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**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**

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**File No. 1264**

**1940 January 8**

**Jackson Day Dinner Address**

The President used this Draft  
as his Reading Copy

DRAFT #4

I want to say  
Mr. Hatch: Such men &  
very numerous are here

(Regally)

JACKSON DAY DINNER

JANUARY 8, 1940

Mr. Chairman,女士们，先生们：

Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one. Teacher said, "Charlie, Charlie McMary, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?" Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$50.00 dinner with all the fixin's-free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to sign and nothin' to jine" -- and a [free] ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

There are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle -- in fact a cross between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town<sup>hastur</sup> are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs. I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch.<sup>[By this second]</sup>

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely to get better sport next Fall.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson[ ] dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House, as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouillée, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interlarded with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed sallets; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jellie and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00 we have each and all of us paid; there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley; and the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute

the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith!

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and

finally again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the front-lines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see ~~the~~ the immediate under-brush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- officers and privates, foremen and workmen -- have to get a job done, + have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions ~~of~~ that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day; and on the other hand, sometimes

*that the great public is interested more in government than in politics;*

uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk".

The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on this subject of strict party voting. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would give anything to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town.

I have in mind the predicament of one of the ablest editors of today who sometime ago said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your program but cannot say so publicly because, Mr. President, the readers and advertisers of my paper are ninety-~~percent~~ per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources. Of course you understand."

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, ~~etc.~~ Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problems of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the

utterances of the past, often tortured out of context.

The devil can quote [redacted] past statesmen as well  
as [redacted] Scripture, to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing  
line of the moment, have come to attach major importance  
only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To  
them it matters, on the whole, very little what party  
label American statesmen bore, or what mistakes they made  
in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that  
their times demanded be done.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of  
his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders  
were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education  
and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because  
he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring  
stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties.

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact  
that the theories of the French Revolutionists at times  
over-excited his practical judgment. 21. <sup>ft</sup>

He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned to speculate on it; a new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which then had to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson, the Democrat, but Jackson, the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, Biddle and the Bank had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin him.

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways, <sup>3</sup> they dropped mere partisanship when they considered it against the national interest.

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being merely a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general public welfare.

In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today ~~xxxxx~~ we have built up a great mosaic of the state of the union from thousands of bits of information -- from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainant; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have seen the same opportunity in their office, and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the many people in these last seven years who have given composite leadership have failed in their obligation. Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of *who complain now* these years. Most of ~~them~~<sup>A</sup> were the shouting optimists of 1929.

I do not believe that the American people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. It is a fact -- a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning -- a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are shameful in the light of it.

The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build further gains.

Behind us lies accomplished a really big job. It was the creation out of the funk of the early thirties of a new spirit with which we can now face the forties.

A realistic historian of our party has wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our troubles, and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make, individually, of ourselves. A selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interests of and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the ~~Syndicate~~ moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction.

They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops.

They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities.

They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life.

They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor.

They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks <sup>and</sup> ~~mainly~~ built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; made our banks safe <sup>that we have</sup> and brought our courts up to date; ~~and~~ kept millions of <sup>that we have</sup> ~~people~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~the~~ breadline.

They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view-with-alarm. *In addition to the*  
There are, of course, some people -- ~~who~~ professional  
politic viewers-with-alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health".

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed" said Ezra, one day, "Ben't you gittin' a leetle hard of hearin'?" "Yes" said Uncle Jed "I'm afesred I'm gittin' a mite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned. Ezra asked what happened.

"Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been drinkin' any. I said 'Yes, a mite'.

"Then that doctor said, 'Well, Jed, I might just as well tell you now if you don't want to lose your hearin' you've got to give up drinkin'.

"Well, ~~you~~, I thought it all over; and then I said, 'Doc~~tor~~, I like what I've been drinkin' so much better than what <sup>A</sup> keep on gittin' I've been hearin', that I reckon I'll jest ~~quit~~ deef!'".

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Now-a-days most everybody in the country knows that sometimes when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath.

There are, of course, a few exceptions of men who, stretching political disagreements into personal invective, prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for those exceptions to the rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If ~~MM~~ leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge of the different parts of the country--and plenty of experience; you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your government.

But remember that they must have ~~other~~ qualities -- the willingness to pay \$100 for a ~~\$100~~ dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of ~~that dinner~~, and the courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

Franklin Roosevelt  
The original reading copy

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

At the Jackson Day Dinner, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C.

January 8, 1940

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, CANDIDATES HERE AND  
CANDIDATES THERE: (Laughter)

First I want to assure you, in the opinion of  
the Attorney General, that you are all legally here.

(Laughter)

Once upon a time, and in a campaign year every  
speech ought to start out that way, once upon a time there  
was a school teacher, and the school teacher (who,) after  
describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her  
class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to  
Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every  
small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one.  
Teacher said, "Why Charlie, Charlie McMary" (laughter)  
"Charlie, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?"  
"Teacher," he said, -- "sure I want to go to Heaven, but"  
he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room --  
"not with (that) this bunch". (Laughter)

A week ago, Homer Cummings invited three dis-  
tinguished leaders of the opposition (were invited) to  
come to this (great) Banquet -- a \$10.00 dinner with all  
the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check --  
no tips -- "nothin' to sign and nothin' to jine" -- and  
a free ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat.  
(Laughter) Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets.  
And why? (Applause)

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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You know, there are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle (laughter) -- in fact a sort of a cross between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town, however, are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs. (Laughter)

Why didn't our guests come? (Laughter) And I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch. (Laughter)

But maybe there were -- maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely in order to get better sport next Fall. (Laughter)

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834 in Andrew Jackson's (White) House at that time Andrew Jackson's White House, a report that was made by a guest at the dinner. And I think it

would be interesting to you if I quote from a letter that this man who attended it sent home. (as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:)

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouillie, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; I always thought, of course, that the Brain Trust was something new. But it isn't. (Laughter) Then after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interlaced with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed salled; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was Jelley and small tarts in the Turkish (style) manner, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds," and "after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00 that we have each and all of us paid; and there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley; and I am afraid that the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all. (Laughter)

I had hoped that our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all of our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice (on) as to how to reconstitute the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I (felt) feel no reluctance to give them good advice for I (was) feel sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith.

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance that they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and (finally) then again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the frontlines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see the immediate underbrush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party

or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and the purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics, after all, is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- the officers and the privates, the foremen and the workmen -- have got to get a good job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than (most) some of my predecessors in the Presidency, and that I, too, I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. And I think I must admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in Government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and

explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and, incidentally, of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the great public is interested more in government than in politics; that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day, and on the other hand, sometimes uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk". (Laughter)

The growing independence of voters, after all, (has) that's been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency, frankly, is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to (the most recent example -- the election of 1936.) certain recent elections. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters. And do not let us forget it.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on (this) the subject of strict party voting. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends (in the South,) down Georgia-way, who are under the impression

that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. And I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages and counties who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would give anything in the world to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town. (Laughter)

I have in mind the predicament of one of the ablest editors of a great paper today who sometime ago said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your program" Mr. President, "but" I "cannot say so publicly because, (Mr. President,) the readers and" the "advertisers of my paper are ninety per cent Republicans" and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from Democratic sources. Of course," Mr. President, "you understand."

And might I add, that the President understood.

(Laughter)

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, (year after year) year in and year out about the great men of American history -- written with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problem(s) of government if they were alive today. The

purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the utterances of the past, often tortured out of context. Yes, the devil can quote past statesmen as (well) readily as he can quote the Scriptures, in order to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or what mistakes they made in the smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded be done.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education (and) or of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of (a) the chaos of currency and banking difficulties. (Applause)

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact that, in the light of later knowledge, the theories of the French Revolutionists at times over-excited his practical judgment. He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job (which) that then had

to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of (man) men, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. And that is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today. (Applause)

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And I feel very much the same way about Andrew Jackson -- not Jackson the Democrat but Jackson the American, Jackson the American who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and in the practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, Biddle and the Bank had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin (him.) the President himself.

And of all (of) these great American figures, I like to think -- and I (know) believe I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, and especially their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; (that) and while, properly, they used the mechanics of party organization (in many) in a thousand ways, they dropped mere partisanship when they considered partisanship to be different from the party -- not the party but the national interest. (it against the national interest)

As some of you know, I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York long before I became Governor (of the State,) and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship -- any Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being merely a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, (and) of facts and ideals, affecting the general (public) welfare.

In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow (out) that concept. In the White House today we have built up a great mosaic, a mosaic of the state of the union from thousands of bits of information -- from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and from poor; from enthusiast and from complainant; from liberal and from conservative; from Republic and from Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have seen the same opportunity in their office, and that their motives have been primarily motives of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement. (Applause)

Doubtless they have all of them been irked, irked by (the) commentators and the interpreters of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and its free press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. In other words, they had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirts.

And when you have learned not to worry at all about all of these things, there is really a lot of fun

in this job.

For when you reach (that) the point of understanding, there is a deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the over-statement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and, equally, the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of trying to fit(ting) that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the good of the people (of the nation) as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the many people and a great many of them, I am glad to say, are here tonight, - the many people in these last seven years who have given composite leadership have failed in their obligation. People cannot say that. Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of these years. And most of those who complain now, let us not forget, were the shouting optimists of 1929.

You know, I do not believe that the American

people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly if it comes out of the same can. (Applause)

(The people of the United States) For the people of this great country of ours recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is (in) really in bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or for optimism; it seems to me that it is a matter for realism. It is a fact -- a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning -- a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all of our little partisan squabbles are (shameful) a bit drab in the light. (of it.)

And the second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build (further) greater gains.

Behind us lies accomplished a really big job. It was the creation out of the funk, the pure unadulterated funk of the early thirties, the creation of a new spirit with which we can now face the forties. (Applause)

A realistic, recent historian of our party has wisely concluded when he says, "We have the intelligence to define our troubles and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make, individually,

of ourselves." And "a selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interest and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in at least the right direction.

They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops.

They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges (with) and at the same time greater responsibilities.

They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life.

They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor.

They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soils, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved

our roads and added to our parks and built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; that we have made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date; and last but not least, that we have kept millions of people out of the breadlines. (Applause)

Yes, they are glad that Government, the United States Government -- think what that means -- the Government of the United States, they are glad that it is daily becoming more useful, more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- in addition to the (professional) political viewers-with-alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life. There are some who complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong, it seems to me, to the type of unfortunate individual -- and almost every family has one of them -- the unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health." (Laughter)

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I can better understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed", said Ezra, one day, "Ben't you gittin' a leetle hard of hearin'?" "Yes", said Uncle Jed, "I'm afeared I'm gittin' a mite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston,  
go down to Boston to see an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed (returned) came back. And Ezra asked what happened. "Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been drinkin' any. And I said 'Yes, I been drinkin' a mite".

"And then that doctor said, 'Well, Jed, I might just as well tell you now that if you don't want to lose your hearin' you've got to give up drinkin'.'

"Well," said Uncle Jed "I thought it (all) over; and then I said, 'Doc, I like what I('ve) been drinkin' so much better than what I've been g-hearin', (laughter) that I reckon I'll jest keep on gittin' deef!'" (Laughter - cheers - applause)

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned country philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it, even though I think you will know how to apply some of these stories, little or no partisanship -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Nowdays most everybody in the country knows, by this time that sometimes when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found

sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath. (Laughter)

There are, of course, a few exceptions, a few exceptions of men who, stretching political disagreements into personal invective, prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for those exceptions to the rule. They must find it mighty hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and their friends as well.

Yes, motive, motive in the long run is what counts -- motive incidentally accompanied by good manners. If leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge, intimate knowledge of the different parts of the country and plenty of experience, you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your Government.

But remember, my friends, that they must have other qualities too -- the willingness, the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$10.00 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of it, and the courage, the sublime courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it. (Applause)

NOTE: Following was released to the Press before actual delivery  
of the speech. It will be noted from the mimeographed copy  
of the speech as actually delivered that the President de-  
parted to a considerable extent from the written text.

January 8, 1940

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered at the Jackson Day Dinner, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C., MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

NOTE: Release to all editions of newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 10:00 o'clock, P. M., E. S. T., January 8, 1940.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STATE: EARLY  
Secretary to the President

Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one. Teacher said, "Charlie, Charlie McNary, you don't want to go to heaven? Why not?" "Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$10.00 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to sign and nothin' to jine" -- and a ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

There are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle -- in fact a cross between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town, however, are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs.

Why didn't our guests come? I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to heaven with this bunch.

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely to get better sport next Fall.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House, as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouillab, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interlaced with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed salad; then canvas back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carried on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jelly and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanches made and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00 we have each and all of us paid; there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley; and the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith.

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and finally again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the front-lines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see the immediate under-brush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- officers and privates, foremen and workmen -- have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions ... that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

\* But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the great public is interested more in government than in politics; that the independent voter in this country has been steady on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves nominally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, on election day, and on the other hand, sometimes uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk".

The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk reasonably on this subject of strict party veins. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would do anything to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town.

I have in mind the predecease of one of the best editors of today who shortly ago said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your program but don't say so publicly because, Mr. President, the readers and advertisers of my paper are ninety per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources. Of course, you understand."

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn documents are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problems of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all those comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the utterances of the past, often tortured out of context. The devil can quote scripture as well as scripture, to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or what mistakes they made in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded to do.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties.

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact that the theories of the French Revolutionists at times over-excited his practical judgment. He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned to speculate on it; a new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which then had to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championing of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson the Democrat but Jackson the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practices of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, Biddle and the Bank had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin him.

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I'm right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways, they dropped mere partisanship when they considered it against the national interest.

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being merely a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general public welfare.

In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today we have built up a great mosaic of the state of the union from thousands of bits of information -- from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainer; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have seen the same opportunity in their office, and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and thin a that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the many people in these last seven years who have given composite leadership have failed in their obligation. Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of these years. Most of those who complain now were the shouting optimists of 1929.

I do not believe that the American people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. It is a fact -- a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning -- a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are shameful in the light of it.

The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build further gains.

Behind us lies accomplished a really big job. It was the creation out of the funk of the early thirties of a new spirit with which we can now face the forties.

A realistic historian of our party has wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our troubles and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make, individually, of ourselves. A selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interest and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction.

They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops.

They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities.

They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life.

They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor.

They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks and built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; that we have made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date; that we have kept millions of people out of the breadlines.

They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- in addition to the professional politic viewers-with-alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health".

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed", said Ezra, one day, "Bum't you gittin' a little hard of hearin'?" "Yes", said Uncle Jed, "I'm afraid I'm gittin' a mite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned. Ezra asked what happened. "Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been drinkin' any. I said 'Yes, a mite'.

"Then that doctor said, 'Well, Jed, I might just as well tell you now if you don't want to lose your hearin' you've got to give up drinkin'.'

"Well, I thought it all over; and then I said, 'Doc, I like what I've been drinkin' so much better than what I've been hearin', that I reckon I'll just keep on gittin' deaf!'"

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Nowadays most everybody in the country knows that sometimes when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath.

There are, of course, a few exceptions of men who, stretching political disagreements into personal invective, prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for those exceptions to the rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge of the different parts of the country and plenty of experience, you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your government.

But remember that they must have other qualities -- the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$10.00 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of it, and the courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

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A week ago three distinguished members of the President's opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$3.00 dinner with all the fixin's -- a free seat -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- no commitments -- and the guarantee that the President of the United States would give them, free of charge, a ring-side seat at a non-political ~~complaint~~ side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets and the only reason I can think of is that, like the other small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch.

That brings me to what might be called the text of this very informal and homey talk tonight. The text is the single and simple word "motive". In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and finally a return to Washington, I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may well be called the trenches and frontlines of government of all kinds, local and state and federal, the less can they understand the length and breadth of the campaign itself.

X

It is because people in county court houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia are most of them so close to the picture of party or factional warfare that they are so apt to ~~acquire~~ <sup>Acquire a false</sup> the definition of that word "motive". They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the names of the Generals -- stand hundreds of thousands of men and women, officers and privates, foremen and workmen, who are putting in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the functions of what ~~the~~ modern <sup>legislative</sup> methods assign to ~~the~~ modern <sup>executive</sup> ~~and administrative~~ government.

When people tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, I admit the soft impeachment but retort that I do believe in party organization; that party organization is a part of our American system and that, organized nationally and by states and by localities, it is a good thing for the purpose of explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections and of improving the breed of candidates for public office. But I go on to tell them that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at

least for the past generation; and that vast numbers of people may consider themselves normally as adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for a candidate or candidates of another party, come election day. That, after all, is proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase.

There are, of course, many citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally. I think, for example, of some of my close friends in the South who would be ostracized socially and in a business way if it were to appear publicly that they had voted for a Republican. I think of very close friends of mine in Northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, even though they would like to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in the town.

*Confidential*

I think of a dear old relative of mine who is tremendously fond of me and goes to the trouble of telling me every time I run for office "you know I would give everything in the world to vote for you but my Father was a Republican".

Think, too, of the millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments which are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- written or uttered with ample quotations and with the objective of proving just what Jefferson and Hamilton and Jackson and Clay and Lincoln and Douglas and Cleveland and Blaine and Theodore Roosevelt and Bryan would have said or would have done about some modern problem of government if they had been alive today.

Most people who are not on the actual firing line of the moment have come to look at the motive behind the leaders of the past, and to us it matters on the whole very little what party label they bore.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me -- not because of his honest belief that the nation would be safer if

*I think we should  
in politics*  
the choosing of our leaders were confined to persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership, but because he brought stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties. I would gladly go  
to a dinner in his honor no matter which party gave it  
because he was a great American.

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me not because he seemed to over-sympathize at times with French Revolutionists but because of his many-sided genius and because of his firm belief that the ballot should be in the hands of everybody and that if they got all the facts their composite judgment was better than the self-perpetuating judgment of an aristocracy. I think of the memory of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not over-anxious to speculate on it. I do know that Lincoln preserved the Union and made possible, at a later time, a united <sup>country</sup> ; and I do know that his sympathies and his great interest in and championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

~~I have attended Lincoln dinner, sponsored by  
Republians, in the past and I would do so again. And~~  
I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson,

the Democrat, but Jackson, the American, who took another step for us in strengthening the ideals and the practice of popular government.

With all of them I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their motives placed the good of the nation ahead of the good of the party -- and while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways, they also opposed mere partisanship when they considered it to run counter to the national interest.

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. And many years ago I came to the personal conclusion that properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency could become a forum, a focal point for exchange of information and ideas and facts and ideals instead of a party headquarters. In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept -- from one man or woman this thought; from another [redacted] data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainant; from liberal and con-

servative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most Americans when they have become Governors or Presidents have felt that same way, and that their motives have been primarily motives of service rather than motives of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have been irked by the commentators of the day who have ascribed other motives to them, and doubtless if they have had much experience with the public life of America, the irksomeness has soon worn off. Doubtless, most of them wore hair shirts when they started but most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days of public life.

*Line 1 (H...D)* A good many years ago I could only raise a hearty laugh when a famous editor told me solemnly that he was really in complete sympathy with my program but could not say so publicly because, as he said "You know, Mr. President, that the readers of and advertisers in my paper are ninety-eight per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources".

Nor could I get angry when a few days ago a solemn column categorically asserted that Mr. So-and-So had written the whole of my Message to Congress last week.

I cannot lose my temper if I read and learn for the first time that ~~the~~ appointment made by me the previous day, after careful search for the fittest man for the place I could find, had really been made with some dark, deep and somewhat mysterious political motive.

And beside the mere fact of not worrying about all these things, there is really a lot of joy in it -- as, for instance, last Wednesday when, on reading over my Message to Congress just before going to the Capitol to deliver it, I said to myself -- there - at that point the Republican Members of the House on the left side of the Chamber will break into wild applause when I mention the fact that every major item in the new budget, except national defense, will show a definite decrease in dollars.

Was I wrong? No. On several previous occasions they had led with their chin, forgetting that while I had barely touched them with my left, a right hook was at

that moment traveling at high speed in their direction. And look  
~~Well, they walked into that left hand again,~~  
And I get enormous joy out of things like the episode  
at the American Embassy in Paris last September. In comes  
a Senator of the United States and Bill Bullitt expects that  
he will demand a sitting room, bedroom, bath and lounge on  
the first steamer for home -- a somewhat difficult procedure  
when we were putting three or four Americans into every cabin  
and a lot more of them in cots in the corridors. Bullitt  
need not have been worried. The Senator said, Mr. Ambassador,  
I am in no hurry to go home - save me out until the last boat.  
All last session I was making speeches every ~~other~~ day,  
praising the Germans to the skies and damning the Russians  
to the lowest depths. My constituents must have time to  
forget that because today the Germans and the Russians are  
sleeping in the same bed".

Finally, I think the White House is a good deal like  
millions and millions of other American homes. We all hear  
and read every kind of overstatement, of half-truth, of  
glittering generality, of half-baked "ism", of viewing with  
alarm and pointing with pride. And out of it all we do a  
bit of philosophizing -- we learn to sift the tiny particle  
of truth that is covered with layer after layer of concealing

tinsel -- we figure out the good from the bad -- we ask ourselves how we and the neighbors are getting on. We ask ourselves how on the whole our region is getting on and how on the whole our country is getting on. We are worried by the wars abroad - we know that they may result in a good deal of harm to us or to our children at home. We realize that there are lots of problems that affect us and all our friends that have not been solved yet. We do know the difficulty of keeping the wheels of ~~industry~~ industrial and agricultural prosperity turning around, <sup>We do know</sup> ~~and~~ the lack of good living conditions to which hundreds of thousands of families are still subjected; <sup>We do know the need of</sup> ~~and~~ taking better care of old age, and the finding of employment for the younger generation.

Frankly, most people in the United States think that on the whole we have been moving forward during these later years in the right direction; that on the whole the farmer is no longer an outcast and he is getting better prices for his crops; that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges and more responsibilities -- both of which had long been enjoyed by corporations and trusts; that gamblers and speculators have been restrained;

that certain forms of insurance, long used by the rich, have been extended to the poor; that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks; built our schools; cheapened our electricity and kept millions of people out of the bread-line; made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date.

Some people say that we Americans are an emotional race -- we may have been in the past but we are less so now. On the whole, while we believe there is a lot more to be accomplished, we are quietly happy over the fact that most of these things have been done. I think that we can leave the boasting to other people. We do not need to stand on the court house steps and point with pride to an appreciative audience. The average American audience knows all about that without having to be told again.

At the same time I do not think that there are many people in America who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people out of the category of politicians who always view with alarm -- look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe

that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook.

They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he enjoys bad health".

*story* So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Now-a-days most everybody in the country knows that when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic phillippic, a fifteen ~~round heavyweight championship bout,~~ Talking <sup>A</sup> round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath.

There are, of course, a few exceptions which prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for the exceptions to the rule. They must find it awfully hard to live with themselves, not only themselves but their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If a man has good motives and good manners and, at the same time, has knowledge of every part of the country -- experience, and, last but not least, leadership, you can be fairly safe in assuming that he won't wreck your government.

But remember that he must have another quality -- the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$6.00 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of that dinner and the courage to make a  
*for half an hour*  
plate-side chat at the end of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

DRAFT # 3

JACKSON DAY DINNER

JANUARY 8, 1940

\*\*\*\*\*

Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- all except one. Teacher said "Charlie, Charlie McNary, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?" Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$6.00 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to ~~sign~~ <sup>sign</sup> and nothin' to ~~sign~~ <sup>sign</sup>" -- and a free ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

There are a lot of riddles in the National

Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle—  
~~in fact even between a riddle and a statement.~~  
Most of the riddles are synthetic, like cross-word puzzles,  
invented out of fairy tales and romance every morning and  
evening in some solemn column. But occasionally we get  
~~about it, 3 mighty hairs.~~  
a real riddle like this one. I guess the real reason is  
that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven  
with this bunch in this room.

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it  
was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten  
~~putting on a chowd season~~  
up the ducks, and that we were ~~closing the season in~~  
~~next~~  
January merely to get better sport ~~in the Fall.~~

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned  
Jackson Day Dinner. Someone called my attention the other  
day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a  
dinner in February 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House,  
as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French  
style; then beef bouillie, next wild turkey boned  
and dressed with brains; after that fish; then  
chicken cold and dressed white, interlarded with

INSERT A - PAGE # 2

most of the riddles in this town are the ones posed  
for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles  
and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or  
evening as synthetic <sup>a</sup> <sup>daily amusement feature, like</sup> fairy tales or bedtime stories cal-  
culated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night.

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Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00  
we have each and all of us paid; ~~and~~ there would have  
been nothing left for Jim Farley ~~if~~ and the Democratic  
[National] Committee would have had to [dip into its funds]  
<sup>borrow money</sup>  
to [furnish] bicarbonate of soda ~~for~~ all.  
<sup>provide</sup>

slices of tongue and garnished with dressed salled; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jolley and small tarts in the Turkiss style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

B In those days they got \$100 worth! And you and I paid \$100 for this one.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- thought unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not ~~be able~~ use it ~~they of little faith.~~

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion

with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and finally again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the frontlines of government, of all kinds --

*PASSIT DCE only*  
local and state and federal -- the ~~more~~ it is to ~~the~~ ~~more~~  
~~the immediate underbrush, the individual tree trunks~~  
~~and the relative unimportance of their particular job,~~  
~~of the moment and to forget the nobility, the~~  
~~concerned with the major objectives to be sought and the~~  
~~usefulness and the wider extent of the forest~~  
~~ultimate purposes to be served.~~

*Walt*

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" ~~of~~ <sup>and purposes</sup> ~~of what both parties and their leaders have been in the past and should~~ ~~be today.~~ They forget politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women, officers and privates, foremen and workmen, have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions of ~~that~~ the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to ~~executives~~ ~~and~~ administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but

only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office. But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day.

But on the other hand, they sometimes uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk". The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. And party regulars who want to win

- 7 -  
*and supporters*

must hold their allies among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on this subject of party ~~independence~~ <sup>strict voting</sup>. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would ~~give anything~~, <sup>be able to</sup> vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their <sup>own home</sup> town.

I have in mind the predicament of one of the ablest editors of today who ~~recently~~ <sup>some time ago</sup> said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your program but cannot say so publicly because, Mr. President, the readers and advertisers of my paper are ninety-eight per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources. Of course you understand."

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, and Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problem of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the utterances of the past, often tortured out of context. The devil can quote the words of past statesmen as well as the words of scripture, to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or <sup>what</sup> <sub>their</sub> <sup>big</sup> <sub>small</sub> mistakes in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded be done.

INSERT C - Page #9

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact  
that the theories of the French Revolutionists over-excited  
his practical judgment at times.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties.

(C) Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me not because (in spite of the fact that) he seemed to over-sympathize at times with French Revolutionists. He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the New Republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of <sup>^</sup> restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned

INSERT D - Page #10

democracy, Biddle and the ~~Bank~~ had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin him.

to speculate on it. A new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which had then to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson, the Democrat, but Jackson, the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic ~~democracy~~, they had been compelled to endure an economic depression which his enemies had created to ruin him.

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways -- ~~for they were all hard to be the shrewdest of politicians~~ -- they dropped mere partisanship when they considered it against the national interest.

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly swailed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general public welfare. <sup>mainly</sup> In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today there ~~comes~~ <sup>we have built up</sup> ~~of the State of the Union have thousands of~~ great mosaic ~~of the~~ bits of information ~~which make up the~~ ~~State of the Union~~ -- from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and

and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainant; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have ~~ever~~ seen the same opportunity in their office and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days, ~~of public life~~. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

I have learned not to lose my temper when I read and learn for the first time that the appointment made by me the previous day, after careful search for the fittest man for the place I could find, had really been made with some dark, deep and somewhat mysterious political motive.

*point X*

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

I hope indeed that the months to come in the Presidency will be filled with equal enjoyment -- and for the sake of some political writers may I add -- no matter how many months there may be.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is ~~almost~~ <sup>practical</sup> satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances ~~in~~ which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the ~~President~~

INSERT E - Page 14

Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of these years. Most of them were the shouting optimists of 1929.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens, ~~to help us~~.

not be chipped away;

to

other firms.

It is a ~~fact~~ fact - a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are shameful in the light of it.

That few people have grasped its meaning - a fact so big

INSERT F - Page #14

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens, ~~to help us~~  
~~secure our~~. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation <sup>on which to</sup> build ~~to~~ further gains.

~~many people~~ who have given ~~any~~ <sup>any</sup> leadership  
~~in these last seven years~~ <sup>their</sup> ~~has~~ failed in ~~the~~ <sup>A</sup> obligation.

~~of leadership. These are those who try to create the~~

~~impression that we are a party of defeatists. I have been~~

~~defeated -- sometimes -- but this is the first time I have~~

~~ever been called a defeatist. I do not believe that the~~

~~American people who swallowed canned optimism in 1929 will~~

~~swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.~~

~~Of course, we realize that the world around us~~  
~~here in our own country is not the kind of a world we would~~  
~~like to have.~~

~~I pointed out how much we still had left to do~~  
~~domestically in my annual message to the Congress.~~

~~Then we are worried by the wars abroad -- we know~~  
~~that they may result in much harm to us or to our children~~  
~~at home. And we know that the end of the war tomorrow~~  
~~existing wouldn't end our worries.~~

~~For the big job to be done in this generation~~  
~~is built around a fact itself so big that few people can~~  
~~grasp its meaning -- a fact so big that our little partisan~~  
~~squabbles are really shameful in comparison.~~

The fact is that whether the war stops or whether the war goes on it has already directly dislocated the economic organization of the civilized world by nearly 50,000,000 of the most effective men.

Under arms in the world today are 20,000,000 men. Engaged in supplying materials of war for that first 20,000,000 are at least another 30,000,000. And before the war broke out, years of rationing in preparation of war -- getting people used to less food, less clothing, less automobiles, less all of modern living -- just in case -- had completely disorganized the economic machine of the world.

These 50,000,000 men, the most productive of their generation, are now seeking on one hand to destroy means of production -- and on the other to accelerate the invention of more efficient machines. Some day if democracy is to endure, <sup>the war</sup> ~~the war~~ not only must end but those 50,000,000 men and their new machines must be fitted into private trade and peaceful enterprise.

No bigger job ever faced mankind.

~~Ramxxxix~~ It is not a job which the technique of delegate-hunting or partisan throat-cutting can surmount.

- 15 A -

DRAFT # 3

- ix-

That big job lies ahead of us -- no one knows  
for how long -- to be accomplished, I hope, under the  
political leadership of this democratic party of ours.

~~But behind us~~ <sup>a really</sup> lies accomplished ~~the~~  
~~big job, that has to be done, before we can start for this~~  
~~new~~. It was the creation out of the funk of the thirties  
with <sup>we can work</sup> ~~we can work~~ <sup>early</sup>  
of a new spirit/which ~~to~~ face the forties.

~~As probably the best~~ historian of our party has  
wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our  
troubles and the physical means with which to meet them.  
In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country  
will depend on what we make individually of ourselves. A  
selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

~~And another has pointed out that in this land of~~  
~~magnificent distances and magnificent variety, only two~~  
~~kinds of men could be permanently happy -- giants who could~~  
~~cooperate in modern life as men have never before known how,~~  
~~and Indians who did not need to cooperate at all.~~

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has  
already performed in this generation has been to provide the  
energy and the confidence to steer government in the interests

DRAFT # 3

- 15 A - (continued)

and under the direction of those of our people who do not  
want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the personal moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction. They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops. They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities. They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life. They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor. They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks; have built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date; and kept millions of people out of the breadline. They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- ~~not politicians, who always~~ <sup>but</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>try</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>who always</sup> ~~try~~ <sup>to</sup> view with alarm -- ~~look on the dark side of life, complain~~ <sup>that</sup> ~~that~~ things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he enjoys <sup>is</sup> bad health". *Insert G*

~~They remind me of the man who had just visited the home of a millionaire whose two daughters had been playing a duet on a piano. In great surprise he reported to a friend that Mr. So-and-So had lost his millions because both his daughters had to use the same piano at the same time.~~

*Private  
Grace*  
~~They remind me of the man who was warned by his Doctor that he would lose his hearing if he did not give up liquor. He said that he liked his liquor so much better than what he was hearing in the world, that he would just go on drinking.~~

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like  
that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed", said Ezra<sup>o</sup> one day "Ben't you gittin'  
a leetle hard of hearin'?" "Yes" said Uncle Jed "I'm  
afeared I'm gittin' ~~a~~ <sup>2</sup>mite deaf.

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston  
to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned. Ezra asked what happened.  
"Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been  
drinking any. I said "Yes, a mite". Then that doctor said  
"Well, Jed, I might just as well tell you now if you don't  
want to lose your hearin' you've got to give up drinkin'."  
~~Waa~~ <sup>3</sup> ~~right + all over and him~~  
~~and Ezra, I said~~ <sup>A</sup> ~~waa~~, "Doctor, I like what I've been  
drinkin' so much better than what I've been hearin', that  
I reckon I'll <sup>just</sup> ~~go~~ ahead and <sup>2</sup>get deaf."

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Now-a-days most everybody in the country knows that sometimes when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath.

There are, of course, a few exceptions of men who stretch political disagreements into personal invective, <sup>inv.</sup> ~~which~~ prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for the ~~the~~ exceptions to the rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive  
accompanied by good manners. If the leaders have good  
motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge  
of the different parts of the country <sup>And plenty of</sup> ~~and~~ experience, you  
can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your  
government.

But remember that ~~they~~ must have another quality --  
the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$6.00 dinner, the fortitude  
to eat the whole of that dinner and the courage to make  
a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

\* \* \* \* \*

DRAFT #1

JACKSON DAY SPEECH

January 8, 1940

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Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who,  
*the hereafter*  
after describing ~~Heaven~~ in alluring and golden terms, asked  
her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to  
Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small  
boy in the class held up his hand -- all except one. Teacher  
said "Charlie, Charlie McNary, you don't want to go to  
Heaven? Why not?" Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven,  
"pointing to the show of hands"  
but -- not with that bunch!"

It is in this vein of good humor that I stand at  
this festive board in the National Capital wholly satisfied  
that it has been worth the money to pay \$100.00 for a  
\$3.00 dinner -- and I paid it.

There are riddles in the National Capital. I am  
supposed to be a self made riddle myself. Most of the  
riddles are synthetic, invented every morning and evening  
out of fairy tales and romance by the columnists. But  
occasionally -- once a session we get a "believe-it-or-not"  
riddle -- one which may be solved by the historians --  
not the commentators of the year two thousand and one.



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*From the papers of  
Samuel I. Rosenman  
Grant 32*

*Item # 19 of "Attachment B"  
Jackson Day Dinner, Jan. 8, 1940*

DRAFT # 3

JACKSON DAY DINNER

JANUARY 8, 1940

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Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- all except one. Teacher said "Charlie, Charlie McNary, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?" "Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".



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1940 FEB. 8, 1940

From the Papers of  
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A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$6.00 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to jine and nothin' to sign" -- and a free ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

There are a lot of riddles in the National

Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle.

Most of the riddles are synthetic, like cross-word puzzles,  
~~or have a riddle and facts there~~  
invented out of fairy tales and romance every morning and  
evening in some solemn column. But occasionally we get  
a real riddle like this one, ~~about the empty chairs~~. I guess the real reason is  
that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven  
with this bunch in this room.

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it  
was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten  
up the ducks, and that we were closing the season in  
January merely to get better sport ~~in the Fall~~.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned  
Jackson Day Dinner. Someone called my attention the other  
day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a  
dinner in February 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House,  
as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French  
style; then beef bouille, next wild turkey boned  
and dressed with brains; after that fish; then  
chicken cold and dressed white, interlarded with



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From the Papers of  
Samuel L. Rosenberg

slices of tongue and garnished with dressed salad; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jelly and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

In those days they got \$100 worth! ~~and you~~  
and I paid \$100 for this one? *Biscarbonate of Soda*

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not be able to use it. *They of little faith!*

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion



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Samuel J. Rosenman

with which they have tried to serve the whole country,  
and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to  
politics, compared with the paramount importance of  
government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and finally again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the frontlines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the <sup>less</sup> <sup>see only</sup> burden it is to understand the relative unimportance of their particular job compared with the major objectives to be sought and the ultimate purposes to be served.

*refined & made extant of the forest they*



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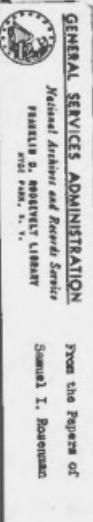
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Samuel J. Rosenman

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" of a party and its leaders have been in the past and should

be today. They forget politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position — back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women, officers and privates, foremen and workmen, have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions of what the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to executives and administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but



only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office. But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party, and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day. But on the other hand, they sometimes uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk". The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. And party regulars who want to win,



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DRAFT # 3

- 7 -

must hold their allies among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope  
a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to  
talk rationally on this subject of party <sup>just now</sup> allegiance. I  
have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the  
South, who are under the impression that they would be  
ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear  
publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I  
also have in mind some very close friends in northern  
villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would  
~~give anything~~ like to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their in-  
fluence and their social position in their town.

I have in mind the predicament of one of the  
<sup>best known</sup> ablest editors of today who recently said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your  
program but cannot say so publicly because, Mr.  
President, the readers and advertisers of my  
paper are ninety-eight per cent Republicans, and  
I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable  
policy of traditional opposition to anything and  
everything that comes from democratic sources.

Of course you understand."



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Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, and Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problem of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the utterances of the past, often tortured out of context. The devil can quote the words of past statesmen as well as the words of scripture, to prove his purposes.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or mistakes in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded be done.



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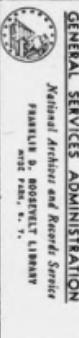
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Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties.

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me not because (in spite of the fact that) he seemed to over-sympathize at times with French Revolutionists. He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the New Republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man instead of restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned



From the Papers of  
Samuel I. Horenstein  
in the possession of

to speculate on it. A new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which had then to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson, the Democrat, but Jackson, the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, they had been compelled to endure an economic depression which his enemies had created to ruin him.

*People + the bank etc*



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University of California  
Los Angeles  
California  
U.S.A.

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways -- for they ~~were~~ all had to be the shreadest of politicians -- they dropped mere partisanship when they considered it against the national interest.

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general public welfare. In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today there seems a great mosaic of the bits of information which make up the state of the union -- from one man or woman this thought from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and



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From the People to the Government  
Samuel I. Rosenman

and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainant; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have ~~ever~~ seen the same opportunity in their office and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days of public life. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

I have learned not to lose my temper when I read and learn for the first time that the appointment made by me the previous day, after careful search for the fittest man for the place I could find, had really been made with some dark, deep and somewhat mysterious political motive.



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And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

I hope indeed that the months to come in the Presidency will be filled with equal enjoyment -- and for the sake of some political writers may I add -- no matter how many months there may be.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is almost a detective satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances from which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done.

By this test I do not think anyone can say that the Democratic



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Party in these last seven years has failed in its obligation of leadership. There are those who try to create the impression that we are a party of defeatists. I have been defeated -- sometimes -- but this is the first time I have ever been called a defeatist. I do not believe that the American people who swallowed canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940.

Of course, we realize that the world around us here in our own country is not the kind of a world we would like to have.

I pointed out how much we still had left to do domestically in my annual message to the Congress.

Then we are worried by the wars abroad -- we know that they may result in much harm to us or to our children at home. And we know that the end of the war tomorrow wouldn't end our worries.

For the big job to be done in this generation is built around a fact itself so big that few people can grasp its meaning -- a fact so big that our little partisan squabbles are really shameful in comparison.



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The fact is that whether the war stops or whether the war goes on it has already directly dislocated the economic organization of the civilized world by nearly 50,000,000 of the most effective men.

Under arms in the world today are 20,000,000 men.

Engaged in supplying materials of war for that first 20,000,000 are at least another 30,000,000. And before the war broke out, years of rationing in preparation of war -- getting people used to less food, less clothing, less automobiles, less all of modern living -- just in case -- had completely disorganized the economic machine of the world.

These 50,000,000 men, the most productive of their generation, are now seeking on one hand to destroy means of production -- and on the other to accelerate the invention of more efficient machines. Some day if democracy is to endure the war not only must end but those 50,000,000 men and their new machines must be fitted into private trade and peaceful enterprise.

No bigger job ever faced mankind.

xxxxxxxx It is not a job which the technique of delegate-hunting or partisan throat-cutting can surmount.



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- 15 A -

- 2xx -

DRAFT # 3

~~That big job lies ahead of us — no one knows  
for how long — to be accomplished, I hope, under the  
political leadership of this democratic party of ours.~~

~~Beg Behind us I think lies accomplished another /  
big job, that had to be done before we could start on this  
next one. It was the creation out of the funk of the thirties  
with  
of a new spirit/which to face the forties.~~

~~As probably the best historian of our party has  
wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our  
troubles and the physical means with which to meet them.  
In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country  
will depend on what we make individually of ourselves. A  
selfish and greedy people cannot be free."~~

~~And another has pointed out that in this land of  
magnificent distances and magnificent variety, only two  
kinds of men could be permanently happy -- plants who could  
cooperate in modern life as men have never before known how  
and Indians who did not need to cooperate at all.~~

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has  
already performed in this generation has been to provide the  
energy and the confidence to steer government in the interests

DRAFT # 3

- 15 A - (continued)

and under the direction of those of our people who do not  
want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.



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And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the personal moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction. They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops. They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities. They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life. They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor. They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks; have built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date; and kept millions of people out of the breadline. They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.



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And one of the manifestations of that new spirit

is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There

are, of course, some people -- not politicians, who <sup>always</sup> ~~politicians~~, who <sup>always</sup> ~~never~~ view with alarm -- look on the dark side of life, complain

that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook.

They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he enjoys bad health".

They remind me of the man who had just visited the home of a millionaire whose two daughters had been playing a duet on a piano. In great surprise he reported to a friend that Mr. So-and-So had lost his millions because both his daughters had to use the same piano at the same time.

They remind me of the man who was warned by his doctor that he would lose his hearing if he did not give up liquor. He said that he liked his liquor so much better than what he was hearing in the world, that he would just go on drinking.



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Michael A. DeGraw and Robert S. Sorenson

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From the People to  
Samuel I. Rosenman

So you see I have talked with you tonight in  
a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no  
partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my  
three Republican leader friends who ought to have been  
here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and  
by every Democrat in the Congress. Now-a-days most  
everybody in the country knows that sometimes when two  
Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle  
of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight  
championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later,  
will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about  
each other laughing and joking while they catch their breath.

There are, of course, a few exceptions of men  
who stretch political disagreements into personal invective,  
which prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant  
subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a  
good time. I am genuinely sorry for the exceptions to the  
rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves --  
and with their families and friends as well.



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Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If the leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge of the different parts of the country, <sup>and kindly</sup> experience, you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your government.

But remember that he must have another quality -- the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$6.00 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of that dinner, and the courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

\* \* \* \* \*



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Samuel I. Rosenman

DRAFT #4

*Judge Rosenman*

JACKSON DAY DINNER

JANUARY 8, 1940

Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one. Teacher said, "Charlie, Charlie McNary, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?" "Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$6.00 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to sign and nothin' to jine" -- and a free ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets.

Why?



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WITH INDEX, ETC.

From the Papers of  
Samuel I. Rosenman

There are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle -- in fact a cross between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs. I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch in this room.

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely to get better sport next Fall.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson Day dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House, as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:



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Jo C. [unclear]

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouille, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interladed with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed sallet; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jelly and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00

we have such and all of us paid; there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley; and the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- thought unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute



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the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith.

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and



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finally again in Washington — I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the front-lines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see why the immediate under-brush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- officers and privates, foremen and workmen -- have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions of that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.



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People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day, and on the other hand, sometimes



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WILLIAM E. BOYD, JR., DirectorFrom the Papers of  
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uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk".

The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase.

I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on this subject of strict party voting. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would give anything to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town.



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I have in mind the predicament of one of the  
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frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with  
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Mr. President, the readers and advertisers of  
my paper are ninety-eight per cent Republicans  
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Millions of unnecessary words and explanations  
and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after  
year, about the great men of American history -- with  
ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton,  
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The devil can quote the words of past statesmen as well as the words of scripture, to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or what mistakes they made in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded be done.

Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of a chaos of currency and banking difficulties.

Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact that the theories of the French Revolutionists at times over-excited his practical judgment.



He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned to speculate on it. A new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which then had to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.



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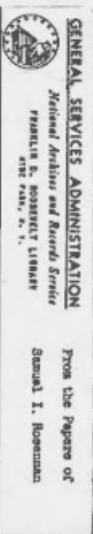
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I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson, the Democrat, but Jackson, the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, Biddle and the Bank had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin him.

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways -- they dropped mere partisanship when they considered it against the national interest.



I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being merely a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general public welfare.

In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today ~~xxxx~~ we have built up a great mosaic of the state of the union from thousands of bits of information -- from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainer; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have seen the same opportunity in their office, and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.



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West Park, N.Y.

Samuel I. Rosenman  
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L doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.



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I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the many people in these last seven years who have given composite leadership have failed in their obligation. Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of these years. Most of them were the shouting optimists of 1929.

I do not believe that the American people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. It is a fact -- a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning -- a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are shameful in the light of it.



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WHITE PLAINS, N. Y.

Samuel I. Rosenman

The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build further gains.

Behind us lies accomplished a really big job.

It was the creation out of the funk of the early thirties of a new spirit with which we can now face the forties.

A realistic historian of our party has wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our troubles and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make individually of ourselves. A selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interests and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.



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They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

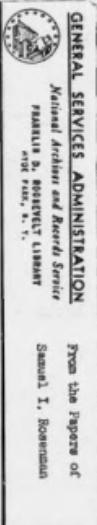
And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- not professional politic viewers with alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health".

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed" said Ezra, one day, "Ben't you gittin' a leetle hard of hearing?" "Yes" said Uncle Jed "I'm afear'd I'm gittin's a nite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned.. Ezra asked what happened.



There are, of course, a few exceptions of men who stretching political disagreements into personal invective, prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for those exceptions to the rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If the leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge of the different parts of the country and plenty of experience, you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your government.

But remember that they must have another quality -- the willingness to pay \$100 for a \$6.00 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of that dinner and the courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

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January 8, 1940

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered at the Jackson Day Dinner, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C., MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

NOTE: Release to all editions of newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER than ~~10:00~~ o'clock,  
F. M., E. S. T., January 8, 1940. ~~10:00~~

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

DRAFT #4

JACKSON DAY DINNER

JANUARY 5, 1940

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Once upon a time there was a school teacher, who, after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one. Teacher said, "Charlie, Charlie McMary, you don't want to go to Heaven? Why not?" Teacher -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but" he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with that bunch".

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$100 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nothin' to sign and nothin' to jine" -- and a ~~bus~~ ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

There are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle -- in fact a cross between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town<sup>however.</sup> are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs.<sup>Why didn't our guests come?</sup> I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch.~~in this bunch.~~

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely to get better sport next Fall.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson ~~day~~ dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834 in Andrew Jackson's White House, as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouillée, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interlarded with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed sallad; then canvass back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jolley and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00 we have each and all of us paid; there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley; and the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice on how to reconstitute

the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I felt no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith.

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

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The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and

finally again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the front-lines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see ~~the~~ the immediate under-brush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- officers and privates, foremen and workmen -- have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions ~~of~~ that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than most of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day, and on the other hand, sometimes

*(that the great public is interested more in government than in politics;*

uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk".

The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on this subject of strict party voting. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would give anything to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town.

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"I am really in complete sympathy with your program but cannot say so publicly because, Mr. President, the readers and advertisers of my paper are ninety-eight per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources. Of course you understand."

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, ~~and~~ Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problems of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the

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Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact that the theories of the French Revolutionists at times over-excited his practical judgment. *No paragraph*

He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today.

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Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirt.

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevances in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

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I do not believe that the American people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter not for pessimism or optimism; it is a matter for realism. It is a fact -- a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning -- a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are / shameful in the light of it.

The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build further gains.

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A realistic historian of our party has wisely concluded "We have the intelligence to define our troubles and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make, individually, of ourselves. A selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interest~~s~~ and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the ~~present~~ moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction.

They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops.

They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities.

They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life.

They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor.

They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks <sup>and</sup> ~~more~~ built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; <sup>that we have</sup> made our banks safe <sup>that we have</sup> and brought our courts up to date; <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ kept millions of people out of the breadlines.

They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- in addition to the politic viewers-with-alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a moron or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health".

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed" said Ezra, one day, "Ben't you gittin' a leetle hard of hearing?" "Yes" said Uncle Jed "I'm afeared I'm gittin's a mite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned. Ezra asked what happened.

"Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been  
drinkin' any. I said 'Yes, a mite'.

"Then that doctor said, 'Well, Jed, I might just  
as well tell you now if you don't want to lose your hearin'  
you've got to give up drinkin'.

"Well, ~~Doc~~, I thought it all over; and then I said,  
'Doc~~me~~, I like what I've been drinkin' so much better than what  
I've been hearin', that I reckon I'll jest ~~get~~ deaf!!'"

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a  
vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship  
mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican  
leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are  
grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress.  
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There are, of course, a few exceptions of men who, stretching political disagreements into personal invective, prove the general rule -- but why bring up unpleasant subjects at this dinner at which we are all having such a good time. I am genuinely sorry for those exceptions to the rule. They must find it hard to live with themselves -- and with their families and friends as well.

Motive in the long run is what counts -- motive accompanied by good manners. If ~~the~~ leaders have good motives and good manners and, at the same time, knowledge of the different parts of the country and plenty of experience, you can be fairly safe in assuming that they won't wreck your government.

But remember that they must have <sup>other</sup> ~~another~~ qualities -- \$100 for a \$60 dinner, the fortitude to eat the whole of ~~the dinner~~, and the courage to make a half-hour plate-side chat at the end of it.

## STATEMENTS FILE

January 8, 1940

Sheriff of Kansas

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered at the Jackson Day Dinner, Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D. C., MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

NOTE: Release to all editions of newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 10:00 o'clock, P. M., E. S. T., January 8, 1940.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

Once upon a time there was a school teacher, etc. after describing Heaven in alluring and golden terms, asked her class of small boys how many of them wanted to go to Heaven. With eyes that sparkled at the thought every small boy in the class held up his hand -- except one. Teacher said, "Charlie, Charlie McFurry, you don't want to go to heaven? Why not?" "Teacher" -- sure I want to go to Heaven, but he said, pointing to the rest of the boys in the room -- "not with this bunch". etc.

A week ago three distinguished leaders of the opposition, were invited to this great Banquet -- a \$10.00 dinner with all the fixin's free -- no cover charge -- no \$100 check -- no tips -- "nuthin' to sign and nuthin' to jine" -- and a ring-side seat at a non-political plate-side chat. Believe-it-or-not -- they sent polite regrets. Why?

etc. There are a lot of riddles in the National Capital. I, myself, am supposed to be a self-made riddle -- in fact straddle between a riddle and a Santa Claus. Most of the riddles in this town, however, are the ones posed for you in some solemn column. Like cross-word puzzles and hypothetical bridge hands, they come to you morning or evening as a synthetic daily amusement feature, like fairy tales or bedtime stories calculated to keep unsuspecting children awake all night. But occasionally we get a real riddle like this one about the three empty chairs. etc.

Why didn't our guests come? I guess the real reason is that, like the small boy, they did not want to go to Heaven with this bunch. etc.

But maybe there were other reasons. Maybe it was because they figured that we just wanted to fatten up the ducks, and that we were putting on a closed season in January merely to get better sport next Fall. etc.

Maybe they were holding out for an old-fashioned Jackson dinner. Someone called my attention the other day to a magazine article setting forth a report of a dinner in February, 1834, in Andrew Jackson's White House, as made by a guest at the dinner. I quote:

"The first course was soup in the French style; then beef bouillabaisse, next wild turkey boned and dressed with brains; after that fish; then chicken cold and dressed white, interlarded with slices of tongue and garnished with dressed salad; then canvas back ducks and celery; afterwards partridges with sweet breads and last pheasants and old Virginia ham. The dishes were placed in succession on the table, so as to give full effect to the appearance, then removed and carved on a side table by the servants. The first dessert was jelly and small tarts in the Turkish style, then blanche mode and kisses with dried fruits in them. Then preserves of various kinds, after them ice cream and lastly grapes and oranges."

Such a dinner today would cost the full \$100.00 we have each and all of us paid; there would have been nothing left for Jim Farley and the Democratic Committee would have had to borrow money to provide bicarbonate of soda for all.

I had hoped our invited guests would come because I had intended to tell them not only about Andrew Jackson but about Abraham Lincoln as well; to tell them how much alike all our great leaders have been -- even to give them free -- though unsolicited -- advice ~~as~~ how to reconstitute the Republican Party successfully along the lines on which Abraham Lincoln created it. As the leader of the Democratic Party I ~~had~~ no reluctance to give them good advice for I was sure that they would not use it -- they of little faith.

Seriously, the more I have studied American history and the more clearly I have seen what the problems are, I do believe that the common denominator of our great men in public life has not been mere allegiance to one political party, but the disinterested devotion with which they have tried to serve the whole country, and the relative unimportance they have ascribed to politics, compared with the paramount importance of government.

By their motives may ye know them!

The relative importance of politics and government is something not always easy to see when you are in the frontline trenches of political organization.

In a period of thirty years, during which I have been more or less in public life -- in my home county, in Albany, in Washington, in Europe during the World War, in New York City, in national conventions, back in Albany and ~~firmly~~ again in Washington -- I have come to the conclusion that the closer people are to what may be called the front-lines of government, of all kinds -- local and state and federal -- the easier it is to see the immediate under-brush, the individual tree trunks of the moment and to forget the nobility, the usefulness and the wide extent of the forest itself.

It is because party people in County Court Houses or City Halls, or State Capitals, or the District of Columbia, are, most of them, so close to the picture of party or factional warfare, that they are apt to acquire a false perspective of what the "motives" and purposes of both parties and their leaders should be for the common good today.

They forget that politics is only an instrument through which to achieve government. They forget that back of the jockeying for party position -- back of the party generals -- hundreds of thousands of men and women -- officers and privates, foremen and workmen -- have to get a job done, have to put in day after day of honest, sincere work in carrying out the multitudinous functions ... that the policy-makers in modern democracy assign to administrators in modern democracy.

People tell me that I hold to party ties less tenaciously than ~~most~~ of my predecessors in the Presidency, that I have too many people in my Administration who are not active party Democrats. I admit the soft impeachment. My answer is that I do believe in party organization, but only in proportion to its proper place in government. I believe party organization -- the existence of at least two effectively opposing parties -- is a sound and necessary part of our American system; and that, effectively organized nationally and by states and by localities, parties are good instruments for the purpose of presenting and explaining issues, of drumming up interest in elections, and of improving the breed of candidates for public office.

"But the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the great public is interested more in government than in politics; that the independent vote in this country has been steadily on the increase, at least for the past generation; that vast numbers of people consider themselves normally adherents of one party and still feel perfectly free to vote for one or more candidates of another party, come election day, and on the other hand, sometimes uphold party principles even when precinct captains decide "to take a walk".

The growing independence of voters, after all, has been proved by the votes in every Presidential election since my childhood -- and the tendency is on the increase. I am too modest, of course, to refer to the most recent example -- the election of 1936. Party regulars who want to win must hold their allies and supporters among those independent voters.

There are, of course, some citizens -- I hope a decreasing number -- with whom I find it difficult to talk rationally on this subject of strict party voting. I have in mind, for example, some of my close friends in the South, who are under the impression that they would be ostracized in society and in business if it were to appear publicly that they had ever voted for a Republican. I also have in mind some very close friends in northern villages who tell me, quite frankly, that though they would give anything to be able to vote for me, a Democrat, it would hurt their influence and their social position in their own home town.

I have in mind the predicament of one of the ablest editors of today who sometime ago said to me, very frankly:

"I am really in complete sympathy with your program but cannot say so publicly because, the President, the readers and advertisers of my paper are ninety per cent Republicans and I simply cannot afford to change its unalterable policy of traditional opposition to anything and everything that comes from democratic sources. Of course you understand."

Millions of unnecessary words and explanations and solemn comments are uttered and written, year after year, about the great men of American history -- with ample quotations -- to prove what Jefferson or Hamilton, Jackson or Clay, Lincoln or Douglas, Cleveland or Blaine, Theodore Roosevelt or Bryan would have said or would have done about some specific modern problem of government if they were alive today. The purpose of all these comments is either to induce the party leaders of today blindly to follow the words of leaders of yesterday; or to justify public acts or policies of today by the utterances of the past, often tortured out of context. The devil can quote past statesmen as well as Scripture, to prove his purpose.

But most people, who are not on the actual firing line of the moment, have come to attach major importance only to the motives behind the leaders of the past. To them it matters, on the whole, very little what party label American statesmen bore, or what mistakes they made in smaller things, so long as they did the big job that their times demanded be done.

A - 11 (7) Alexander Hamilton is a hero to me in spite of his position that the nation would be safer if our leaders were chosen exclusively from persons of higher education and of substantial property ownership; he is a hero because he did the job which then had to be done -- to bring stability out of a chance of currency and banking difficulties.

(7) Thomas Jefferson is a hero to me despite the fact that the theories of the French Revolutionists at times over-excited his practical judgment. He is a hero because, in his many-sided genius, he too did the big job which then had to be done -- to establish the new republic as a real democracy based on universal suffrage and the inalienable rights of man, instead of a restricted suffrage in the hands of a small oligarchy. Jefferson realized that if the people were free to get and discuss all the facts, their composite judgment would be better than the judgment of a self-perpetuating few. That is why I think of Jefferson as belonging to the rank and file of both major political parties today. (7)

A - 11 (7) I do not know which party Lincoln would belong to if he were alive in 1940 -- and I am not even concerned to speculate on it; a new party had to be created before he could be elected President. I am more interested in the fact that he did the big job which then had to be done -- to preserve the Union and make possible, at a later time, a united country. His sympathies and his motives of championship of humanity itself have made him for all centuries to come the legitimate property of all parties -- of every man, woman and child in every part of our land.

I feel very much the same way about Jackson -- not Jackson the Democrat but Jackson the American, who did the big job of his day -- to save the economic democracy of the Union for its westward expansion into a great nation, strengthened in the ideals and practice of popular government.

I have always thought it a magnificent illustration of the public's instinct for the quality of a leader, that the people triumphantly reelected Jackson in spite of the fact that in the meantime, in his fight for economic democracy, Fiddle and the Bank had sought to create an economic depression in order to ruin him. (7)

Of all of these great American figures, I like to think -- and I know I am right -- that their purposes, their objectives, their motives, placed the good of the nation always ahead of the good of the party; that while they used the mechanics of party organization in many ways, they dropped more partisanship when they considered it against the national interest. (7) V. N. (7)

I saw a good deal of the Governorship of New York before I became Governor of the State, and I saw a good deal of the inside of the White House for many years before I occupied it. Many years ago it had become clear to me that, properly availed of, the Governorship and the Presidency, instead of being merely a party headquarters, could become the most important clearing house for exchange of information and ideas, and facts and ideals, affecting the general (public) welfare.

In practice, as you know, I have tried to follow out that concept. In the White House today we have built up a great mosaic of the state of the union from thousands of bits of information — from one man or woman this thought; from another, data on some event; a scrap here perhaps and a scrap there; from every Congressional district in the Union; from rich and poor; from enthusiast and complainer; from liberal and conservative; from Republican and Democrat.

I like to think that most American Governors or Presidents have seen the same opportunity in their office, and that their motives have been primarily of service rather than of party or personal aggrandizement.

Doubtless they have all been irked by the commentators of the day who ascribed other motives to them. Doubtless after much experience in the public life of America, with its free speech and press, the irksomeness wore off. Doubtless, all of them wore hair shirts when they started; but if they matured in public life, most of them discarded those shirts in their earlier days. They had to drop their hair shirt or else lose their political shirts.

And when you have learned not to worry about all these things, there is really a lot of fun in this job.

For when you reach that point of understanding, there is deep satisfaction in pursuing the truth through the medley of information that reaches the White House, the overstatement, the half-truth, the glittering generality, the viewing-with-alarm, and the pointing-with-pride. There is practical satisfaction in sifting a tiny particle of truth from the mass of irrelevance in which it is hidden. And there is the philosopher's satisfaction of fitting that particle of truth into the general scheme of things that are good and things that are bad for the people of the nation as a whole.

I said a moment ago that the measure of greatness of any party leadership of a country, is the measure in which it gets done in its time the big job that has to be done. By this test I do not think anyone can say that the many people in these last seven years who have given composite leadership have failed in their obligation. Most of those who call for a wholly different type of leadership must admit the fairly constant progress of these years. Most of those who complain now were the shouting optimists of 1929.

, I do not believe that the American people who swallowed that canned optimism in 1929 will swallow canned pessimism in 1940 -- particularly out of the same can.

The people of the United States recognize two facts today: The first is that the world outside our hemisphere is in really bad shape. This is a matter set for pessimism or optimism; it's a matter for realism. It is a fact — a fact so big that few people have grasped its meaning — a fact so big in its effect on the future of the world that all our little partisan squabbles are ~~unimportant~~ in the light of it.

The second is that we have made great gains at home in our own economic prosperity and in the security of our individual citizens. These gains must not be chipped away; they must be only a foundation on which to build further gains.

Behind us lies accomplished a really big job. It was the creation out of the funk of the early thirties of a new spirit with which we can now face the forties.

A realistic historian of our party has wisely concluded, "We have the intelligence to define our troubles and the physical means with which to meet them. In the end, whether we make America a good or a bad country will depend on what we make, individually, of ourselves. A selfish and greedy people cannot be free."

The enormous task which the Democratic Party has already performed in this generation has been to provide the energy and the confidence to steer government in the interest and under the direction of those of our people who do not want to be selfish and who do not want to be greedy.

And I am convinced that most people in the United States do have a sense - with a real feeling of pleasure in the moralities involved - that we have been moving forward these later years in the right direction.

They are really glad that on the whole the farmer is no longer an economic outcast and is getting better prices for his crops.

They are glad that we are slowly working out for labor greater privileges with greater responsibilities.

They are glad that gamblers and speculators are no longer the most honored element in our economic life.

They are glad that certain opportunities for security, once only available to the rich, like old age insurance, are becoming available to the poor.

They are glad that we are beginning to conserve the natural resources of our soil, our rivers and our trees for the good of our children; that we have improved our roads and added to our parks and built hundreds of schools; that we are bringing to every housewife cheap electricity's relief from drudgery; that we have made our banks safe and brought our courts up to date; that we have kept millions of people out of the breadlines.

They are glad that government is daily becoming more honest and more decent.

And one of the manifestations of that new spirit is that there are fewer Americans who view with alarm. There are, of course, some people -- in addition to the professional politico-viewers-with-alarm -- who always look on the dark side of life, complain that things are not as they were once and who firmly believe that everybody who disagrees with them is a soren or a crook. They belong to the type of unfortunate individual of whom it is said "he is enjoying bad health".

(Vd.)

Sometimes when I listen and listen to people like that I understand old Uncle Jed.

"Uncle Jed", said Ezra, one day, "Don't you gittin' a little hard of hearin'?" "Yes", said Uncle Jed, "I'm afear'd I'm gittin' a mite deaf."

Whereupon Ezra made Uncle Jed go down to Boston to an ear doctor.

Uncle Jed returned. Ezra asked what happened. "Well", said Uncle Jed, "that doctor asked me if I had been drinkin' any. I said 'Yes, a-mite'."

"Then that doctor said, 'Well, Jed, I might just as well tell you now if you don't want to lose your hearin' you've got to give up drinkin'.'

"Well, I thought it all over; and then I said, 'Doc, I like what I've been drinkin' so much better than what I've been hearin' & that I reckon I'll just keep on gittin' deaf!'"

So you see I have talked with you tonight in a vein of old-fashioned philosophy, with little or no partisanship mixed up with it -- just as I promised my three Republican leader friends who ought to have been here tonight. They are grand fellows, liked by me and by every Democrat in the Congress. Nowadays most everybody in the country knows that sometimes when two Congressmen or two Senators engage in a terrific battle of words, a forensic philippic, a fifteen round heavyweight championship bout, the two contestants, five minutes later, will be found sitting in the cloakroom with their arms about each other laughing and jocking while they catch their breath.

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