

March 10, 1943

[Reception for freshman Senators & Representatives]

FDR Speech File

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE CLOSE OF THE INFORMAL RECEPTION HE HELD
IN THE STATE DINING ROOM AT THE WHITE HOUSE
FOR NEW SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
78TH CONGRESS
MARCH 10, 1943, AT 8.30 P.M., E.W.T.
(126 INVITED GUESTS WERE PRESENT)

(Speaker Sam Rayburn, who had acted all evening as a sort of "master of ceremonies," rapped on a chair for attention)

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Speaker! (laughter)

SPEAKER RAYBURN: Mr. President, you have given us a grand party, and we have all enjoyed it. You have met Senators and Members here tonight that it is hard for you to meet.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know why "Father" Rayburn wants to put you all to bed so early. (laughter)

SPEAKER RAYBURN: Well now, it has been perfectly grand for us all too, I know, for the new Members -- 108 of them -- to meet and greet you, and we have enjoyed it very, very much. It is most gracious and fine of you to do it.

And now, if you want to say "good-night" to us in any form which you desire, why we are all ready.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Sam, and all the rest of you "freshmen" -- some of whom are older than I am! -- (laughter) -- it's grand to make your acquaintance.

You know, during the last Congress things were pretty

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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.

busy at the White House, and I honestly believe there were -- Oh -- 20 to 30, 30 to 40 of the new Congressmen in the last Session whom I never met at all.

I know perfectly well that you realize some of my problems. You don't really get the truth from the columnists, because they say that I am overburdened and overworked. I am not working as hard, so far as appointments go -- so far as seeing people goes -- as I did before the war started -- nothing like it.

Now I haven't an excess of "gray matter," but I do have to have a little bit more time to think and to read. The amount of literature that I get from -- Oh -- the General Staff, the needs of the Army, and Manpower, the size of the Army and Navy, and things like that, the amount of stuff that I have to read today does take an awful lot of time. And it makes my schedule in the morning -- when I see people -- it limits that schedule to about five or six people -- five or six different appointments in the course of the morning, instead of the ten or fifteen, or twice as many as I used to put in before the war. And that honestly is the only reason that I can't see you people -- Senate and House -- as much or as often as I used to. It isn't because of any greater burden on me, but it's the necessity of doing more reading. In some ways I feel as if I had gone back to school. As far as the work goes, it isn't any heavier, but it's a little bit different character of work.

And so I know that you will bear with me and be lenient, if it takes any of you who want to see me about something important a long, long time before you can get in. You will have to

take the will for the deed. I am doing the best I can. I do wish to goodness that I had more time, as I did before, to see personally the Members of the House and Senate.

I think that part of it is my fault, so my Secretaries tell me. When somebody comes in on a ten-minute appointment, I start to do the talking. (laughter) I get enthusiastic, and the result is that at the end of ten or fifteen minutes my visitor hasn't had a chance to get in a word edgewise. (laughter) And that is something I am trying to school myself to omit, to try to let the other fellow talk, instead of my doing it. And that is about the hardest thing I have to do in this life, because as most of you people -- some of you who have been here before, you all know I love to talk. It's an unfortunate characteristic.

So I say, please bear with me, and if you do come in, say to me quite frankly, "Now listen, before you talk, Mr. President, let me have my say." (laughter) I think it would be a grand thing.

I do hope, honestly, that you will come in and see me, just as often as you can get by! (more laughter)

It's grand to see you. Thanks ever so much for coming.

(applause for the President)

STATEMENTS FILE

(A)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Remarks of the President,
at about the close of the
Informal Reception he held
in the State Dining Room at
The White House for new
Senators and Representatives of
the 78th Congress. March 10, 1943
at 8.30 P.M. E.W.T. (126

Invited Guests were present)

(Speaker Rayburn, who
had

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

(D) Speaker Rayburn, who had acted all evening as a sort of "master of ceremonies" ~~to appear~~ ~~to~~ rapped ~~on~~ ~~wood~~ a chair for attention.)

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(A) At the Informal Reception of the President
for the new Congressmen ... March 10, 1943

(B) THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Speaker: (laughter)

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