
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”

The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 3: “The Four Freedoms” and FDR in World War II

File No. 1438

1942 November 11

Radio Address - Armistice Day

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

NOVEMBER 11, 1942

Here in Arlington we are in the presence of the honored dead.

We are accountable to them -- and to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

Today, as on all Armistice Days since 1918, our thoughts go back to the First World War, and we remember with gratitude the bravery of the men who fought and ~~won~~ *Accepted to win* that fight against German militarism.

But this year our thoughts are also very much of the living present, and of the future which we begin to see opening before us -- a picture illumined by a new light of hope.

Today, Americans and their British brothers-in-arms are again fighting on French soil. They are again fighting against a German militarism which transcends a hundred-fold the brutality and barbarism of 1918.

The Nazis of today -- and their appropriate associates, the Japanese -- have attempted to drive history into reverse, to use all the mechanics of modern civilization to drive humanity back to conditions of pre-historic savagery.

They sought to conquer the world, and for a time they seemed to be successful in realizing their boundless ambition. They over-ran great territories. They enslaved -- they killed.

But, today, we know and they know that they have conquered nothing. Today, they face inevitable, final defeat.

The forces of liberation are advancing.

Britain, Russia, China and the United States grow rapidly to full strength. The opponents of decency and justice have passed their peak.

And -- as the result of recent events -- the United Nations forces are being joined by large numbers of the fighting men of our traditional ally, France. On this day, of all days, it is heartening for us to know that soldiers of France ~~will~~ go forward with the United Nations.

The American Unknown Soldier who lies here did not give his life on the fields of France merely to defend his American home for the moment that was passing. He gave it that his family, his neighbors, and all his fellow Americans might live in peace in the days to come. His ^{hope} ~~quest~~ was not fulfilled.

American soldiers are giving their lives today in all the continents and on all the seas in order that the dream of the Unknown Soldier may at last come true. All the heroism and all the unconquerable devotion that free men and women are showing in this war shall make certain the survival and the advancement of civilization. That is why on this day of remembrance we do not cease from our work, and that in

going about our tasks in behalf of our fighting men everywhere,
our thoughts turn in gratitude to those who have saved our
Nation in days gone by.

We stand in the presence of the honored dead.

We stand accountable to them, and to the generations
yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

God, the Father of all living, watches over these
hallowed graves and blesses the souls of those who rest here.
May He keep us strong in the courage that will win this war,
and may He impart to us the wisdom and the vision that we
shall need for true victory in the peace which is to come.

*orig. reading
copy*

Transmitted by Pershing

*To the above I added at the end, extemporaneously
the following:*

At this moment great events are taking place in France and
Africa and I think it is particularly appropriate that we greet here
today the General of the Armies of the United States.

And I know that I speak for all of you here. I know that I
speak for all Americans -- men, women and children -- in every part of
this great land, when I extend our American affectionate greetings to
General Pershing.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
DELIVERED IN THE AMPHITHEATRE,
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY,
ARMISTICE DAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1942,
AT 11.15, A.M., E.W.T.
(BROADCAST NATIONALLY)

MY FELLOW AMERICANS:

Here in Arlington we are in the presence of the honored dead.

And I think that we are accountable to them -- (and) accountable
to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

Today, as on all Armistice Days since 1918, our thoughts go back
to the First World War; and we remember with gratitude the bravery of the
men who fought and helped to win that fight against German militarism.

But this year our thoughts are also very much of the living present,
(and) of the future which we begin to see opening before us -- a picture
illuminated by a new light of hope.

Today, Americans and their British brothers-in-arms are again
fighting on French soil. They are again fighting against a German militarism
which transcends a hundred-fold the brutality and the barbarism of
1918.

The Nazis of today -- and their appropriate associates, the
Japanese -- have attempted to drive history into reverse, to use all the
mechanics of modern civilization to drive humanity back to conditions of
pre-historic savagery.

They sought to conquer the world, and for a time they seemed to
be successful in realizing their boundless ambition. They over-ran great
territories. They enslaved -- they killed.

But, today, we know and they know that they have conquered nothing.
Today, they face inevitable, final defeat. (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.

Yes, the forces of liberation are advancing.

Britain, Russia, China and the United States grow rapidly to full strength. The opponents of decency and justice have passed their peak.

And -- as the result of recent events -- very recent -- the United States and the United Nations' forces are being joined by large numbers of the fighting men of our traditional ally, France. On this day, of all days, it is heartening for us to know that soldiers of France go forward with the United Nations.

The American Unknown Soldier who lies here did not give his life on the fields of France merely to defend his American home for the moment that was passing. He gave it that his family, his neighbors, and all his fellow Americans might live in peace in (the) days to come. His hope was not fulfilled.

American soldiers are giving their lives today in all the continents and on all the seas in order that the dream of the Unknown Soldier may (at last) come true at last. (Applause) All the heroism, (and) all the unconquerable devotion that free men and women are showing in this war shall make certain the survival and the advancement of civilization. That is why on this day of remembrance we do not cease from our work. (and that in) We are going about our tasks in the behalf of our fighting men everywhere. Our thoughts turn in gratitude to those who have saved our Nation in days gone by.

We stand in the presence of the honored dead.

We stand accountable to them, and to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

God, the Father of all living, watches over these hallowed graves and blesses the souls of those who rest here. May He keep us strong in the

courage that will win (this) the war, and may He impart to us the wisdom and the vision that we shall need for true victory in the peace which is to come.
(applause)

At this moment great events are taking place in France and Africa;
and I think it is particularly appropriate that we greet here today the
General of the Armies of the United States. (applause)

And I know that I speak for all of you here. I know that I speak
for all Americans -- men, women and children -- in every part of this great
land, when I extend our American affectionate greetings to General Pershing.
(applause)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Address of the President /
Delivered in the Amphitheatre, /
Arlington National Cemetery, /
^{Armistice Days}
November 11, 1942. /
at 11.15 AM EWT. /
(Broadcast Nationally) /

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STATEMENTS FILE

NOVEMBER 11, 1942

CAUTION: The following Armistice Day address of the President, to be delivered in the Amphitheatre, Arlington National Cemetery, MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE until released.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 11:06 A. M. E. W. T., November 11, 1942. The same release of the text of the address also applies to radio announcers and news commentators.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STATEMENTS FILE

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

*Checked from
Shorthand Notes*

My fellow Americans:

Here in Arlington we are in the presence of the honored dead.

Please I think that *accountable*
We are accountable to them — and to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

Today, as on all Armistice Days since 1918, our thoughts go back to the First World War; and we remember with gratitude the bravery of the men who fought and helped to win that fight against German militarism.

But this year our thoughts are also very much of the living present, and of the future which we begin to see opening before us — a picture illumined by a new light of hope.

Today, Americans and their British brothers-in-arms are again fighting on French soil. They are again fighting against a German militarism which transcends a hundred-fold the brutality and barbarism of 1918.

Note
The Nazis of today — and their appropriate associates, the Japanese — have attempted to drive history into reverse, to use all the mechanics of modern civilization to drive humanity back to conditions of pre-historic savagery.

They sought to conquer the world, and for a time they seemed to be successful in realizing their boundless ambition. They over-ran great territories. They enslaved — they killed.

But, today, we know and they know that they have conquered nothing. Today, they face inevitable, final defeat. *(applause)*

Yes, the forces of liberation are advancing.

Britain, Russia, China and the United States grow rapidly to full strength. The opponents of decency and justice have passed their peak.

And — as the result of recent events — *very recent — the United States and the* the United Nations' forces are being joined by large numbers of the fighting men of our traditional ally, France. On this day, of all days, it is heartening for us to know that soldiers of France go forward with the United Nations.

The American Unknown Soldier who lies here did not give his life on the fields of France merely to defend his American home for the moment that was passing. He gave it that his family, his neighbors, and all his fellow Americans might live in peace in the days to come. His hope was not fulfilled.

American soldiers are giving their lives today in all the continents and on all the seas in order that the dream of the Unknown Soldier may at last come true. All the heroism, and all the unconquerable devotion that free men and women are showing

(applause)

We are the
in this war shall make certain the survival and the advancement of civilization. That is why on this day of remembrance we do not cease from our work, ~~and that in~~ going about our tasks in behalf of our fighting men everywhere, our thoughts turn in gratitude to those who have saved our Nation in days gone by.

We stand in the presence of the honored dead.

We stand accountable to them, and to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

God, the Father of all living, watches over these hallowed graves and blesses the souls of those who rest here. May He keep us strong in the courage that will win ~~this~~ war, and may He impart to us the wisdom and the vision that we shall need for true victory in the peace which is to come. *(applause)*

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Warrisan
At this moment ^{great events are taking place} in France and Africa. And I think it is particularly appropriate that we greet here today the General of the Armies of the United States. *(applause)*

And I know that I speak for all of you here. I know that I speak for all Americans -- men, women and children -- in every part of this great land, when I extend our American affectionate greetings to General Pershing.
(applause)

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FIRST DRAFT

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
November 11th, 1942

Here in Arlington we are

~~meeting~~ in the presence of the honored dead.

We ~~are~~ ^{are} accountable to them, and to the gener-

ations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives.

Today, as on all Armistice Days since 1918,
our thoughts go back to the First World War, and we remember
with gratitude the bravery of the men who fought and won
that fight against German militarism.

But ~~today~~ ^{this year} our thoughts are also very
much of the living present, and of the future which we
begin to see opening ~~before~~ before us -- a picture illumined
by a new light of hope.

Today, Americans and their British brothers-in-
arms are again fighting on French soil. They are again

fighting against German militarism which ~~has now assumed~~ ^{transcends a hundred}
~~fold the brutality and barbarism of 1918.~~

The Nazis of today -- and their appropriate
associates, the Japanese -- have attempted to drive history
into reverse, to use all the mechanics of modern civilization
to drive humanity back to conditions of pre-historic savagery.

They sought to conquer the world, and for a

~~THEY WERE SUCCESSFUL IN REALIZING THEIR~~

time they seemed to be successful in realizing their
boundless ambition. They over-ran great territories.

They ~~also~~ ^{- they killed -} enslaved ~~millions of men, women and children~~

But, today, we know and they know that they
have conquered nothing. Today, they ~~themselves are facing~~ ^{face}
inevitable, final defeat.

The forces of liberation are advancing.

Britain, Russia, China and the United States.
~~The British and ourselves are proceeding~~

^{grow}
1 rapidly to ~~full~~ ^{strength.} ^{The opponents of}
^{desecry and justice have passed their peak.}
~~During the months to come, the striking power~~

~~of the Russians and the Chinese will be ferociously increased.~~

And -- as the result of recent events -- the
United Nations forces are being joined by large numbers
of the fighting men of our traditional ally, France. On
this day, of all days, it is heartening ^{for} us to know that soldiers
^{with the United Nations}
~~of France will go forward with across the seas~~
~~and across the continents until victory has been won.~~

But, we cannot mention the word "victory" here,
by the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, without solemn remembrance
of the failure of the "peace" which followed the war in
which he died. This American soldier did not give his life

on the fields of France merely to defend his own home. American soldiers are not giving their lives today, on the deserts of North Africa or on the waters of the North Atlantic or in the jungles of the Southwest Pacific, merely to defend their own homes. They demand and they deserve a larger cause than that.

It is for us to make sure that the cause is worthy of the greatness of the sacrifices that are made in its name.

It is for us to make sure that there is justification for all the heroism and all the unconquerable devotion that free men and women have shown in this war for the survival and the advancement of civilization.

"We stand in the presence of the honored dead.

"We stand accountable to them, and to the generations yet unborn for whom they gave their lives."

God, the Father of all living, watches over these hallowed graves and blesses the souls of those who rest here. May He keep us strong in the courage that will win this war, and may He impart to us the wisdom and the vision that we shall need for true victory in the peace which is to come.

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The American Unknown Soldier who lies here did not give his life on the fields of France merely to defend his American home for the moment that was passing. He gave it that his family, his neighbors, and all his fellow Americans might live in peace in the days to come. His ^{hope} ~~purpose~~ was not fulfilled.

American soldiers are giving their lives today in all the continents and on all the seas in order that the dream of the Unknown Soldier may at last come true. All the heroism and all the unconquerable devotion that free men and women are showing in this war shall make certain the survival and the advancement of civilization. That is why on this day of remembrance we do not cease from our work, and that in

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