

August 30, 1939

[Labor Day Statement]

1239

FDR Speech File

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 30, 1939

A LABOR DAY STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT:

Upon this Labor Day American wage earners may well consider the benefits and satisfaction which flow from a democracy not only to them but to all our people. We have the blessings of peace, a cohesive unity and a substantial measure of prosperity to be thankful for upon the national observance of this fifty-two year old birthday.

We have made great economic and social advances in the public interest since March 1933, and they have combined for the general well-being of this generation and generations yet to come. Increased employment and more and better filled pay envelopes, brought about through the aid and cooperation of the Government, have built up purchasing power so that employers, farmers and investors have shared the benefits with millions of workers.

Wage earners themselves have gained directly through increases in wages and job opportunities, through better working conditions and through shorter hours of labor. They have been aided by such far-reaching and far-sighted legislation as the social security program for which this generation and future generations will ever offer up thanks.

The success of the comprehensive economic and social program, which was launched in 1933, is in fact already assured. Since March of that year, as a result of progressive and constructive policies, planned with the well-being of the entire nation in mind, jobs in private industry, exclusive of agriculture, have been provided for more than seven and a quarter million men and women who were without work in the early months of 1933. In this same period the amount in weekly pay envelopes, in manufacturing alone, increased by more than \$90,000,000.

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Results have been ~~especially~~ satisfactory so far as the income of farmers is concerned. Cash income of farmers for the first six months of 1933 totaled \$2,057,000,000, as compared with \$2,975,000,000 in the first six months of 1939, an increase of \$918,000,000.

All this constitutes an economic achievement of which we may well be proud. So let us be thankful upon this Labor Day and the days to come for what we have accomplished in the great democracy which is the United States and let us pray that nothing may transpire to interrupt our progress towards the goal of peace, good will and national well-being, which we as a people always have had and, please God, always shall have as our objective in our own interest and that of the world at large.



HOLD FOR RELEASE

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August 30, 1939

CONFIDENTIAL UNTIL RELEASED

NOTE: This statement by the President is for publication
in the MORNING newspapers of Sunday, September 3, 1939.

Please safeguard against premature release.

WILLIAM D. HASSETT

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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. 1240

1939 September 3

Fireside Chat #14 - War in Europe

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

SEPTEMBER 3, 1939

My countrymen and my friends:

Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

Until four-thirty this morning I had hoped against hope that some miracle would prevent a devastating war in Europe and bring to an end the invasion of Poland by Germany.

For four long years a succession of actual wars and constant crises have shaken the entire world and have threatened in each case to bring on the gigantic conflict which is today unhappily a fact.

It is right that I should recall to your minds the consistent and at times successful efforts of your Government in these crises to throw the full weight of the United States into the cause of peace. In spite of spreading wars I think that we have every right and every reason to maintain as a national policy the fundamental moralities, the teachings of religion and the continuation of efforts to restore peace --

future
some day, though the time may be distant, we can be of
even greater help to a crippled humanity.

It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force or the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future. I have my constant stream of information from American representatives and other sources throughout the world. You, the people of this country, are receiving news through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day.

You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world at this moment. You are subjected to no censorship of news, and I want to add that your Government has no information which it ~~hesitates~~ to withhold~~s~~ or which it has any thought of withholding from you.

At the same time, as I told my Press Conference on Friday, it is of the highest importance that the press and the radio use the utmost caution to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other.

I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will also discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read. Check up on it first.

You must master at the outset a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations. When peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger.

It is easy for you and me to shrug our shoulders and say that conflicts taking place thousands of miles from the continental United States, and, indeed, the whole American Hemisphere, do not seriously affect the Americas -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about our own business. Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word that

comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future.

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields. At this moment there is being prepared a proclamation of American neutrality. This would have been done even if there had been no neutrality statute on the books, for this proclamation is in accordance with international law and with American policy.

This will be followed by a proclamation required by the existing Neutrality Act. I trust that in the days to come our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

It is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who, without well-rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future,

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undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies which are of little present or future value.

I myself cannot and do not prophesy the course of events abroad -- and the reason is that because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world, ~~TMX*~~ I do not dare to do so. And the other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

I cannot prophesy the immediate economic effect of this new war on our nation but I do say that no American has the moral right to profiteer at the expense either of his fellow citizens or of the men, women and children who are living and dying in the midst of war in Europe.

Some things we do know. Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, believe in the spirit of the New Testament -- a great teaching which opposes itself to the use of force, of armed force, of marching armies and falling bombs. The overwhelming masses of our people seek

peace -- peace at home, and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

We have certain ideas and ideals of national safety and we must act to preserve that safety today and to preserve the safety of our children in future years.

That safety is and will be bound up with the safety of the Western Hemisphere and of the seas adjacent thereto. We seek to keep war from our firesides by keeping war from coming to the Americas. For that we have historic precedent that goes back to the days of the Administration of President George Washington. It is serious enough and tragic enough to every American family in every State in the Union to live in a world that is torn by wars on other Continents. Today they affect every American home. It is our national duty to use every effort to keep them out of the Americas.

And at this time let me make the simple plea that partisanship and selfishness be adjourned and that national unity be the thought that underlies all others.

This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said not once but many times that I have seen war and that I hate war. I say that again and again.

I hope the United States will keep out of this war. I believe that it will. And I give you assurances that every effort of your Government will be directed toward that end.

As long as it remains within my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT ON NEUTRALITY

September 3, 1939

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It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force or the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

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As long as it remains within my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States.

FIRST DRAFT OF THE PRESIDENT'S RADIO SPEECH
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939.

I think it is right that in a brief fifteen minutes I should give what may well be called an ad interim report to the men and women -- and to the children -- of this country.

To summarize the events which have led up to the present distressing situation in world affairs, I need only point out that since 1931, and especially since 1935, events based on the use of force have crowded closely on each other's heels.

There was definite danger of a general conflagration at the time of the occupation of Ethiopia by Italy in 1935.

There was danger at all times during the Spanish civil war, which lasted nearly three years (?), that other wars would break out as a result of it.

There has been danger for over three years that the widespread conflict in China would embroil other nations.

In March 1938, Austria was occupied by the Germany Army and incorporated into the Reich.

Over a year ago claims of Germany threatened serious trouble between that country and Czecho-Slovakia, and you are all familiar with the crisis that led up to the Munich Conference. War was averted and large areas of the Czecho-

Slovak Republic were taken from her, together with any practical opportunity to defend what was left of her territorial integrity.

This past Spring the Republic of Albania was occupied by the armies of Italy and the independence of Albania made virtually subject to the Kingdom of Italy.

In the Spring of this year also occurred the final dismemberment of Czecho-Slovakia. The western part became a satellite of the Reich. Slovakia, while maintaining a semblance of independence, became a Protectorate of the Reich, as did essentially the eastern end -- Ruthenia -- as well.

During this past Summer it became increasingly evident that the Republic of Poland would become the next European issue and events have moved rapidly to the present moment when we are faced with the fact of a German invasion of Poland.

Almost all of the armed forces of Europe are at this moment either engaged in war or are in a state of readiness through complete mobilization. It is impossible for me to predict what will happen finally during the next few hours or the next few days. I have, of course, my constant stream of dispatches which come from American representatives throughout the world, but these dispatches give me little

more information than you, the people of this country, are receiving through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day. You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world. You are subjected to no censorship of news through private organizations, and I want to add to that that your government has no information whatsoever which it hesitates to withhold from you or which it has any thought of withholding from you.

By contrast I quote an American radio announcer from Berlin who yesterday said that very few of the people in the Capital of Germany itself knew the facts of what had happened between Germany and Poland the day before.

At the same time I tell you what I told my Press Conference on Friday. That it is of the highest importance that the American press and the American radio use the utmost caution to discriminate in their dissemination of news between actual verified fact, on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other. I told them that it was particularly important that in sending news of American government activities they should first check with the White House or with the appropriate department of the government in Washington.

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I have said that the long series of chapters of war and conflict and crisis during these recent years have been based on force. That is an inescapable conclusion. In some cases the crises have resulted in war. In other cases the ~~extremists~~ settlements which have been made have equally been based on the threat of force.

It is very easy for you and me to shrug our shoulders and say that all of these instances, all of these conflicts have taken place thousands of miles from the continental United States, or, indeed, from the American Hemisphere, and that, therefore, the United States is not seriously affected or involved by any one of them -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about our own business.

I ask that you consider the American record during these years. In every case which I have mentioned the American people, speaking through their government and through their President, have done everything that seemed

163

right or possible in the cause of peace. In those instances where war has resulted, we have at least made our position clear as being in opposition to war. In other cases, such as the crisis before the Munich Conference, the voice of the United States contributed in some degree to the averting of war at that time. Again, last Spring, the same influence was felt in Europe -- and during the past ten days we have made it very clear that we believed that hostilities could have been averted by the use of the methods of the conference table rather than the use of guns and bombs.

The documentary evidence proves beyond a question that your President and your Government have worked consistently and solely to avert war and maintain peace.

We have sought, and we ~~are~~ still seek, to turn civilization back to the days of a reasonable and consistent international law between nations. It was toward that end that at the last session of the Congress the Administration sought to ^{amend} ~~minimize~~ certain existing laws so that the United States could avoid being placed in an unneutral position as existing statutes might have placed us in.

Again, it is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who make flat statements that this or that or the other thing will happen -- the people who without rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies of little present or future value.

I myself cannot give assurances that take the form of sure and certain prophecy -- and the reason is that it is because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world that I do not dare to prophesy what is going to happen next. The other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

No American can glibly say that the crises of the past few years and the crisis of the present moment will have no effect on the United States. We know better.

A great war in Europe may result in a purely temporal prosperity that will make stocks soar and give wide employment -- it may do that tomorrow and the result at a later time may be the collapse of prices, the beginning of a

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greater era of chaos than we have hitherto known, and pressures against the economic and social life of our own nation from the outside such as we have never dreamed of. I do not say that as a prophecy, but I use the example to point out that any kind of prophecy is silly today.

Some things we do know. Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, believe in the spirit of the New Testament -- a great teaching which opposes itself to the use of force -- armed force -- marching armies and falling bombs. By now the overwhelming masses of our people are in favor of peace -- peace at home and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

During these past few days, through the minds of some of us, has been running the old teaching that "He who taketh up the sword shall perish by the sword". It is not for me officially to evaluate or characterize the objectives or the methods of those who began the present conflict in Europe -- but I have a shrewd intuition that my understanding of the responsibility for that conflict is in complete accord with the understanding of the overwhelming majority of my fellow American citizens.

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On the record of these past six years your President and your Government has been wholly on the side of world peace. All that I can tell you today is that that position, that policy, has not been altered by one jot or thither.

I repeat what I have so often said, that I hope the United States will not become involved in any war -- that I believe the United States will not become involved in any war -- and, finally, that your Government will use every honorable means to keep the United States out of any war.

I ask you in forming your own thoughts to discriminate in one other particular -- to discriminate against those who seek for political or for partisan ends to make capital out of a great world tragedy -- personal or political capital -- at a time when personal or political advantage should be the last thing in people's minds. The situation in the world and its implications to the people of the United States is frankly so serious today, so serious for ourselves and for our children, that we must act only as Americans.

We have certain ideals of democracy and we act to preserve those ideals not only today but for the future as well. We have certain ideas of national safety and we must act to preserve our national safety today and also

to preserve the national safety of our children in future years.

That is why I am asking you to think things through -- to think of each episode of today and tomorrow and the next day in its relationship to future years, especially in its relationship to the effect on the United States and on this hemisphere in future years.

We believe that true religion is best maintained through the exercise of free, democratic processes. Because we believe in one, we believe in the other -- and of necessity we must visualize the possibility -- a very remote possibility I grant you -- that the United States and the Western Hemisphere might under conceivable circumstances be the only part of this rounded world of ours which was the last resting place of religion and free democracy.

It seems obvious that with religion and free democracy human liberties can and will be maintained. And that is why we must be unanimous in thinking these problems through, in order that in future days they may not be threatened by other systems foreign to our heritage and dangerous to their continued existence.

In resources and in population we are strong but we must remember that one hundred and thirty million people represent less than one-tenth of the population of the world.

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On the record of these past six years your President and your Government has been wholly on the side of world peace. All that I can tell you today is that that position, that policy, has not been altered by one jot or tittle.

I repeat what I have so often said, that I hope the United States will not become involved in any war -- that I believe the United States will not become involved in any war -- and, finally, that your Government will use every honorable means to keep the United States out of any war.

I ask you in forming your own thoughts to discriminate in one other particular -- to discriminate against those who seek for political or for partisan ends to make capital out of a great world tragedy -- personal or political capital -- at a time when personal or political advantage should be the last thing in people's minds. The situation in the world and its implications to the people of the United States is frankly so serious today, so serious for ourselves and for our children, that we must act only as Americans.

We have certain ideals of democracy and we act to preserve those ideals not only today but for the future as well. We have certain ideas of national safety and we must act to preserve our national safety today and also

to preserve the national safety of our children in future .

That is why I am asking you to think things through -- to think of each episode of today and tomorrow and the next day in its relationship to future years, especially in its relationship to the effect on the United States and on this hemisphere in future years.

We believe that true religion is best maintained through the exercise of free, democratic processes. Because we believe in one, we believe in the other -- and of necessity we must visualize the possibility -- a very remote possibility I grant you -- that the United States and the Western Hemisphere might under conceivable circumstances be the only part of this rounded world of ours which was the last resting place of religion and free democracy.

It seems obvious that with religion and free democracy human liberties can and will be maintained. And that is why we must be unanimous in thinking these problems through, in order that in future days they may not be threatened by other systems foreign to our heritage and dangerous to their continued existence.

In resources and in population we are strong but we must remember that one hundred and thirty million people represent less than one-tenth of the population of the world.

DRAFT OF THE PRESIDENT'S RADIO SPEECH
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1939.

I think it is right that in a brief fifteen minutes I should give what may well be called an ad interim report to the men and women -- and to the children -- of this country.

To summarize the events which have led up to the present distressing situation in world affairs, I need only point out that since 1931, and especially since 1935, events based on the use of force have crowded closely on each other's heels.

There was definite danger of a general conflagration at the time of the occupation of Ethiopia by Italy in 1935.

There was danger at all times during the Spanish civil war, which lasted nearly three years (?), that other wars would break out as a result of it.

There has been danger for over three years that the widespread conflict in China would embroil other nations.

In March 1938, Austria was occupied by the Germany Army and incorporated into the Reich/

Over a year ago claims of Germany threatened serious trouble between that country and Czechoslovakia, and you are all familiar with the crisis that led up to the Munich Conference. War was averted and large areas of the Czechoslovakia

Slovak Republic were taken from her, together with any practical opportunity to defend what was left of her territorial integrity.

This past Spring the Republic of Albania was occupied by the armies of Italy and the independence of Albania made virtually subject to the Kingdom of Italy.

In the Spring of this year also occurred the final dismemberment of Czecho-Slovakia. The western part became a satellite of the Reich. Slovakia, while maintaining a semblance of independence, became a Protectorate of the Reich, as did essentially the eastern end -- Ruthenia -- as well.

During this past Summer it became increasingly evident that the Republic of Poland would become the next European issue and events have moved rapidly to the present moment when we are faced with the fact of a German invasion of Poland.

Almost all of the armed forces of Europe are at this moment either engaged in war or are in a state of readiness through complete mobilization. It is impossible for me to predict what will happen finally during the next few hours or the next few days. I have, of course, my constant stream of dispatches which come from American representatives throughout the world, but these dispatches give me little

more information than you, the people of this country, are receiving through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day. You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world. You are subjected to no censorship of news through private organizations, and I want to add to that that your government has no information whatsoever which it hesitates to withhold from you or which it has any thought of withholding from you.

By contrast I quote an American radio announcer from Berlin who yesterday said that very few of the people in the Capital of Germany itself knew the facts of what had happened between Germany and Poland the day before.

At the same time I tell you what I told my Press Conference on Friday. That it is of the highest importance that the American press and the American radio use the utmost caution to discriminate in their dissemination of news between actual verified fact, on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other. I told them that it was particularly important that in sending news of American government activities they should first check with the White House or with the appropriate department of the government in Washington.

At the same time I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read. Check up on it first.

I have said that the long series of chapters of war and conflict and crisis during these recent years have been based on force. That is an inescapable conclusion. In some cases the crises have resulted in war. In other cases the ~~statements~~ which have been made have equally been based on the threat of force.

It is very easy for you and me to shrug our shoulders and say that all of these instances, all of these conflicts have taken place thousands of miles from the continental United States, or, indeed, from the American Hemisphere, and that, therefore, the United States is not seriously affected or involved by any one of them -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about our own business.

I ask that you consider the American record during these years. In every case which I have mentioned the American people, speaking through their government and through their President, have done everything that seemed

right or possible in the cause of peace. In those instances where war has resulted, we have at least made our position clear as being in opposition to war. In other cases, such as the crisis before the Munich Conference, the voice of the United States contributed in some degree to the averting of war at that time. Again, last Spring, the same influence was felt in Europe -- and during the past ten days we have made it very clear that we believed that hostilities could have been averted by the use of the methods of the conference table rather than the use of guns and bombs.

The documentary evidence proves beyond a question that your President and your Government have worked consistently and solely to avert war and maintain peace.

We have sought, and we ~~are~~ still seek, to turn civilization back to the days of a reasonable and consistent international law between nations. It was toward that end that at the last session of the Congress the Administration ^{amend} sought to ~~remove~~ certain existing laws so that the United States could avoid being placed in an unneutral position as existing statutes might have placed us in.

Again, it is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who make flat statements that this or that or the other thing will happen -- the people who without rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies of little present or future value.

I myself cannot give assurances that take the form of sure and certain prophecy -- and the reason is that it is because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world that I do not dare to prophesy what is going to happen next. The other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

No American can glibly say that the crises of the past few years and the crisis of the present moment will have no effect on the United States. We know better.

A great war in Europe may result in a purely temporal prosperity that will make stocks soar and give wide employment -- it may do that tomorrow and the result at a later time may be the collapse of prices, the beginning of a

greater era of chaos than we have hitherto known, and pressures against the economic and social life of our own nation from the outside such as we have never dreamed of. I do not say that as a prophecy, but I use the example to point out that any kind of prophecy is silly today.

Some things we do know. Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, believe in the spirit of the New Testament -- a great teaching which opposes itself to the use of force -- armed force -- marching armies and falling bombs. By now the overwhelming masses of our people are in favor of peace -- peace at home and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

During these past few days, through the minds of some of us, has been running the old teaching that "He who taketh up the sword shall perish by the sword". It is not for me officially to evaluate or characterize the objectives or the methods of those who began the present conflict in Europe -- but I have a shrewd intuition that my understanding of the responsibility for that conflict is in complete accord with the understanding of the overwhelming majority of my fellow American citizens.

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your Government has been wholly on the side of world peace.
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That is why I am asking you to think things through -- to think of each episode of today and tomorrow and the next day in its relationship to future years, especially in its relationship to the effect on the United States and on this hemisphere in future years.

We believe that true religion is best maintained through the exercise of free, democratic processes. Because we believe in one, we believe in the other -- and of necessity we must visualize the possibility -- a very remote possibility I grant you -- that the United States and the Western Hemisphere might under conceivable circumstances be the only part of this rounded world of ours which was the last resting place of religion and free democracy.

It seems obvious that with religion and free democracy human liberties can and will be maintained. And that is why we must be unanimous in thinking these problems through, in order that in future days they may not be threatened by other systems foreign to our heritage and dangerous to their continued existence.

In resources and in population we are strong but we must remember that one hundred and thirty million people represent less than one-tenth of the population of the world.

(SECOND DRAFT)

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

SEPTEMBER 3, 1939.

Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

Until four-thirty this morning I had hoped against hope that some miracle would prevent a devastating war in Europe and bring to an end the invasion of Poland by Germany.

For four long years a succession of actual wars and constant crises have shaken the entire world and have threatened in each case to bring on the gigantic conflict which is today unhappily a fact.

It is right that I should recall to your minds the consistent and at times successful efforts of your Government in these crises to throw the full weight of the United States into the cause of peace. In spite of spreading wars I think that we have every right and every reason to maintain as a national policy the fundamental moralities, the teachings of religion and the continuation of efforts to restore peace -- for some day, though the time may be distant, we can be of even greater help to a crippled humanity.

It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force or the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future. I have my constant stream of information from American representatives and other sources throughout the world, ~~but these mistakes give~~
~~that~~ ~~the same information~~ you, the people of this country,
are receiving through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day.

You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world at this moment. You are subjected to no censorship of news, and I want to add that your Government has no information which it hesitates to withhold from you or which it has any thought of withholding from you.

At the same time, as I told my Press Conference on Friday, it is of the highest importance that the press and the radio use the utmost caution to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other.

I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will also discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read. Check up on it first.

You must master at the outset a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations. When peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger.

It is easy for you and me to shrug our shoulders and say that conflicts taking place thousands of miles from the continental United States, and, indeed, the whole American Hemisphere, do not seriously affect the Americas -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about our own business. Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word that comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future.

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields. At this moment there is being prepared a proclamation of American neutrality. This would have been done even if there had been no neutrality statute on the books, for this proclamation is in accordance with international law and with American policy.

BEDOUIN ETHNIC UNIT
MOTORCYCLE

INSERT (A)

This will be followed by a Proclamation required by the existing Neutrality Act. I trust that in the days to come our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

(A) DIRECT

REAGAN'S GOING TO HAVE A LOT OF WORK

I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING TO GET IT ALL DONE
TODAY, BUT I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING TO GET IT ALL DONE

REAGAN'S GOING TO SPEND A LOT OF TIME

Inset A

-4-

We shall continue to seek a return to reasonable and consistent international law between nations, and it was toward that end that at the last session of the Congress the Administration sought to amend certain existing law so that the United States could avoid being placed in the unequitable position which certain existing provisions placed us in.

It is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who, without well-rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies which are of little present or future value.

The course of events abroad
I myself cannot and do not prophesy ~~what~~ events abroad
and the reason is that because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world ~~that~~ I do not dare to do so. And the other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

I cannot prophesy the immediate economic effect of this new war on our nation but I do say that no American has the moral right to profiteer at the expense either of his fellow citizens or of the men, women and children who are living and dying in the midst of war in Europe.

Some things we do know. Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, ^{believe} ~~are~~ in the spirit of the New Testament -- a great teaching which opposes itself to the use of force, of armed force, of marching armies and falling bombs. The overwhelming masses of our people seek peace -- peace at home, and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

Inc 1B
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TO BE INSERTED

D

We have certain ideas and ideals of national safety and we must act to preserve that safety today and to preserve the safety of our children in future years.

That safety is and will be bound up with the safety of the Western Hemisphere and of the seas adjacent thereto. We seek to keep war from our firesides by keeping war from coming to the Americas. For that we have historic precedent that goes back to the days of the Administration of President George Washington. It is serious enough and tragic enough to every American family in every State in the Union to live in a world that is torn by wars on other Continents. Today they affect every American home. It is our national duty to use every effort to keep them out of the Americas.

And at this time let me make the simple plea that partisanship and selfishness be adjourned and that national unity be the thought that underlies all others.

This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said not once but many times that I have seen war and that I hate war. I say that again and again.

As long as it remains within my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States.

I hope the United States will keep out of this war. I believe that it will. And I give you assurances that every effort of your Government will be directed toward that end.

INSERT (A)

This will be followed by a Proclamation required by the existing Neutrality Act. I trust that in the days to come our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

ANDREW JACKSON
AND MARY JACKSON

(Second draft)

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

SEPTEMBER 3, 1939.

Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

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It is right that I should recall to your minds the consistent and at times successful efforts of your Government in these crises to throw the full weight of the United States into the cause of peace. In spite of spreading wars I think that we have every right and every reason to maintain as a national policy the fundamental moralities, the teachings of religion and the continuation of efforts to restore peace -- for some day, though the time may be distant, we can be of even greater help to a crippled humanity.

It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force or the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

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We shall continue to seek a return to reasonable and consistent international law between nations, and it was toward that end that at the last session of the Congress the Administration sought to amend certain existing law so that the United States could avoid being placed in the unneutral position which certain existing provisions placed us in.

It is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who, without well-rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies which are of little present or future value.

I myself cannot and do not prophesy certain events -- and the reason is that because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world that I do not dare to do so. And the other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

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[During these past few days, through the minds of many of us has been running the old teaching that "He who taketh up the sword shall perish by the sword".]

It is not for me officially to evaluate or characterize the methods or objectives of those who began the present conflict in Europe. -- [but I have a shrewd intuition that my understanding of the responsibility for that conflict is incomplete for the moment] in accord with the understanding of the overwhelming majority of my fellow citizens.]

This nation will remain a neutral nation, ^{but} I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said not once but many times that I have seen war and that I hate war. I say that again and again.

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I hope the United States will keep out of this war. I believe that it will. And I give you assurances that every effort of your Government will be directed toward that end.

TO BE INSERTED

We have certain ideas and ideals of national safety and we must act to preserve that safety today and to preserve the safety of our children in future years.

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My countrymen and my friends:

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Suggestions for
Sunday night Spect.-
Sept 3/1989

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

September 2, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Dear Mr. President:

Enclosed, the memorandum,
which might be useful in con-
nection with the radio speech
tomorrow night.

Faithfully,

Adolf Hitler

MEMORANDUM: THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH

Sunday Evening, September 3, 1939

Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

Social forces have divided Europe; have led that unhappy Continent through crisis after crisis; and have at length made the long feared catastrophe of open war a terrible reality. It is not my purpose to pass judgment; but I cannot loyally perform my duty without telling you, as clearly as I can, the nature of the crucial problems we now have to meet together.

Upon the commencement of hostilities, I took occasion to state what must be our guiding policy. I expressed the sincere hope that we could avoid being drawn into this conflict. I added, and I affirm again, that I believe we can do so; and that every effort will be made by this Administration to do so.

You must master, at the outset, a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations. When peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger. Until the European war has come to an end, and until its result is embodied in a peace firmly based on just and equitable principles, grounded on popular will and attested by general recognition of its inherent morality, we cannot say with truth that we are free from the danger of war. Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word which comes through the air, every ship which sails the sea, every civilized process

of exchange, and even every natural human instinct which recoils against cruelty tends to bring us within the area of the forces which now meet on the European plains. Not in our time is the privilege given to remain far away and unconcerned.

When the World War broke out in 1914, it was possible for President Wilson to ask of every American that he remain neutral even in thought. I cannot ask this today; ^{from a neutral has a right to take account of facts} I cannot ask that you close your minds and your consciences. Instead, I must ask that you use your minds to the fullest; that you base your conclusions on facts and guard against propaganda; that your moral judgments shall be taken humbly, with the knowledge that all of us can err, and that the truth is hard to find. In a democracy like ours the course which the country follows must ultimately be the course which its people desire. The aggregate of your own thinking makes up that invincible force we call public opinion. Every one of you is a partner in forming that public opinion. Each of you has within himself some part of the sovereign power; and power is a heavy responsibility. If it is carelessly, irresponsibly or disloyally used, the nation must pay a heavy price.

Already certain facts are clear.

The first and most tragic of them is that no single people in this world today wanted this war, or any war. Could the countless millions whose voices were stilled have found effective expression in all of the countries involved, no shot would have been fired, and the Continent of Europe would not be passing through the valley of the shadow.

The second fact is that the reputed causes of the war -- in this case certain adjustments between Poland and Germany,-- have only a minor bearing on the conflict. In this respect the present war follows closely the pattern of the disaster in 1914. Twenty-five years ago a world conflict arose on the nominal occasion of the murder of an Austrian Archduke at Sarajevo. Within a few short weeks, that incident was forgotten. Greater forces were at work then, as they are today; the real questions at issue are fundamental.

It is also clear that beneath this clash of arms there is a straining desire, which I like to hope is universal in Europe, to achieve again a just order of things. Men do strive instinctively for a world of order, governed by laws whose obedience brings the gift of peace. Frustration or fear may force their minds into other channels; but men resort to force only after they have appealed in vain to the moral forces of fairness, generosity, truth.

~~The disaster which has befallen Europe suggests that such frustration may have been taking place on that continent since the close of the World War. It is not for us to judge; but rather, to try to understand. It is said that the war is made necessary to rectify the supposed injustices of some phases of the Versailles Treaty; and this is not without truth. It is said also that the war is fought to defend Europe against a doctrine of domination by force which is far worse than the Versailles system; and you may find that that also is true. Yet you must remember that the men, women and children whose agony is paying the price.~~

of past mistakes had no part in making them. It must therefore be our steady purpose to find for them and ourselves a way of hope in place of ways of despair.

Now that force is opposed to force; and as through suffering truth at length becomes plain, I think we shall find that at last there is only one clear issue in Europe: an issue so great and so clear that it suggests the inevitable outcome. At long last, you will probably find that there are ranged on the one side peoples who believe in an ordered world based on principles; and on the other groups who believe in little save cynical force. It is always dangerous to prophesy; but I hold to the faith that the world will then resume its age-old endeavor to re-establish the principles of justice, of equity, of law. So it has always been; and so, I think it will be again.

Because most of us have lived through a similar struggle before, it is possible to lay down certain propositions whose strength we know of our own experience.

The rights of neutral countries suffer through the mere existence of war. They will be still more affected by the terms of peace which is made after the war. If the work of peace-making is badly done, they also suffer. This gives them the right to deny to the victor the sole right to determine terms of peace; it gives them the right to impose a just peace when the struggle is over.

No solution based on force or threat of force, or made by the victor, whoever he may be, can make a lasting settlement. Unless they have the quality of assent, and

are sanctioned by public opinion as just, they disappear as soon as the force that made them passes. It takes more than a victory to make a peace.

No nation needs to establish military domination in order to live. Economic arrangements are readily available which can satisfy the reasonable needs of any nation for its peaceful life, its national prosperity and the development of its civilization.

No guaranty of any peace settlement is worth the paper it is written on unless it is accompanied by disarmament. It is clear that any settlement which leaves armament unchecked is literally incapable of guaranty.

The only possible hope of achieving permanent peace is through cooperation. All else is only armistice between wars. Cooperation implies the equality of every nation, irrespective of its strength; and the acceptance of a moral order carried out in effective international law; when controversies are settled by peaceful processes; when all nations enter those peaceful processes on terms of equality, with generosity and justice.

For the Western Hemisphere, certain practicable steps are immediately suggested.

Our ~~immediate~~ duty must be to maintain and defend the peace of the Americas. In older days the principle was formulated that no non-American power should establish colonies or domination over American territory. Today that doctrine must be extended to mean that no process of war proceeding from outside the Americas shall be permitted to enter this Hemisphere or its adjacent waters. That

principle I am prepared to carry out.

The American states properly may consider taking counsel together in the interest of their common peace. This was foreseen by the twenty-one American republics at Buenos Aires in 1936, and at Lima in 1938. Further, because the American republics have successfully maintained the principle of cooperative peace, their voice today is doubly strong. Should all else fail, the Western world has the supreme duty of upholding and carrying on the heritage of the modern civilization.

For ourselves there is no cause for anxiety. We are strong enough to be neutral. We have sought to maintain the general peace; and may honorably maintain our individual peace. Our financial reforms in the past few years have made our economics safe. We need fear no convulsions like those suffered in 1914. Our markets are open; our business continues; our life is undisturbed. We must still further strengthen our social life so that it is not weakened by any feeling that parts of our people are victims of social injustice. The strength and unity of our country depends upon the responsibility which each of us recognizes towards all.

A house so made is builded upon a rock, and can withstand all storms.

Approved by *Shelton* *By Kenne*
STATEMENTS FILE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

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September 3, 1939

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STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

Answer
Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

Until four-thirty this morning I had hoped against hope that some miracle would prevent a devastating war in Europe and bring to an end the invasion of Poland by Germany.

For four long years a succession of actual wars and constant crises have shaken the entire world and have threatened in each case to bring on the gigantic conflict which is today unhappily a fact.

Answer
It is right that I should recall to your minds the consistent and at times successful efforts of your Government in these crises to throw the full weight of the United States into the cause of peace. In spite of spreading wars I think that we have every right and every reason to maintain as a national policy the fundamental moralities, the teachings of religion(~~and~~) the continuation of efforts to restore peace -- (~~for~~) some day, though the time may be distant, we can be of even greater help to a crippled humanity. *(without question)*

It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force ~~(or)~~ the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future. I have my constant stream of information from American representatives and other sources throughout the world. You, the people of this country, are receiving news through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day.

You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world at this moment. You are subjected to no censorship of news, and I want to add that your Government has no information which it ~~(hesitates to) withhold from you or~~ which it has any thought of withholding from you.

At the same time, as I told my Press Conference on Friday, it is of the highest importance that the press and the radio use the utmost caution to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other.

I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will also discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything you hear or read. Check up on it first. *(Answer)*

You must master at the outset a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations. When peace has been broken anywhere, peace of all countries everywhere is in danger.

Le It is easy for you and me to shrug our shoulders and say that conflicts taking place thousands of miles from the continental United States, and, indeed, the whole American Hemisphere, do not seriously affect the Americas -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about ~~our~~ own business. Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word that comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future.

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields. At this moment there is being prepared a proclamation of American neutrality. This would have been done even if there had been no neutrality statute on the books, for this proclamation is in accordance with international law and with American policy.

This will be followed by a Proclamation required by the existing Neutrality Act. I trust that in the days to come our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

Answers It is of the utmost importance that the people of this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who, without well-rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies which are of little present or future value.

What I myself cannot and do not prophesy the course of events abroad --- and the reason is that because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world, ~~that~~ I do not dare to do so. And the other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

I cannot prophesy the immediate economic effect of this new war on our nation but I do say that no American has the moral right to profit at the expense either of his fellow citizens or of the men, women and children who are living and dying in the midst of war in Europe.

Some things we do know. Most of us in the United States believe in spiritual values. Most of us, regardless of what church we belong to, believe in the spirit of the New Testament -- a great teaching which opposes itself to the use of force, of armed force, of marching armies and falling bombs. The overwhelming masses of our people seek peace -- peace at home, and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize peace at home.

We have certain ideas and ideals of national safety and we must act to preserve that safety today and to preserve the safety of our children in future years.

Answers That safety is and will be bound up with the safety of the Western Hemisphere and of the seas adjacent thereto. We seek to keep war from our firesides by keeping war from coming to the Americas. For that we have historic precedent that goes back to the days of the Administration of President George Washington. It is serious enough and tragic enough to every American family in every State in the Union to live in a world that is torn by wars on other Continents. Today ~~they~~ affect every American home. It is our national duty to use every effort to keep ~~them~~ out of the Americas.

Answers And at this time let me make the simple plea that partisanship and selfishness be adjourned; and that national unity be the thought that underlies all others.

This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. Even a neutral has a right to take account of facts. Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience.

I have said not once but many times that I have seen war and that I hate war. I say that again and again.

I hope the United States will keep out of this war. I believe that it will. And I give you assurances that every effort of your Government will be directed toward that end.

As long as it remains within my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the United States.

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
From the White House
September 3, 1939, 9.00 P. M.

MY FELLOW AMERICANS AND MY FRIENDS:

Tonight my single duty is to speak to the whole of America.

Until four-thirty this morning I had hoped against hope that some miracle would prevent a devastating war in Europe and bring to an end the invasion of Poland by Germany.

For four long years a succession of actual wars and constant crises have shaken the entire world and have threatened in each case to bring on the gigantic conflict which is today unhappily a fact.

It is right that I should recall to your minds the consistent and at time successful efforts of your Government in these crises to throw the full weight of the United States into the cause of peace. In spite of spreading wars I think that we have every right and every reason to maintain as a national policy the fundamental moralities, the teachings of religion (and) the continuation of efforts to restore peace -- (for) because some day, though the time may be distant, we can be of even greater help to a crippled humanity.

It is right, too, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have, without question,

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.

been based on the use of force (or) and the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the future. I have my constant stream of information from American representatives and other sources throughout the world. You, the people of this country, are receiving news through your radios and your newspapers at every hour of the day.

You are, I believe, the most enlightened and the best informed people in all the world at this moment. You are subjected to no censorship of news, and I want to add that your Government has no information which it (hesitates to) withholds (from you) or which it has any thought of withholding from you.

At the same time, as I told my Press Conference on Friday, it is of the highest importance that the press and the radio use the utmost caution to discriminate between actual verified fact on the one hand, and mere rumor on the other.

I can add to that by saying that I hope the people of this country will also discriminate most carefully between news and rumor. Do not believe of necessity everything

you hear or read. Check up on it first.

You must master at the outset a simple but unalterable fact in modern foreign relations between nations. When peace has been broken anywhere, the peace of all countries everywhere is in danger.

It is easy for you and for me to shrug our shoulders and to say that conflicts taking place thousands of miles from the continental United States, and, indeed, thousands of miles from the whole American Hemisphere, do not seriously affect the Americas -- and that all the United States has to do is to ignore them and go about (our) its own business. Passionately though we may desire detachment, we are forced to realize that every word that comes through the air, every ship that sails the sea, every battle that is fought does affect the American future.

Let no man or woman thoughtlessly or falsely talk of America sending its armies to European fields. At this moment there is being prepared a proclamation of American neutrality. This would have been done even if there had been no neutrality statute on the books, for this proclamation is in accordance with international law and in accordance with American policy.

This will be followed by a Proclamation required by the existing Neutrality Act. And I trust that in the days to come our neutrality can be made a true neutrality.

It is of the utmost importance that the people of

this country, with the best information in the world, think things through. The most dangerous enemies of American peace are those who, without well-rounded information on the whole broad subject of the past, the present and the future, undertake to speak with assumed authority, to talk in terms of glittering generalities, to give to the nation assurances or prophecies which are of little present or future value.

I myself cannot and do not prophesy the course of events abroad -- and the reason is that because I have of necessity such a complete picture of what is going on in every part of the world, that I do not dare to do so. And the other reason is that I think it is honest for me to be honest with the people of the United States.

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peace -- peace at home, and the kind of peace in other lands which will not jeopardize our peace at home.

We have certain ideas and certain ideals of national safety and we must act to preserve that safety today and to preserve the safety of our children in future years.

That safety is and will be bound up with the safety of the Western Hemisphere and of the seas adjacent thereto. We seek to keep war from our own firesides by keeping war from coming to the Americas. For that we have historic precedent that goes back to the days of the Administration of President George Washington. It is serious enough and tragic enough to every American family in every State in the Union to live in a world that is torn by wars on other Continents. And those wars today (they) affect every American home. It is our national duty to use every effort to keep (them) those wars out of the Americas.

And at this time let me make the simple plea that partisanship and selfishness be adjourned; and that national unity be the thought that underlies all others.

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Miss Tully

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It is right, ~~now~~, to point out that the unfortunate events of these recent years have been based on the use of force or the threat of force. And it seems to me clear, even at the outbreak of this great war, that the influence of America should be consistent in seeking for humanity a final peace which will eliminate, as far as it is possible to do so, the continued use of force between nations.

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