
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. 1363

1941 March 18

**Message to Congress re
The National Resources Board**

f3/18/41

Enclosed

W/

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 10, 1941

Memorandum For Mr. Forster.

I return the National Resources Board message.

I have no alibi whatsoever, except to say that my stupidity was matched by ten persons in the Budget and the Resources Board, all of whom read the message with the same blank stare.

Had I not been perfectly aware of it before, I am once more convinced this government would cease to run if you ever took a day off.



JHR
James Rowe, Jr.

To the Congress:
Mr. President (Signed)

National Defense is more than a mobilization of a nation's armed strength. Equally must we focus public thought on the ideals and objectives of our national life. We must seek wider understanding of the possibilities for that future we prepare to defend.

Among those possibilities are the larger use, the conservation and development of the Nation's resources. I have from time to time during the past eight years called to the attention of the Congress these possibilities; and during these years several laws have been enacted to promote the orderly development and prudent husbandry of our national resources, human as well as material.

The National Resources Planning Board has now completed its report, which I send you herewith, on "The Development of Resources and the Stabilization of Employment in the United States". This is the first of a series of such reports which each year I shall transmit to the Congress shortly after submission of the Budget of the United States.

The Budget contains the recommendations of the Chief Executive for the financial outlays to carry on a public works program during the next fiscal year. This report places these recommendations within the framework of a long-range policy of intelligent planning for the future. It contains a six-year program of public construction and a statement of related future policies and plans of the Federal Government.

Under the terms of Reorganization Plan No. 1, effective July 1, 1939, I have, by a series of Executive Orders, given to

the National Resources Planning Board responsibility for correlating the six-year public works programs of those agencies which plan or undertake construction directly for the Federal Government and those which indirectly participate in construction by means of loans, grants or other financial aid. The Board is also aiding cities and States to prepare similar programs or capital budgets so as to develop a full and coordinated program of national development.

The Board can thus help to iron out conflicts among the plans of different agencies, and to present for consideration by the Congress a program which expresses local, State, regional, and national aspirations for a progressive development of our resources and for stabilization of employment.

This six-year program lists the Budget estimates for the coming fiscal year and summarizes a developing program for the ensuing five years. If projects are to be ready at hand for rapid inauguration in times of need, the surveys and investigations, the engineering plans and specifications must be prepared in advance. Authorizations and financial arrangements must be already agreed upon.

The planning revolving fund, suggested in the Board's report, would make available a shelf of useful projects without in any way committing the Government to the immediate construction of such works. Because of the current national emergency, projects not needed for defense have been temporarily deferred. As a result, we are now in the process of storing up a reservoir of non-defense public work which can be loosed when the pace of rearmament slackens.

The report of the Board is divided into three parts:

Part I, The Federal Program for National Development: This is the report of the Board and contains its findings and recommendations.

Part II, Regional Development Plans: This section reproduces statements prepared through the ten regional offices of the Board in cooperation with regional and State planning agencies and with representative citizens.

Part III, Functional Development Policies: This part of the report is devoted to studies by the technical advisory committees of the Board on national policies for the development of our land, water, and energy resources.

To facilitate their use by the Congress, I recommend that all three parts of the report be printed, together with the illustrations and supporting tables.

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

MARCH 17, 1941

CONFIDENTIAL: To be held in **SILENT CONFIDENCE** and no portion, synopsis or intimation to be published or given out until the **READING** of the President's Message has begun in the Senate or the House of Representatives. Extreme care must therefore be exercised to avoid premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

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FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THE WHITE HOUSE,

March 17, 1941.



Mr. Ingling
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1941.

Mr. Speaker:

My dear Speaker Rayburn:

Several months ago it became clear that, in the existing widespread wars, democracies were in dire need, in ever increasing quantities, of this country's production of munitions with which to carry on their fight. It also became clear that it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to secure cash or foreign exchange with which to buy these munitions.

The great majority of Americans felt that it was imperative to the security of America that we encourage the democracies' heroic resistance to the aggressions of the dictator nations by not only maintaining but also increasing the flow of material assistance from this country. Therefore, the Congress has enacted and I have signed H. R. 1776.

Through this legislation, our country has notified the world that it is determined to do its full part in creating an adequate arsenal of democracy and in making the products thereof available to Great Britain, Greece and the other defenders of democracy.

We cannot fail in this ~~assigned~~ purpose. The fate of democracy and the fate of the country hang in the balance. Our aid must be immediately and constantly effective. We must give now to the limit of our ability; we must produce now to the limit of our capacity.

We must face the grim realities of the situation. We are living in a period when total and lightning war has been developed by the enemies of democracy to an almost unbelievable extreme. For seven years, under a dictator's ruthless drive and ingenuity, the production of the country has been spurred on regardless of the sacrifice and deprivation of the men and women workers, regimented into a furiously working machine. Now, they not only have available to them the work power of their own people but also that of the regimented work power of the conquered nations.

They will be defeated by greater munitions power. They must overcome the lead which their early start has given them. We must outdo their accomplishments, not through the ruthless leadership of a dictator but through the principles of democracy, where the leaders are responsive to the will of the people.

We must produce to the ultimate limit of our power and we must be prepared to carry on until democracy is saved, whether it be one, five, or ten years. This must be achieved by hard work on the part of all of us. The critical production machinery must work twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week.

While the defense equipment produced under H. R. 1776 remains under the control of the United States until it is ready for disposition, it is the fixed policy of this government to ~~make~~ make for fighting democracies every gun, plane and munition of war that we possibly can.

In my budget message to the Congress of January 5, 1941, I summarized the program for the fiscal years 1940, 1941 and 1942, which contained a total in excess of \$25,000,000,000 for national defense in the form of appropriations, authorizations and recommendations. As a start in the financing of the legislation just passed, in the spirit which I have outlined and which I solemnly believe to be the spirit which is essential to the security of America, I ask the Congress to appropriate an additional \$ _____.

Very sincerely yours,

Therefore I hereby transmit
etc.

Honorable Sam Rayburn,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Inset A

This great arsenal will be in
this country - it will be a bulwark
of our own defense - it will be
the source of the tools of defense
for all democracies who are fighting
to preserve themselves against
aggression. It must be effective at
~~now for the failure of democracy is hanging in~~
~~the balance. We cannot & shall not fail in~~
~~our freedom.~~

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D. C.

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

March 11, 1941.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Frankly we have not had an opportunity to make any revision of this letter on account of the conferences that are in progress in connection with the estimate. My reaction to it is on the whole very good, but I am wondering if it isn't over-inflammatory in tone and I am wondering also if it would not be better to emphasize the point that we are in this program defending ourselves as well as aiding the democracies of the world. I have a feeling that this latter point may set a little better in the country generally.

When you put your own hand to this we might be helpful in checking on the final paragraph to see that it is in appropriate form.

THPS
Director.

Inclosure

*Professor
Draft
Copy given to Harold
Smith*

March 11, 1941.

My dear Speaker Rayburn:

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The great majority of Americans felt that it was imperative to the security of America that we encourage the democracies' heroic resistance to the aggressions of the dictator nations by not only maintaining but also increasing the flow of material assistance from this country. Therefore, the Congress has enacted and I have signed H. R. 1776.

Through this legislation, our country has notified the world that it is determined to do its full part in creating an adequate arsenal of democracy and in making the products thereof available to Great Britain, Greece and the other defenders of democracy.

We cannot fail in this sacred purpose. The fate of democracy and the fate of the country hang in the balance. Our aid must be immediately and constantly effective. We must give now to the limit of our ability; we must produce now to the limit of our capacity.

We must face the grim realities of the situation. We are living in a period when total and lightning war has been developed by the enemies of democracy to an almost unbelievable extreme. For seven years, under a dictator's ruthless drive and ingenuity, the production of the country has been spurred on regardless of the sacrifice and deprivation of the men and women workers, regiments into a furiously working machine. Now, they not only have available to them the work power of their own people but also that of the regimented work power of the conquered nations.

They will be defeated by greater munitions power. We must overcome the lead which their early start has given them. We must outdo their accomplishments, not through the ruthless leadership of a dictator but through the principles of democracy, where the leaders are responsive to the will of the people.

We must produce to the ultimate limit of our power and we must be prepared to carry on until democracy is saved, whether it be one, five, or ten years. This must be achieved by hard work on the part of all of us. The critical production machinery must work twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week.

While the defense equipment produced under H. R. 1776 remains under the control of the United States until it is ready for disposition, it is the fixed policy of this government to give to the fighting democracies every gun, plane and munition of war that we possibly can.

In my budget message to the Congress of January 3, 1941, I summarized the program for the fiscal years 1940, 1941 and 1942, which contained a total in excess of \$25,000,000,000 for national defense in the form of appropriations, authorizations and recommendations. As a start in the financing of the legislation just passed, in the spirit which I have outlined and which I solemnly believe to be the spirit which is essential to the security of America, I ask the Congress to appropriate an additional \$_____.

Very sincerely yours,

Honorable Sam Rayburn,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

March 11, 1941.

My dear Speaker Rayburn:

Several months ago it became clear that, in the existing widespread wars, democracies were in dire need, in ever increasing quantities, of this country's production of munitions with which to carry on their fight. It also became clear that it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to secure cash or foreign exchange with which to buy these munitions.

The great majority of Americans felt that it was imperative to the security of America that we encourage the democracies' heroic resistance to the aggressions of the dictator nations by not only maintaining but also increasing the flow of material assistance from this country. Therefore, the Congress has enacted and I have signed H. R. 1775.

Through this legislation, our country has notified the world that it is determined to do its full part in creating an adequate arsenal of democracy and in making the products thereof available to Great Britain, Greece and the other defenders of democracy.

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In my budget message to the Congress of January 7, 1941, I summarized the program for the fiscal years 1940, 1941 and 1942, which contained a total in excess of \$25,000,000,000 for national defense in the form of appropriations, authorizations and recommendations. As a start in the financing of the legislation just passed, in the spirit which I have outlined and which I solemnly believe to be the spirit which is essential to the security of America, I ask the Congress to appropriate an additional \$_____.

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Letter

BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To Rayburn

To the Congress of the United States:

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Through this legislation, our country has notified the world that it is determined to do its full part in creating an adequate arsenal of democracy and in making the products thereof available to Great Britain, Greece and the other ^{defenders} ~~champions and friends~~ of democracy [and the United States.]

We cannot fail in this sacred purpose. The fate of democracy and the fate of the country hang in the balance. Our aid must be immediately and constantly effective. We must give now to the limit of

our ability; we must produce now to the limit of our capacity, ^{and we} must continue to produce and to give to the limit of our ability so that the munitions available to the fighters for democracy will exceed those available to their enemies.]

We must face the grim realities of the situation. We are living in a period when total and lightning war has been developed by the enemies of democracy to an almost unbelievable extreme. [Their countries have been converted into munitions factories to the very limit of their capacity to furnish labor, raw materials, transportation, manufacturing equipment and factories, capital and management.] For seven years, under a dictator's ruthless drive and ingenuity, the production of the country has been spurred on regardless of the sacrifice and deprivation of the men and women workers, regimented into a furiously working machine.

[They have been producing more and more and more until now half of their entire industrial output is munitions. At the same time, they have been consuming as individuals less and less and less.] Now, they not only have available to them the work power of their own people but also that of the regimented work power of the conquered nations, [which we know are on semi-starvation rations in all of the necessities of life.] They have created not only vast production capacity but also enormous stocks of airplanes, bombs, submarines, guns, ammunition and all other mass killing weapons.]

They [can only] be defeated by greater munitions power. [It will not be easy to produce it.] We must overcome the lead which their early start

has given them. We must outdo their accomplishments, not through the ruthless leadership of a dictator but through the principles of democracy, where the leaders are responsive to the will of the people.

We must produce to the ultimate limit of our power and we must be prepared to carry on until democracy is saved, whether it be one, five, or ten years. This must be achieved by hard work on the part of all of us. The critical production machinery must work twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. [The time for "business as usual" and "life as usual" is past. We must all agree to work, to sacrifice and to cooperate fully and loyally until the defeat of aggression is assured.]

A [The defense equipment produced under H. R. 1776 remains under control of the United States until it is ready for disposition. Furthermore, we shall know that [as long as] the fighting democracies [hold out], each gun, each plane and each ship that we dispose of to them is worth more to us in their hands than it would now be in our own.

In my budget message to the Congress of January 3, 1941, I summarized the program for the fiscal years 1940, 1941 and 1942, which contained a total in excess of \$25,000,000,000 for national defense in the form of appropriations, authorizations and recommendations. As a start in the financing of the legislation just passed, in the spirit which I have outlined and which I solemnly believe to be the spirit which is essential to the security of America, I ask the Congress to appropriate an additional \$_____.

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