must carry on with equal persistence the work of tracking the ~~the~~ germ of the disease to its ~~source~~.
~~This letter work must not cease until infantile paralysis has been stamped out forever and a system of care and control has been built up~~
~~national wide.~~

We believe that this basis of the division of funds will also afford a well balanced division of activity between central organization and the far-flung county communities. Thus while the central organization directs the broad work of research and care and treatment, local relief ^{the} ~~through county chapters~~ ~~The funds will be carried out in accord with~~ principle of local self-determination, ~~dear to the American heart in all portions of our nation~~.

In thanking all who have made possible the widespread celebrations being held tonight -- I am informed that some twenty-five thousand events are being carried out -- may I, in passing, speak of one phase of this campaign which touches me personally. I refer to the fact that these celebrations to raise funds are being held on my birthday. I consider that as only an incident and not a very important incident at that.

By this I do not mean that I am insensible of the honor which the selection of my birthday for this effort implies. I am deeply appreciative

of that honor and feel in my heart a joy greater than I can express that in this year, as in previous years beginning with 1934, my birthday should be chosen as a pivotal date around which this splendid campaign should move.

The point I wish to make is that the really important thing is the work itself. ~~that goes on until the day for victory~~
~~prolonged hard work~~ For that noble work one day is as good as another. ~~the ideal we strive for will not be achieved~~
~~the opportunity in this great cause every day is the great task~~
which is ours to achieve.

again, as in previous years, I must take this means of thanking the vast array who have worked for the success of this campaign. Their very number, ~~is~~ greater than ever will be known, precludes individual acknowledgment. ~~But from the bottom of my heart I thank all who have been active in this great cause.~~ My thanks go ~~to~~ to all who have made ~~fine~~ contributions, either directly or indirectly, whether through patronage of the parties, in contributing to the March of Dimes, or aiding this great work by other means. ~~or the end I look forward to~~
~~acknowledgment to the workers for the nation.~~ And I desire, also, to express my heartfelt appreciation to the thousands and thousands of friends who have sent birthday greetings.

With my thanks to all of my countrymen goes from the depths of my soul a prayer that God will bless the work and the workers. The ~~best~~ good chance ~~infantile paralysis~~ must go on.

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFANTILE PARALYSIS
THE WHITE HOUSE
JANUARY 30, 1939

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This year fifty per cent of the net proceeds of tonight's parties will go to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. But the remaining fifty per cent will be spent in the communities where the money is being raised. The funds will be administered through county chapters of the National Foundation. These chapters will be composed of those chairmen who have worked so hard to make this year's drive the success we all anticipate, and those other members of the communities whose association with medicine, public health activities and other agencies, give them special

equipment to supervise infantile paralysis relief work in local communities.

While the county chapters extend local assistance to victims, especially those who are without funds, the National Foundation must carry on with equal persistence the work of tracking the germ of the disease to its source.

We believe that this basis of the division of funds will also afford a well balanced division of activity between the central organization and the far-flung county communities. Thus while the central organization directs the broad work of research and care and treatment, local relief will be carried out through county chapters in accord with the American principle of local self-determination.

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The point I wish to make is that the really important thing is the work itself. For that noble work one day is as good as another. The ideal we strive for is to work every day in the task which is ours to achieve.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt

(Original reading copy - over
radio from White House)

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January 30, 1939

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1226-A

CAUTION: This address given President to be delivered on the occasion of his birthday anniversary is for release in editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER than 11:37 P. M., E.S.T.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

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Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

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