
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”

The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal**

File No. 1331

1940 October 30

**Worcester, MA - Meriden, Hartford & New
London, CT - Informal Speeches**

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT,
NEW HAVEN, CONN., OCTOBER 30, 1940.

- - - - -
It is very good of you to come out on this very rainy day and I appreciate it.

I am particularly happy to be here today because yesterday I wasn't sure that I could come. I have had, as you know, certain responsibilities that go with the office and within the past few days, we are afraid, another conflict has broken out.

There have been a great many conflicts that have broken out so far but I notice that in all of them the United States has managed to keep clear and not get into war.

Yesterday we had a very impressive ceremony in Washington -- the drawing of the numbers. As you and I know, with this great armament program on the mechanical side -- the building of all of these munitions in which Connecticut is taking her full part -- with all that, we have to have trained people to handle them in case of emergency.

And so we have started to train more men -- not that we expect to have to use them.

It is just for the same reason that you have got umbrellas up today -- so as not to get wet.

And, incidentally, I think you realize that all this talk about sending American boys to Europe -- well, it does not conform with either the facts of the past or the facts of the future.

What a pity it is that there should be, even in a national campaign, an injection of fear -- fear into the hearts of American citizens -- fears about things that do not exist. What a pity it is! That is something we should repeat to ourselves over and over again. The only thing we have to fear in America is fear itself. If we had had fear in the past seven years we would not have passed the great measures of social justice for the workers of the land, measures that are now on the statute books, measures which the working people in Connecticut appreciate because they helped them in their lives and in their homes.

I wish I could have driven through New Haven and seen a lot of places that I have been to many times before. Thanks very much for coming out. Win or lose, I hope to see you again.

- - - - - 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.

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT,
HARTFORD, CONN., OCTOBER 50, 1940.

This is a very good omen. If you will remember, four years ago I was on this spot and it was a rainy day. And you remember what Connecticut did the next week.

You know, I was saying to your Senator that where I live, on the back of my farm I can look into Connecticut. I know almost every road and every community in this State and so I have always thought of you in this State as my neighbors.

I want to say just two very simple things: First of all, here in this great insurance center of the United States there are people in every single one of the 48 states who hold policies in your insurance companies. It makes me very sad to know, in view of history and present facts, that there are many executives of insurance companies who are trying to spread fear -- not just here in Hartford, not just in Connecticut but among the policy holders in every part of the Union.

Let me go back: In 1932, the insurance companies -- and I had been in the surety business, so I know -- if you had tried to liquidate them for the benefit of the policy holders, they would have come out in the red. Why? Because the assets which they carried on the farms and other properties throughout this country were down at values so low that they could not have got their money back. What did we do? You know?

It was just like that with the banks. The banks folded up in this country before I took office. Where are they today?

Therefore I say that on the part of those men who are trying to instill fear in the policy holders throughout the United States, it is the most dastardly and the most unpatriotic action of any Americans I know of.

Of course it is only part and parcel of an election or campaign but you and I know that those things, those false statements, leave scars and what I am working for is the unity of the Americas, especially the unity of American people in this great program of defense. And I want to take off my hat to the State of Connecticut because of the splendid cooperative effort that all the workers of this State in hundreds and hundreds of factories are making. The result of that effort is to make the United States strong enough in order to defend itself from attack from the outside.

And you know, too, that we aim to defend only against an attack from the outside.

Almost every year that has passed, sometimes every few minutes, some responsibility has fallen on us to avoid entangling alliances or entangling actions that might lead this country into war. I notice that for seven and one-half years, nearly eight, the United States not only has remained at peace, not only has kept free from any entanglements, but the United States today is at peace and is going to remain at peace.

And so I am glad that we have had this day with a drizzle because it is a great omen of what is going to happen next Tuesday.

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.

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
From the Rear Platform of his Special Train
Meriden, Connecticut
October 30, 1940

You know, I had hoped that I could motor through this part of Connecticut. I want to see more of the great work that all of you people are doing for defense all through Connecticut. We are very proud of it.

I am glad to have this chance to stop over just for a minute because it is Frank Maloney's old home town.

Thanks for coming out on this rainy day. I hope to come back again soon.

I am glad to have this youngster, who is to become your next Governor, here on the platform with me.

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.

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT,
WORCESTER, MASS., OCTOBER 30, 1940.

- - - - -

I wish I could see all you good people around on the left-hand side of the train. This particular park needs enlarging.

I am very glad to be back in Massachusetts where, as you know, I spent a good many years of the earlier part of my life.

I have had a great day. It is rather a coincidence that when I was in the Connecticut Valley four years ago, it was a day just like this -- and we carried Connecticut.

And it is also a coincidence that when I was in Worcester in the daytime eight years ago it was a day just like this -- and we carried Massachusetts.

I have been combining business with pleasure today. I have been seeing some of the great defense work that is going on further west down the River in Springfield, and I know that this State is doing its full share in building up our national defenses.

I just want to say one thing to you -- and I know you realize it -- and that is that our defense efforts are for defense and nothing else.

And another thing I know you realize also is that in these troubled days in the world, the surest and safest way to maintain peace is an adequate defense -- and we are getting it.

It is good to see you. Thank you for coming out on this rainy day. Some time, I hope, I will come back here when the sun is shining and there is no election on. But just so long as it happens to be election year -- I may be just a little superstitious -- I hoped that it would rain and it did.

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.

STATEMENTS FILE

(3)

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT,
NEW HAVEN, CONN.,
October 30, 1940.

It is very good of you to come out on this very rainy day and I appreciate it.

I am particularly happy to be here today because yesterday I wasn't sure that I could come. I have had, as you know, certain responsibilities that go with the office and within the past few days, we are afraid, another conflict has broken out.

There have been a great many conflicts that have broken out so far but I notice that in all of them the United States has managed to keep clear and not get into war.

Yesterday we had a very impressive ceremony in Washington — the drawing of the numbers. As you and I know, with this great armament program on the mechanical side — the building of all of these munitions in which Connecticut is taking her full part — with all that, we have to have trained people to handle them in case of emergency.

And so we have started to train more men -- not that we expect to have to use them.

It is just for the same reason that you have got umbrellas up today -- so as not to get wet.

And, incidentally, I think you realize that all this talk about sending American boys to Europe -- well, it does not conform with either the facts of the past or the facts of the future.

What a pity it is that there should be, even in a national campaign, an injection of fear -- fear into the hearts of American citizens -- fears about things that do not exist. What a pity it is! That is something we should repeat to ourselves over and over again. The only thing we have to fear in America is fear itself. If we had had fear in the past seven years we would not have passed the great measures of social justice for the workers of the land, measures that are now on the statute books, measures which the working people in Connecticut appreciate because they helped them in their lives and in their homes.

I wish I could have driven through New Haven and seen a lot of places that I have been to many times before. Thanks very much for coming out. Win or lose, I hope to see you again.

* * * *

STATEMENTS FILE

(4)

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
HARTFORD, CONN.,
October 30, 1940.

This is a very good omen. If you will remember, four years ago I was on this spot and it was a rainy day. And you remember what Connecticut did the next week.

You know, I was saying to your Senator that where I live, on the back of my farm I can look into Connecticut. I know almost every road and every community in this State and so I have always thought of you in this State as my neighbors.

I want to say just two very simple things: First of all, here in this great insurance center of the United States there are people in every single one of the 48 states who hold policies in your insurance companies. It makes me very sad to know, in view of history and present facts, that there are many executives of insurance companies who are trying to spread fear -- not just here in Hartford, not just in Connecticut but among the policy holders in every part of the Union.

Let me go back: In 1932, the insurance companies -- and I had been in the surety business, so I know -- if you had tried to liquidate them for the benefit of the policy holders, they would have come out in the red. Why? Because the assets which they carried on the farms and other properties throughout this country were down at values so low that they could not have got their money back. What did we do? You know!

It was just like that with the banks. The banks folded up in this country before I took office. Where are they today?

Therefore I say that on the part of these men who are trying to instill fear in the policy holders throughout the United States, it is the most dastardly and the most unpatriotic action of any American I know of.

Of course it is only part and parcel of an election or campaign but you and I know that those things, those false statements, leave scars and what I am working for is the unity of the Americas, especially the unity of American people in this great program of defense. And I want to take off my hat to the State of Connecticut because of the splendid cooperative effort that all the workers of this State in hundreds and hundreds of ~~manufactures~~ factories are making. The result of that effort is to make the United States strong enough in order to defend itself from attack from the outside.

And you know, too, that we aim to defend only against an attack from the outside.

Almost every year that has passed, sometimes every few minutes, some responsibility has fallen on me to avoid entangling alliances or entangling actions that might lead this country into war. I notice that ~~has not been involved in any foreign wars~~ for seven and one-half years, nearly eight, the United States not only has remained at peace, not only has kept free from any entanglements, but the United States today is at peace and is going to remain at peace.

And so I am glad that we have had this day with a drizzle because it is a great omen of what is going to happen next Tuesday.

* * * *

STATEMENTS FILE

(5)

INFORMAL REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT,
WORCESTER, MASS.,
October 30, 1940.

I wish I could see all you good people around on the left-hand side of the train. This particular park needs enlarging.

I am very glad to be back in Massachusetts where, as you know, I spent a good many years of the earlier part of my life.

I have had a great day. It is rather a coincidence that when I was in the Connecticut Valley four years ago, it was a day just like this is -- and we carried Connecticut.

And it is also a coincidence that when I was in Worcester in the day time eight years ago it was a day just like this -- and we carried Massachusetts.

I have been combining business with pleasure today. I have been seeing some of the great defense work that is going on further west down the River in Springfield, and I know that this State is doing its full share in building up our national defenses.

I just want to say one thing to you -- and I know you realize it -- and that is that our defense efforts are for defense and nothing else.

And another thing I know you realize also is that in these troubled days in the world, the surest and safest way to maintain peace is an adequate defense -- and we are getting it.

It is good to see you. Thank you for coming out on this rainy day. Some time, I hope, I will come back here when the sun is shining and there is no election on. But just so long as it happens to be election year -- I may be just a little superstitious -- I hoped that it would rain and it did.

* * *