

February 4, 1939

[Hotel Constance, Washington, D.C.]

FDR Speech File

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TRANSCRIPT OF ADDRESSES
At a Dinner Given by the
Trustees of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Inc.
Hotel Carlton, Washington, D. C.
Saturday, February 4, 1939

Those present at the dinner were:

The President

Dr. Randolph G. Adams, Ann Arbor, Mich.
Mrs. George Backer, New York City.
Dr. Charles A. Beard, New Milford, Conn.
Dr. Robert C. Binkley, Cleveland, Ohio.
Julian P. Boyd, Esq., Philadelphia, Pa.
Otto Bremer, Esq., St. Paul, Minn.
Amos G. Carter, Esq., Fort Worth, Texas.
Dr. Charles E. Clark, New Haven, Conn.
Dr. Robert D. W. Connor, Washington, D. C.
Harvey C. Couch, Esq., Pine Bluff, Ark.
Stephen Early, Esq., Washington, D. C.
Hon. Mariner S. Eccles, Washington, D. C.
Silliman Evans, Esq., Nashville, Tenn.
Hon. John Fahey, Washington, D. C.
J. W. Flanagan, Esq., Toronto, Canada.
Dr. Alexander C. Flick, Albany, N. Y.
Dr. Guy Stanton Ford, Minneapolis, Minn.
Hon. Felix Frankfurter, Washington, D. C.
President Frank P. Graham, Washington, D. C.
Rt. Rev. Monsignor Peter Guilday, Washington, D. C.
Hon. James W. Hanes, Washington, D. C.
Lathrop C. Harper, Esq., New York City.
Fred A. Ironside, Esq., New York City.
Hon. Jesse H. Jones, Washington, D. C.
Walter Jones, Esq., Pittsburgh, Pa.
Stanley Kahn, Esq., New York City.
Henry Kanner, Esq., Washington, D. C.
John C. Kelly, Esq., New York City.
Gerard B. Lambert, Esq., New York City.
Dr. Waldo Gifford Leland, Washington, D. C.
Ernest K. Lindley, Esq., Washington, D. C.
Hon. Breckinridge Long, Washington, D. C.
Dr. Harry Miller Lydenberg, New York City.
Marvin H. McIntyre, Esq., Washington, D. C.
Mrs. Helen Taft Manning, Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Hon. Henry Morgenthau, Sr., New York City.
Dr. Samuel E. Morison, Boston, Mass.
Dr. Allan Nevins, New York City.
Basil O'Connor, Esq., New York City.
Dr. Bessie L. Pierce, Chicago, Ill.
Donald Richberg, Esq., Chevy Chase, Md.
Dr. Stuart A. Rice, Washington, D. C.

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.

Hon. Lawrence W. Robert, Jr., Washington, D. C.
Sol. Rosenblatt, Esq., New York City.
Hon. Samuel I. Rosenman, New York City.
Boris Said, Esq., New York City.
Louis A. Simon, Esq., Washington, D. C.
Dr. St. George L. Sioussat, Washington, D. C.
William Stanley, Esq., Washington, D. C.
Hon. Nathan Strauss, Jr., Washington, D. C.
Dean C. Mildred Thompson, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
Dr. Walter P. Webb, Austin, Texas.
Sidney Weinberg, Esq., New York City.
Dr. Marguerite M. Wells, Minneapolis, Minn.

DR. WALDO T. LELAND:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I want to express our very keen regret that Mr. Walker, who has been the mainspring of this occasion, is unable to be here tonight because of the loss of a very near and dear relative.

We all know of the keen interest in the proposal that the President has laid before the country. He has asked a group of us to assist in raising funds to carry out that proposal. I do not need to tell you what that proposal is and I do not intend to enlarge on the proposal itself, because that will be done by people who can do it much better than myself. We know that the President proposes to give to the country his papers, his books, his museum collection and other articles in which he is interested and it has been suggested that they be housed in an appropriate building as part of his estate, which he also intends to give to his country. The President has asked us to assist him in realizing this exceedingly benevolent and public-spirited undertaking. It is a request that no one could refuse, least of all those of us who consider ourselves representatives of the academic fraternity.

Consequently, we have created a small organization scattered

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through the country, the members of which are academically inclined or academically engaged and are supposed to have views that are important in regard to historical research and the uses that such collection might have for the advancement of knowledge. Then we also have a very large number of scholars, as well as many others who are interested in the project purely as a public undertaking.

We are here as a large committee meeting -- let us call it a conference -- and I shall propose to conduct this conference, so far as possible, as a committee meeting should be conducted. We have arranged for informal addresses by several of those present, and, if there is time after the President has finished his remarks, we shall engage in a general discussion and questions can be asked. Those questions which cannot be answered can be referred to the proper authorities for answer at a later time.

I think I shall, first of all, make a short report of the progress we have achieved up to date:

When the proposal was made to us, it at once took the form of a problem. The problem was this: First of all, to find out what the President had and its requirements in terms of storage; secondly, to see how we could meet such requirements in terms of construction of a building with stack space, with rooms for library, for research, etcetera; third, to fit that into the environment of Hyde Park -- a very beautiful environment; fourthly, we had to prepare the necessary legislation because, when one proposes to make a gift to the Government, one must secure the consent of the Government to receive the gift and that consent must be embodied in legislation, so we had to consider that, and, finally, comes the very important problem of financing this

operation because, after all, if we are interested in it, we should be interested in it to a sufficient degree to make it possible to realize this wonderful vision that the President has held out to us.

So, there were those aspects: a study of the material that is going into the building, the building itself, the environment, a study of the necessary legislation and a study of the financing.

Thus far, we have made a survey of the President's material, we have studied the White House and the Executive Offices, we have gathered inventories, we have done everything that one can possibly do to find out what there exists to take care of in this building. We have estimated the number of cubic feet of records; we have estimated the square feet of wall space occupied by the pictures; we have estimated the amount of floor space required to exhibit the ship models and we have done those various things necessary in order to get a clear idea of the proportions of our task. That has been accomplished and we have an idea of the amount of space we need.

Next, we have proceeded, with the aid of the supervising architect, Mr. Louis Simon, whose aid has been made possible to us by the Department of the Treasury, have proceeded to study how those requirements could be translated into terms of construction.

Mr. Simon has drawn some exceedingly attractive plans. The most interesting is the general perspective which shows the sort of building we have in mind. In accordance with the President's desire and in accordance with what is appropriate, the building is colonial and of the type appropriate for Dutchess County. It is to be constructed of native field stone and is to be built around three sides of an open square. It is, in general, an exceedingly attractive building and one

which will fit into the environment perfectly.

Then, we have studied the matter of legislation and have finally succeeded in drafting a joint resolution which, after further study and some minor modifications, will be presented to the Congress before long. After that has been accepted, then we shall be able to go ahead, and then will come the problem of raising funds.

That is the report of progress I have to make and that is the situation in which the project finds itself at the present time. That is a satisfactory situation, because we know pretty well what we want to do and how much it will cost to do it.

In order to present this matter more methodically, to emphasize the importance of this idea, the importance of this collection and the establishment of the archives building, I am going to ask two members of the Committee, Professor Samuel E. Morison, a member of the faculty of Harvard University, and, following him, President Ford, a member of the Advisory Committee, to speak.

After that we shall have a presentation of the more material aspects by Mr. Basil O'Connor, who is President of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Inc. -- we had to create a corporation in order to carry out all of these intentions -- and, finally, by Mr. Morgenthau (Senior) who will dwell upon what Mr. O'Connor has said and deal with the situation further in that direction. Finally, the President will conclude this part of the discussion.

After that, if there is time, we will try to have a general discussion, if that is desired, and any questions that may be asked will be answered.

First of all, I will call upon Professor Morison to speak

very briefly on this proposal as he sees it from the point of view of a student of American history.

PROFESSOR MORISON:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I do not think there will be anything methodical in what I am going to say. I shall present to you a few random notes I have gathered from my experience in trying to find out what has been done with papers of the Presidents in the past.

When I talk this over with people who are not authorities, the first question is, "Why does the President carry off his papers from the White House?"

The first answer is that if the Presidents had kept all of their papers in the White House proper we would have had to erect another White House for him to live in. The other answer is that the Prime Ministers of Great Britain had always taken their papers home with them from 10 Downing Street, so that the Presidents of the United States did the same thing when they carried off their papers from the White House. President Washington probably did not know of that fact but, nevertheless, he did take his papers with him. John Adams was very careful to see that all of his papers were boxed before Thomas Jefferson moved in. He did not like Thomas Jefferson and did not like the idea that he might go nosing around the Adams papers.

John Adams, as you know, was only the first of a succession. John Quincy Adams came along after twenty-five years and he accumulated many papers. He was followed by other Adamses who were also in politics -- they seem to go on forever -- and they made a family archives

out of their papers, for they were also historians and biographers. By 1905, Henry Adams had written all he wanted to write, so he and his brother made a deed of trust by which the archives were to be closed for fifty years so that the oldest of us, at least, will never be able to get into those.

Mr. Jefferson also removed his papers from the White House. In spite of the fact that he was succeeded by a great friend, President Madison, he took them all with him to Monticello, and his immediate follower did the same, so it became the custom.

Nobody took any interest in the Presidents' papers, except the Presidents themselves, until around 1827 when the first of these guardians of history began to get interested in the Washington papers. Mr. Jared Sparks, editor of the North American Review, conceived the idea of publishing the papers of George Washington in order to get a real insight on the history of the country. His immediate difficulty was to get possession of those papers. Fortunately he had an acquaintanceship with Chief Justice Marshall. One of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court, Bushrod Washington, was a nephew of George Washington. He had inherited Mount Vernon and the papers.

After long negotiations, an agreement was made, a tri-partite agreement, by which Justice Washington and Chief Justice Marshall split the expected profits with the publisher three ways. Professor Sparks must have been a pretty good bargainer, even for a Yankee, for he was to get fifty per cent and the other fifty per cent was split between the two members of the Supreme Court of the United States.

One of the things that has always puzzled me is why and how Chief Justice Marshall got twenty-five per cent out of that. Now that

I have got a friend in the Supreme Court (referring to Mr. Associate Justice Frankfurter) I hope to get some light on why it is customary for Chief Justices to receive a royalty on the efforts of their associates. The publication turned out to be unusually successful financially and all three did very well indeed.

Jared Sparks had thought that a three months' examination would suffice but he soon found that that was merely scratching the surface and, with the consent of his colleagues, the papers were packed in eighty cases, loaded on a wagon and started to Boston. On the way, the wagon picked up a case of diplomatic manuscripts from the State Department and a case of manuscripts from New York. It was a long, long time before Jared Sparks returned those manuscripts. Before he was finished, Bushrod Washington had died, and the heir of Justice Washington, George Corbin Washington, being very hard up, negotiated a sale of the manuscripts to the State Department at Washington, although a good part of the manuscripts were still in the hands of the historian in Cambridge. However, the Professor finally consented to send back the manuscript, except for a few autographs which he kept by permission of George Corbin Washington.

There was some very acrimonious correspondence between these gentlemen and the State Department with respect to holding back on the State Department. It appears that the State Department had only contracted for the "public" papers and Mr. Sparks and Mr. Washington considered that the only public papers were those of the period of the Presidency and that everything else was private. The State Department did not see it quite the same way. They finally got them to see their point of view but, in the meantime, both had given away a considerable

number of letters of the General to people who wished to have a memento of the great man. Mr. Sparks was particularly reprehensible because he had the first draft of the first message of Washington on the state of the Union, a tremendously long document, which the first President, for reasons of his own, decided to repress and substitute a new one instead. Naturally, historians would like to know what Washington thought of the state of the Union in 1789 but Jared Sparks had torn that up and given it to eight or nine souvenir hunters and it has only been possible to assemble seven or eight of those pieces since, so Jared Sparks now is not held in good repute by historians since the Library of Congress has only a part -- a majority but only a part -- of those papers.

Shortly before that the State Department had purchased the library of Thomas Jefferson when he became rather hard up in his old age and later, by political log rolling, the papers of Jefferson and the papers of Hamilton were purchased at the same time by the same resolution. It was the only way possible to get it through.

Then, in the Administration of President Jackson, the question of purchasing the Madison papers came up. The thing was started by a letter from President Madison's widow, the famous Dolly Madison, stating that the late President, in his will, on the strength of the probable value of his notes of the Federal Convention, had left instructions that they were to be published after fifty years when certain legacies would be paid from the proceeds, his widow to receive the residue.

Therefore, nothing could be realized on these notes until they were in the publisher's hands and printed. When the widow submitted them to the publishers, they proved to be extremely pessimistic

as to the financial value of Madison's incomparable notes, so Mrs. Madison requested the Congress to purchase them from her for the very modest sum, as it would seem to us, of \$30,000. Of course they would be perfectly priceless if such a thing were in the market today. But even that did not go through. The resolution failed. The papers were finally acquired, they were smuggled into national possession as a rider on the general appropriations bill for the year 1837. And so it went with the papers of those days.

At the turn of the century there began a new deal in Presidents' papers. The families, the surviving families of ex-Presidents began to present their papers to the Library of Congress which had been organized shortly before and the State Department handed over to the Library of Congress all the papers it had previously purchased. The correspondence of Andrew Jackson, for instance, was presented by the children of Montgomery Blair in 125 volumes. The Van Buren manuscripts were given by three groups of heirs.

But, in the meantime, a great many Presidential papers have disappeared. President Grant, so far as I have been able to find, left no papers. He destroyed everything that came in -- that is one way of doing it. (Laughter) The manuscripts of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" were all burned. Only a few hundred were saved. They were purchased from the heirs of the hero of the campaign of 1840 only a few years ago, and are now in the Library of Congress.

The Lincoln manuscripts were an unfortunate case. They were used by Nicolay and Hay in their biography but denied to every subsequent biographer. They are now in the Library of Congress but closed by the order of the late Dr. Robert Lincoln -- not even Senator Beveridge

was able to get access to those manuscripts. Also, a great many manuscripts of his earlier life got into a great many other hands and are scattered over the country. In fact, that is the case with almost all Presidential papers down to the present century, that they have been split up and part given away to friends and secretaries, as, for instance, in the case of one which was purchased by the Library of Congress from a descendant of the President's private secretary. Some papers have come to the Library of Congress by even more devious ways which it would probably be not wise to mention.

Beginning with President Cleveland, the manuscripts of the three Presidents of recent times, President Cleveland, President Theodore Roosevelt and President Taft and a portion of the Garfield manuscripts have been presented to the Library of Congress almost intact by their respective families. But, of course, they ran a great risk in the meantime. They were in private hands, mostly in wooden boxes and buildings and are lucky to have escaped destruction.

Beginning with the manuscripts of President Hayes, we have a third way of dealing with the Presidential papers. The Hayes manuscripts are lodged at the Hayes Memorial Library at Fremont, Ohio, with all the books and mementos of the family as well as the papers of President Hayes both as President of the United States and the subsequent years after the Presidency. They were left as a trust and they are preserved in very much the same way that President Franklin D. Roosevelt's papers will be preserved in the President's own home at Hyde Park. But here is a very interesting difference, a quantitative difference between the Hayes problem and the Franklin D. Roosevelt problem. The Hayes manuscripts in the Hayes Memorial Library at Fremont number

about 120,000 pieces. The Franklin D. Roosevelt papers, when they leave the White House will, according to our best calculations, number about 6,000,000 pieces.

President Hoover, I believe, was the first President to take everything in the way of papers from the White House, not even destroying the general file, which many other Presidents had caused to be destroyed. He has, of course, organized the great Hoover War Library at Palo Alto, California. But the papers of his Administration were not nearly so bulky as those of the present regime because, it seems, everybody has been writing letters to the President over the last few years. With the greater facilities of reading and writing and with the growth of popular education, there has been a very happy growth of people's interest in their own government. Everyone feels impelled to write the President at least once a year about something or other and all these letters have been preserved -- a record at least -- even when the letter refers to the work of some Department to which it is forwarded.

In addition to these 6,000,000 pieces of manuscript in the White House files, there is, of course, the great library that President Roosevelt has collected and a naval history, together with an invaluable collection of naval charts, logs, books, pamphlets, prints, paintings and ship models, and all of those are to stay with the President's collection of manuscripts. This, I believe, has never been done before in the case of any Presidential collection except that of Presidents Hayes and Hoover.

Thus, at Hyde Park, if these plans as we hope and believe are successful, it will be the first time that the collections and manuscripts of a President of the United States have been kept together

in their entirety, without anything lost or destroyed, for the use of the historians and for the use of the generations of Americans who are to come after us.

No wonder those of us who are historians feel particularly grateful, not only for ourselves but as well for our young colleagues and our colleagues yet unborn, to President Roosevelt. (Applause)

DR. LELAND:

Thank you very much, Professor Morison. I am sure you presented it in a way that not only held our interest and attention but convinced us that have any doubts as to the utility and desirability and even its inevitability.

Now I am going to ask Professor Ford of the University of Minnesota to expand on what Professor Morison has said and explain it in somewhat more general terms.

PROFESSOR FORD:

Mr. President and Associates in this significant enterprise:

I would like to preface my remarks by coming somewhat to the rescue of the Harvard professor. Although my brief historian connections were entirely with Yale, I think something should be said for the Harvard man.

My only connection with archives has been in connection with European archives, but Jared Sparks was the first man, I think it is safe to say, who ever managed to get European archives opened for any purpose. They felt that an innocent Harvard professor engaged in editing the life or letters of George Washington was so harmless that they let him in despite the authorities' horror of opening archives. Thus

it is possible that the activities of a President may have significance far beyond this country's frontiers.

I should say, Mr. President, that Mr. Morison's last remark opens up a vista that might almost terrify one of what historians might do in the future. I see long vistas of volumes and of observations. They will even supply you, Mr. President, with a philosophy, because, when historians get through dividing history into periods, one of which is a critical period, they get down to devising philosophy for a man.

I remember the last conversation I had with President Wilson. There was a group of us and one ventured to ask President Wilson -- we were in the house on S Street -- "Are you going to write a history of your time?" He said, "No, of course not. The trouble with you historians is that you think a man, in every one of his acts, is revealing a philosophy, some profound attitude that he has toward everything. The real fact is that everything is being fed to a man in an executive position so fast that he has little or no time to exercise any thought of philosophy."

Nevertheless, they are going to supply you with a philosophy, Mr. President, but they will do it at a time when it need not trouble you, I am sure. But they will be right because no historian who digests these archives and these papers and thinks long enough about what is back of them but will be concerned with American democracy and the thought and philosophy of the American people. It is my profound conviction that out of a library such as this, accumulated over the years by one who has been in the strategic position of the donor, will come a revelation of American life and thought, all the more valuable for these thousands and thousands of letters that come from people who

unburden themselves about trivial matters, that it will be, for the historians of the future, a material out of which they will build a great, revealing picture of this Nation, which, suddenly, within the last few decades, has come to realize that youth has passed, that it has reached middle age and that it faces problems that this democracy, on this continent, has not faced before. And the revelation that will be given of how people have come to feel again that this democracy can be an agency to accomplish its purposes in fields hitherto undreamed of will mark a turning point in American history.

Here, in this material, one will see the impact of urbanization, of enormously increased means of communication, communication that is simultaneous and instantaneous, upon millions. I thought, as I listened all night long in 1932 to the Democratic Convention that nominated Mr. Roosevelt, that their action was significant. But of equal significance was the fact that millions of Americans all over the country were part of a vast audience and equally interested in the great cause represented by the man who landed there in Chicago within a few hours by means unknown to his predecessors, to speak to those who had chosen him.

Those are the material indications of an age that moves so fast that social thinking can scarcely keep up with it. That is what makes the problems that democracy faces. We have the problem of those who, by pressing a button or listening to a radio may take advantage of every new material invention and yet, in their thinking cling to the old form. But that is all right. Democracy survives by what it doubts and almost by what it fears quite as much as by the sweep of some great thing in which it believes but which, nonetheless, may carry it far

from its course. But democracy, doubting its way along, finds it is better off in the end, in a safer position than those who decide or let others decide for them. I am recalling the old remark by Fisher Ames comparing monarchy to democracy. He said that monarchy is a trim ship that sails along in pleasant weather but, when the storm comes, it founders on the rocks. "Democracy is a raft," he said. "You cannot sink it but, damn it, your feet are wet all the time."

Well, of course some of us get cautious; some of us get so cautious that we must be submerged up to our necks before we will man the oars to steer a new course but, ultimately, we do. I, who come out of the Great Northwest -- where the old frontiers of thought still persist -- have seen that change and I remarked it not alone by the utterances of leaders but by the remarks of the common man upon the street. When thinking reaches that level, not cogent and clear but convinced that something must be done, that we have reached a time when old processes do not answer, when that conviction becomes common, the change has come and the shaping of parties and of leaders will only be a further demonstration of the significance of this era.

A Frenchman said once in Italy, "The more things change, the more they remain the same." I accept that for the history of democracy, that the more it changes, the more it remains the same. And of this era and this period, so epitomized and summarized for the future in this enormous cache of papers and correspondence, the scholars who go to them in the years to come will remark not how it changes alone but how, through it all, democracy survives and is the same.

This, to my mind, is one of the most significant things that can be done. It surpasses in importance, because of the reach of these

years and their significance, any similar enterprise that has been suggested or executed by any previous executive. And I am sure that I speak not for scholarship alone but, as well, for the future generations of America who will want to know the origins of the shifts and the changes that have come and the values of the things that have survived. They can find it, I am sure, Mr. President, better in this center that we are hoping to build, better than they can anywhere else in the United States. {Applause}

CHAIRMAN LELAND:

We thank you, President Ford, for carrying this discussion up to such levels and revealing some of the implications and values that perhaps we have not expected that such a foundation as we hope to establish may have for our own generation and future generations. I am sure that it makes us feel that it is a privilege to have any part in carrying it out.

Now, having considered these aspects of the matter, let us turn to other aspects that are exceedingly important if we are to realize our hopes. First, I am going to call on Mr. O'Connor, President of the Roosevelt Library, Inc., the corporation which is charged with the actual work that brings us together today.

MR. BASIL O'CONNOR:

Mr. President, as I sat here and heard of the volume and extent of your papers, I thought I knew of an explanation. When Calvin Coolidge ceased to be Governor of Massachusetts, he was succeeded by a man named Allen and Governor Allen found that, whereas Coolidge left his offices at five o'clock invariably and went down to the Adams House,

he, Governor Allen, was staying until seven thirty and a quarter of eight every night. So he said to his secretary one day, "I wish you would check up. I must be seeing many more people than Coolidge saw." His secretary, after checking up, reported that that was not the fact, that, in fact, Coolidge had seen more people every day than Allen had seen.

When Allen was next in Washington -- Coolidge was then Vice President -- he said to Coolidge, "Mr. Vice President, I am staying in my office until seven-thirty and a quarter of eight every night whereas you left at five. The fact is that I see fewer people than you did. How do you explain that?" Coolidge said, "That is simple; you talk back." (Laughter)

I think, Mr. President, that the volume of your papers may be due somewhat to the fact not only that you talk back but that maybe you talk back to some who have not been accustomed to have Presidents talk back to them. (Laughter)

I was also interested in this whole idea of papers disappearing and I am only sorry, despite my extreme respect for Mr. Morgenthau, Senior, who is to follow me, I am awfully sorry that his son is not following me so I can explain to him that there is really nothing radically wrong in papers disappearing. (Laughter)

I suppose we are here tonight because we do have a sincere and real interest in this project. It is true that it is difficult and it is also true that in spots there may be some resistance. Those two things only add zest. Now, it is not self-creating. Some things do happen of themselves in the world but most things do not. Most things are inspired or thought of and carried through. And this project

will not carry itself through automatically. It calls for and it needs money. We have no doubt that that money will be readily forthcoming from people who are able and willing to contribute.

What we feel we would like to ask you to do is to have a sincere and profound interest in this thing, to help see that the project is carefully and successfully consummated. One way, as well as any other, that you can help in that is by listing in your own mind that type of person -- of which there are many in this country -- that has a personal and a real interest in this kind of educational work and in this kind of historical work. Believe it or not, givers are not rushing to the front line but there are, in this country, many very sincere people willing to give if the proper approach is made to them.

Now, what we want you to do, if you will, is to feel that you are really a part of this organization, really a part of this committee and to search your minds and memories for that kind of a person and to make actual notes of it and to help us by sending your suggestions in to Frank Walker at 1600 Broadway in New York City.

It is not our desire, in any sense at all, to make you salesmen or agents. We want your moral support. We want your actual support in enlisting the interest of those that you think will be interested or in giving us the opportunity to interest those same people.

No definite plan has been decided upon. It is not planned to make a public appeal -- it is not as yet planned, at least, and I personally hope that that will not be necessary. Certainly this period, this particular period in which the President has been the active motivating force, commands through this country, even among those who may not agree with him entirely, a respect for what is being done and, even

more than that, an interest in the proper preservation and in the handing down to posterity of a means and a facility whereby, in the future, the real picture can be seen. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN LELAND:

Thank you very much, Mr. O'Connor.

Now, you have heard the beginning of the second part. I am going to ask Mr. Morgenthau (Senior) to continue the discussion along the lines that Mr. O'Connor has commenced.

MR. HENRY MORGENTHAU, SR.:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I feel that I represent an enormous class that, at one time or another, has suffered from intolerance and that we have found in the President a great apostle or advocate of tolerance and we rejoice at the opportunity to show to the living our cheers and not wait to weep tears for the dead. If ever there was justification in doing something, it is right now, while the President is in his prime because I have a suspicion that he is going to live about as long as his mother and myself, and that gives him thirty years more. (Applause) And these 6,000,000 documents may rise to quite a mountain of documents for it seems to me that the President, who is at present the champion of tolerance, is equally the champion -- if he is not yet, he will be -- of democracy in this whole world. Just think of the pleasure we have to sit here with him and see him in the midst of this tremendous work. Think of what a fine thing it would be to give the American people the full opportunity to express their satisfaction right now.

I haven't the slightest doubt that we will succeed in procuring

the necessary funds because, if it is explained to the public what this means, they will rally and support this movement.

Hyde Park is a beautiful place. We ought to have a Mecca where the future admirers of the President can go and it ought to be so arranged that they may have a purpose in coming. All of you or most of you have seen that splendid nucleus of the collection the President has at the White House or at Hyde Park. I think if all of us just think quietly of who, amongst the people that we know, is willing to respond, -- and I know that in their hearts the vast majority of the American people do respond no matter what their politics may be -- then I think it will be a relatively easy task to raise this moderate sum of money.

I regret, and I am sure the President regrets, that when we created the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and could have secured, with the consent of the widow and children, all of Wilson's papers, there was some little dispute amongst the committee. It was a silly dispute, a silly difference of opinion. Some of those men thought that Mrs. Wilson should give the house and the papers without being paid for them. And, now, we don't know whether we will ever get those papers. Now, here, the President comes forward and volunteers to give all of his papers and his collections. There should not be any question of the willingness of the people to accept them in the same spirit as that in which the President has tendered them to us.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LELAND:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Morgenthau. That certainly raises

the discussion to a high level and inspires us still further to see this important thing accomplished.

And now, Mr. President, it is your turn to talk back.

THE PRESIDENT:

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I think I speak for a large number of people at the table who have the diffidence of amateurs in the presence of great scholars. A number of you at the tables have said to me, "Why, we are out of place with these presidents of universities and leaders of learned societies and historians of world renown." I felt that way a little until a few minutes ago it occurred to me that I probably occupied an important historical position at an earlier age than any of you because, when I was twenty years old, I was elected the librarian of the Hasty Pudding Club in Cambridge, Massachusetts. That was the beginning of a great many years of what my family has called the bad habit of acquisitiveness.

I had a small fund at my disposal -- I think it was \$400. a year -- when I was the librarian of the Hasty Pudding Club to buy books for the Hasty Pudding library. Probably the man who is more responsible for my collecting instincts than anybody else, -- he is long since dead but possibly a few of the older people here will remember him, but not if you are younger than Mr. Morison or Felix Frankfurter, who is six months younger than I am -- was an old man named Chase, who ran the bookstore for N. J. Bartlett and Company at Cornhill in Boston.

I went to Mr. Chase and I said to him, "I have got this fund; I know nothing of what I should buy." And he said, "I am going to give

you a course in liberal education on books of all kinds." And I proceeded to buy under his guidance, first for the Hasty Pudding Club and the following year for the Fly Club, books that in those days were very cheap but on which, if they were to be sold tomorrow, either Club would realize a very handsome profit. For example, I bought a complete set of Dickens' Christmas books for \$28. What would they bring today, not just first editions, but first issues? You know what that is. That was the beginning.

One of the first things old man Chase said to me was, "Never destroy anything." Well, that has been thrown in my teeth by all the members of my family almost every week that has passed since that time. I have destroyed practically nothing. As a result, we have a mine for which future historians will curse me as well as praise me. It is a mine which will need to have the dross sifted from the gold. I would like to do it but I am informed by the professors that I am not capable of doing it. They even admit that they are not capable of doing it. They say that they must wait for that dim, distant period which Dr. Ford has suggested, when the definitive history of this particular era will come to be written.

I always remember an episode in 1917. It occurred at the White House. I was Acting Secretary of the Navy and this was the first week in March. It was perfectly obvious to me that we were going to get into the War within the course of two or three weeks, depending entirely on when the first ship flying the American flag was sunk by the unlimited submarine warfare of Germany. I went to see the President and I said, "President Wilson, may I request your permission to bring the Fleet back from Guantanamo, to send them to the Navy Yards

and have them cleaned and fitted out for war and be ready to take part in the War if we get in?" And the President said, "I am very sorry, Mr. Roosevelt, I cannot allow it." But I pleaded and he gave me no reason and said, "No, I do not wish them brought north." So, belonging to the Navy, I said, "Aye, aye, sir" and started to leave the room. He stopped me at the door and said, "Come back." He said, "I am going to tell you something I cannot tell to the public. I owe you an explanation. I don't want to do anything, I do not want the United States to do anything in a military way, by way of war preparations, that would allow the definitive historian in later days -- these days -- to say that the United States had committed an unfriendly act against the central powers." I said, "The definitive historian of the future?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Probably he won't write until about the year 1980 and when he writes the history of this World War, he may be a German, he may be a Russian, he may be a Bulgarian, -- we cannot tell, -- but I do not want to do anything that would lead him to misjudge our American attitude sixty or seventy years from now."

Dr. Ford has spoken of the new processes of democracy. I am glad he did because it is true that nowadays news moves faster than ever before. We have vehicles of communication that we never had before. It is true that where my predecessor received 400 letters a day on the average, I receive 4,000, but that is only a part of the story. We are able to get our ideas across from one end of the earth to the other in much shorter time than even ten or twelve years ago. Some of us not long ago, in September, listened on a Monday afternoon, at two o'clock, to the personal voice of the leader of the German State, an amazing speech made in the Sports Palace. The next day the American

people, at the same hour, heard the quite sober, appealing and rather pathetic voice of Neville Chamberlain telling his democracy and a great many other democracies the story that the English speaking peoples had to tell.

There are a great many things besides mere documents and I hope very much that in this collection that is to be got together, we will have not merely letters and the written words but we will also have, as a part of the collection -- perhaps not kept there but kept under the same general supervision of the Archivist, in the National Archives, the spoken word that is being recorded in every country, and recorded in such a way that the records can be permanently maintained for posterity. In other words, the human, the individual factor will enter into the writing of modern history far more greatly in the future than it has in the past.

In the same way, there are other things that need preservation as, for example, the give and take of the newspaper controversial press. After all, it is all controversial and should be. There should be a record to show that form of communication to our own people and to all the world during the actual happening of each event.

In these papers there are a great many things that I have not said very much about that already I begin to recognize the future value of, although a few years ago I would not have thought much about them. For example, in the consideration of a long distant period, 1913 to 1920, from the purely political angle, the method, for example, of the appointment of postmasters. It seemed a small thing then, a rather petty thing which took a great deal of my time because, at that time, I was distributing the post office patronage of up-State New York. I

happened to be going through some of those files the other day. They form an interesting historical record of appointments of that particular type of public service, showing the progress that we have made in twenty-five years. They show how, in those days, 90%, 95%, of all the appointments of what is, very nearly, the largest appointive group in the Government service was almost wholly political, almost wholly based on the recommendations of the local political leaders of the moment, backed up by petitions from eminent citizens, all of one party. And so you will see that, in a very few years, that will form such a contrast to the modern method of applying to a much larger extent the merit system, the civil service method, as to prove the advances that we have made, even in a quarter of a century.

Another reason that occurred to me the other day, another need for putting some of this material in order, related to some of the Naval papers. Captain Knox, who has been getting out a series of publications of the early Naval records, and who has completed the record of our war with France, to which I contributed some of my manuscripts and material, wrote to me to ask for my manuscript material relating to the first two years of the war between the United States and the Barbary Coast, 1804 and 1805. I wrote back to him that I would immediately look for them and send them over to him to see if they would be of any use in the publication of these new volumes. Well, I could not find them. They are in the White House, I am sure they are there, but I spent at least one hour -- and that is a lot of time in my life -- looking for them and I could not find them. In other words, there it is, the mislaying of somewhat valuable manuscript material relating to a period in our early history that has never been adequately covered

from a documentary point of view. Some day, when Dudley Knox or his successor asks for material relating to our war with Quallah Battoo (Sumatra) in 1832, we will be able to find the material that I happen to have in regard to that very important conflict and the very important diplomatic result that came out of that conflict because, as some of you know, it was largely as a result of it that we undertook first to open up China and then to open its doors.

And so it goes. It is a very conglomerate, hit-or-miss, all-over-the-place collection on every man, animal, subject or material. But, after all, when it is put together and indexed under proper supervision, I believe it is going to form an interesting record of this particular quarter of a century or, as Uncle Henry would say, half century to which we belong.

There is one other subject that has not been mentioned, which I have a certain amount of diffidence in mentioning to the persons concerned. There have been gathered here in Washington for the last six years a very large number of men and women who have left their private occupations and come here to Washington to do service for their Government. They have occupied positions of great importance in the Nation, in almost every line of Government activity. Whether those lines covered too many fields is a question for the Congress to determine and not for us, but the fact remains that they have come here; they have rendered splendid service; they have accumulated, each and every one of them, a large personal mass of historical material. Now, I hesitate to speak to any of them and suggest that they could supplement this collection that is to go to Hyde Park by the presentation of their own papers and yet I am perfectly certain that sitting here at the table

are good people who, perhaps, may not have any other disposition of their personal papers in mind, who may not wish to leave them to their own children, who may not have some particular college library to give them to. The building of this building, with the possibility of adding to its future contents at some future time -- and with the aid of the Treasury Department that is one thing that we are planning for in case it is needed -- I am in great hopes that a large amount of other material will find its way ultimately to this library at Hyde Park.

There are, for instance, records which should not be published at the present time. For example, there are very confidential shorthand records of the conversations during the past two or three years between the Secretary of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in London and the Minister of Finance in Paris, two-way and sometimes three-way conversations over the transatlantic radio telephone. The only records of those conversations are probably the secret records taken down in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, in the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of the Minister of Finance. Now, obviously, records of that kind of private conversations should not be disclosed today, even to a Senatorial committee. There is, however, no reason why they should not be disclosed to the public after a reasonable number of years have elapsed. I have been asking Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and he says that obviously the place to put records of that kind, after this Administration is all through, is in a collection that represents original material of the period. There is a great deal of that.

There are a great many people connected with the Administration who, I think, will be very, very glad to use Hyde Park as a deposi-

tory for their documents and their original material.

However, as I say, that is not a thing I like to speak about to them in person lest they might think they have to say, "Yes," where perhaps they had some other plan in mind. I think everybody in the Administration should feel wholly free to do as they wish to do with their own papers that do not belong to the Government. On the other hand, if they all know that at Hyde Park there exists a place where they can send them for the permanent care for the benefit of the public and under the control of the Government itself, I think it will be of great additional value to this collection we are making.

The plans -- are you going to speak about the plans again?

CHAIRMAN LYLAND:

I think not, unless you would like to have them presented.

THE PRESIDENT:

No, but if anybody would like to see the first sketch plans -- they are somewhat preliminary -- to give you an idea of the proposed location of the building and the proposed type of building, they are right here. It is not an expensive type of architecture. It is permanent, fireproof and air-conditioned, whatever that may mean, these days. I do not believe in it myself; however, I suppose it is good for papers and other records.

I think you will get a pretty good idea from those plans of the physical aspects of this proposed building.

And now I want to thank all of you for all you have done and are doing. I feel that this whole project, as the W.P.A. would say, is in very competent hands. May it go on. I shall, personally, have

the greatest personal joy in watching that building go up and, especially, in watching the trucks, the Army trucks from Washington, D. C., when they begin to roll into the drive and put those things where they will stay for a great many years. (Applause)

CHAIRMAN LILAND:

This is so appropriate a conclusion to this discussion that it seems almost impertinent to continue it. I do, however, wish to speak on one or two matters you have suggested.

I am sure that the university professors, of which I am not one, were very much interested in your extracurricular activities while you were at Harvard and I believe it made an impression that such extracurricular activities should have such interesting consequences as those you have described to us.

As to your suggestion of sifting the dross from the gold, we had a long discussion in the Executive Committee meeting this afternoon. The Committee, as you know, has the power to destroy but it appears that they are in entire accord with the philosophy of your bookseller friend in Boston.

You did raise the point, -- one which we have neglected purposely because we have felt that you should raise it -- of additional collections. The space which has been provided is ample to receive considerable additions, even after your six million pieces and your books and other things are placed there. However, if persons, even those not connected with your Administration should have papers and wish to give them to the library, there are still twelve acres in the plot and, by covering them over, a vast amount of material can be housed.

I speak with some feeling because, when I came to Washington so many years ago that I shall not give the date, my first task had to do with the archives of the Federal Government. One person could catalogue them then in a matter of a few months. That, of course, was a long time ago. The great war more than doubled the accumulation of archives from the beginning of our Government in 1789 down to 1914. Your accumulation is about double the accumulation of archives from 1789 to 1921. That shows the enormous increase there has been in archivist material. Consequently, your six million pieces -- well, we are rather impressed by your moderation in having only six million pieces and we estimate that, by the time they are safely housed, there will be more than six million pieces because they have a way of accumulating themselves.

Now we shall have a few minutes of questions and answers. With regard to the building, I should say there will be an opportunity to examine the plans after the dinner. And now, we are a committee of the whole house to consider this rather extraordinary and interesting problem and if there are any questions we will do our best to answer them.

(There were no questions.)

I suppose there won't be any questions. That does not surprise me because, after the President's remarks, I should say that most questions likely to be asked have already been answered.

I now have the rather pleasant duty of bringing this extraordinary occasion to a conclusion and to thank you, Mr. President, for having given us an opportunity to work together for so important, so interesting and so pleasant an undertaking. (Applause)