
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. 1460

1943 April 13

Dedication of the Jefferson Memorial

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
DEDICATION OF THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL

APRIL 13, 1943

Today in the midst of a great war for freedom, we
dedicate a shrine to freedom.

To Thomas Jefferson, Apostle of Freedom, we are
paying a debt long overdue.

Yet, there are reasons for gratitude that this
occasion falls within our time; for our generation of
Americans can understand much in Jefferson's life which
intervening generations could not see as well as we.

He faced the fact that men who will not fight for
liberty can lose it. We, too, have faced that fact.

He lived in a world in which freedom of conscience
and freedom of mind were battles still to be fought through --
not principles already accepted of all men. We, too, have
lived in such a world.

He loved peace and loved liberty -- yet on more than one occasion he was forced to choose between them. We, too, have been compelled to make that choice.

Generations which understand each other across the distances of history are the generations united by a common experience and a common cause. Jefferson, across one hundred and fifty years of time, is closer by much to living men than many of our leaders of the years between. His cause was a cause to which we also are committed, not by our words alone but by our sacrifice.

For faith and ideals imply renunciations. Spiritual advancement throughout all our history has called for temporal sacrifices.

The Declaration of Independence and the very purposes of the Revolution itself, while seeking freedoms, called for the abandonment of privileges.

Jefferson was no dreamer -- for half a century he led his State and his Nation in fact and in deed. I like to think that this was so because he thought in terms of the morrow as well as the day -- and this was why he was hated or feared by those who thought in terms of the day and the yesterday.

We judge him by the application of his philosophy to the circumstances of his lifetime. But in such applying we come to understand that his life was given for those deeper values which persist throughout all time.

Leader in the philosophy of government, in education, in the arts, in efforts to lighten the toil of mankind -- exponent of plannings for the future, he led the steps of America into the path of the permanent integrity of the Republic.

Thomas Jefferson believed, as we believe, in Man. He believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own government, and that no king, no tyrant, no dictator can govern for them as wisely as they can govern for themselves.

He believed, as we believe, in certain inalienable rights. He, as we, saw those principles and freedoms challenged. He fought for them, as we fight for them.

He proved that the seeming eclipse of liberty can well become the dawn of more liberty. Those who fight the tyranny of our own time will come to learn that old lesson. Among all the peoples of the earth, the cruelties and oppressions of its would-be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. This lesson, so bitterly learned, will never be forgotten while this generation lives.

The words which we have chosen for this Memorial speak Jefferson's noblest and most urgent meaning; and we are proud indeed to understand and share it:

"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man".

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Orig reading copy

1460

ADDRESS
OF THE
PRESIDENT
IN CONNECTION WITH THE
DEDICATION
OF THE
THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
HELD AT THE MEMORIAL
AND BROADCAST NATIONALLY
APRIL 13, 1943 -- 12.07 PM., EWT

Members of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Commission,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today, in the midst of a great war for freedom, we dedicate a shrine to freedom.

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He faced the fact that men who will not fight for liberty can lose it. We, too, have faced that fact.

He lived in a world in which freedom of conscience and freedom of mind were battles still to be fought through -- not principles already accepted of (all) men. We, too, have lived in such a world.

He loved peace and loved liberty -- yet on more than one occasion he was forced to choose between them. We, too, have been compelled to make that choice.

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.

Generations which understand each other across the distances of history are the generations united by a common experience and a common cause. Jefferson, across a (one) hundred and fifty years of time, is closer by much to living men than many of our leaders of the years between. His cause was a cause to which we also are committed, not by our words alone but by our sacrifice.

For faith and ideals imply renunciations. Spiritual advancement throughout all our history has called for temporal sacrifices.

The Declaration of Independence and the very purposes of the American Revolution itself, while seeking freedoms, called for the abandonment of privileges.

Jefferson was no dreamer -- for half a century he led his State and his Nation in fact and in deed. I like to think that this was so because he thought in terms of the morrow as well as the day -- and this was why he was hated or feared by those who thought in terms of the day and the yesterday.

We judge him by the application of his philosophy to the circumstances of his life(time). But in such applying we come to understand that his life was given for those deeper values that (which) persist throughout all time.

Leader in the philosophy of government, in education, in the arts, in efforts to lighten the toil of mankind -- exponent of plannings for the future, he led the steps of America into the path of the permanent integrity of the Republic.

Thomas Jefferson believed, as we believe, in Man.

He believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own government, and that no king, no tyrant, no dictator can govern for them as well (wisely) as they can govern for themselves.

He believed, as we believe, in certain inalienable rights. He, as we, saw those principles and freedoms challenged. He fought for them, as we fight for them.

He proved that the seeming eclipse of liberty can well become the dawn of more liberty. Those who fight the tyranny of our own time will come to learn that old lesson. Among all the peoples of the earth, the cruelties and the oppressions of its would-be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. This lesson, so bitterly learned, will never be forgotten while this generation is still alive (lives).

The words which we have chosen for this Memorial speak Jefferson's noblest and most urgent meaning; and we are proud indeed to understand it and share it:

"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."

(applause)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

ADDRESS
OF THE
PRESIDENT
IN CONNECTION WITH THE
DEDICATION
OF THE
THOMAS JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
HELD AT THE MEMORIAL
AND BROADCAST NATIONALLY
APRIL 13, 1943 -- 12.07 PM, EWT

Jack Romagna
STATEMENTS FILE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

April 13, 1943

CAUTION: The following address of the President, to be broadcast in connection with the dedication of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Washington, D. C., MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE until released.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 12:07 o'clock, P.M., E.W.T., Tuesday, April 13, 1943. The same release also applies to radio announcers and news commentators.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

From S. E. Early
Notes
----- *Member of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial*
Commission, Radio and Sentiment -----

Today in the midst of a great war for freedom, we dedicate a shrine to freedom.

To Thomas Jefferson, Apostle of Freedom, we are paying a debt long overdue.

Yet, there are reasons for gratitude that this occasion falls within our time; for our generation of Americans can understand much in Jefferson's life which intervening generations could not see as well as we.

We faced the fact that men who will not fight for liberty can lose it. We, too, have faced that fact.

We lived in a world in which freedom of conscience and freedom of mind were battles still to be fought through -- not principles already accepted of all men. We, too, have lived in such a world.

We loved peace and loved liberty -- yet on more than one occasion he was forced to choose between them. We, too, have been compelled to make that choice.

Generations which understand each other across the distances of history are the generations united by a common experience and a common cause. Jefferson, across ~~one~~ hundred and fifty years of time, is closer by much to living men than many of our leaders of the years between. His cause was a cause to which we also are committed, not by our words alone but by our sacrifice.

For faith and ideals imply renunciations. Spiritual advancement throughout all our history has called for temporal sacrifices.

American Declaration of Independence and the very purposes of the Revolution itself, while seeking freedom, called for the abandonment of privileges.

Jefferson was no dreamer -- for half a century he led his State and his Nation in fact and in deed. I like to think that this was so because he thought in terms of the morrow as well as the day -- and this was why he was hated or feared by those who thought in terms of the day and the yesterday.

We judge him by the application of his philosophy to the circumstances of his life. But in such applying we come to understand that his life was given for those deeper values which *that* persist throughout all time.

Leader in the philosophy of government, in education, in the arts, in efforts to lighten the toil of mankind -- exponent of plannings for the future, he led the steps of America into the path of the permanent integrity of the Republic.

Thomas Jefferson believed, as we believe, in Man. He believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own government, and that no king, no tyrant, no dictator can govern for them as ~~wisely~~ ^{well} as they can govern for themselves.

He believed, as we believe, in certain inalienable rights. He, as we, saw those principles and freedoms challenged. He fought for them, as we fight for them.

He proved that the seeming eclipse ^{the} of liberty can well become the dawn of more liberty. Those who fight the tyranny of our own time will come to learn that old lesson. Among all the peoples of the earth, the cruelties and oppressions of its would-be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. This lesson, so bitterly learned, will never be forgotten while this generation ~~lives~~ ^{is} still alive.

The words which we have chosen for this Memorial speak Jefferson's noblest and most urgent meaning; and we are proud indeed to understand and share it:

^{Not}
"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man!" (approximate)

First Draft?

MEMORANDUM FOR THE JEFFERSON DAY SPEECH

Ideals imply renunciations. Spiritual advancement throughout all our history has called for temporal sacrifices.

The Declaration of Independence and the very purposes of the Revolution itself, while seeking freedom^{ed}, call _A for the abandonment of privileges.

Jefferson was no dreamer -- it was because he thought in terms of the ^{individual} ~~people~~ as well as the day that he was feared by those who thought in terms of the day and the yesterday.

It is idle that some shallow wits in 1943 seek to apply ~~to~~ the spoken or written word of a century and a half ago to the novelties and discoveries^{ies} of today. New ~~psychologies~~ ^{philosophies} spring from new conditions and especially from the new outlook on world conditions.

We have heard of the Four Freedoms. Jefferson was the apostle of three of them. Leader of the long struggle for freedom of religion and freedom of speech, he receives and needs the renewed plaudits of our day. Leader of the nation in a time of constant threat to our liberties and our very independence from across the seas he and his people could recognize with every passing day what freedom from fear would have meant to the new Republic. ^A And joined to the fear of threats from without was the other fear of the threat from within -- ~~the~~ ^{for} surviving in the minds of many was the danger of

continued to

aristocracy and monarchy which ~~remained~~ Jefferson's presidency from the earlier days of the Revolution and the formation of the Government.

Jefferson would not have felt the full import of the fourth freedom -- freedom from want, for a multitude of reasons. In a very ^{by} earthly sense, there was little want in Jefferson's day. People did not want in the sense that they were starving. They lived in a wide land. The population was sparse; the fields were wide. Poverty there was and much of it but most people were poor in the sense of worldly goods, and high phrases like the standard of living and social service and security for the old had never been dreamed of. Life was a local life; of transportation there was none; of slums there were few. In our great cities eight ^{thous} blocks would take you to open fields; and industry and factories were confined to the homes and small shops.

It is essential that we judge Thomas Jefferson by the application of his philosophy to the circumstances of his lifetime. All that we can guess is that in such applying he fought his fight throughout his life for those deeper values which apply throughout all time. *an* Leader in education, leader in the arts, leader in inventions to make the toil of mankind more easy, leader in planning for the future, leader especially in the firm conviction that in the long run the choice of a majority

of rich and poor, educated and uneducated, plebians and patricians
is more safe and more permanent than ^a ~~the~~ choice limited to wealth,
and higher education and to aristocrats -- Thomas Jefferson, by
public acclaim, and the American people made possible the integrity
and the continuance of the Republic.

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SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
DEDICATION OF THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL
APRIL 13, 1943

135
174
162
98

569
= 5 minutes

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Yet, there are reasons for gratitude that this occasion falls within our time; for our generation of Americans can understand much in Jefferson's life which intervening generations could not see as well as we.

He faced the fact that men who will not fight for liberty can lose it. We, too, have faced that fact.

He lived in a world in which freedom of conscience and freedom of mind were battles ^{of ill} to be fought ^{through} not ^{already} principles accepted of all men. We, too, have lived in such a world.

He loved peace and loved liberty -- yet on more than one occasion ^{he} was forced to choose between them.

We, too, have been compelled to make that choice.

Generations which ^{stood} ~~understand~~ each other across the distances of history are the generations united by a common experience and a common cause. Jefferson, across one hundred and fifty years of time, is closer by much to living men than many of our leaders of the years between. His cause was a cause to which we also are committed, not by our words alone but by our sacrifice.

For faith and ideals imply renunciations. Spiritual advancement throughout all our history has called for temporal sacrifices.

The Declaration of Independence and the very purposes of the Revolution itself, while seeking freedoms, called for the abandonment of privileges.

Jefferson was no dreamer -- for half a century he led his State and his Nation in fact and in deed. I like to think that this was so because he thought in terms of the morrow as well as the day -- ^{and} ~~that~~ this was why he was ^{haunted or} ~~fear~~ed by those who thought in terms of the day ~~and~~ the yesterday.

162

We judge him by the application of his philosophy to the circumstances of his lifetime. ^{But in} ~~By~~ such applying we come to understand that his life was given for those deeper values which ^{persist} ~~apply~~ throughout all time.

Leader in the philosophy of government, in education, in the ~~applied~~ arts, in efforts to lighten the toil of mankind -- ^{exponent of} ~~visionary~~ plannings for the future, he led the steps of America into the path of the ^{permanent} ~~the~~ integrity of the Republic.

Thomas Jefferson believed, as we believe, in ~~Man~~. He believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own government, and that no king, no tyrant, no dictator can govern for them as wisely as they can govern for themselves.

He believed, as we believe, in certain inalienable rights. He, as we, saw those principles and freedoms challenged. He fought for them, as we fight for them.

He proved that the seeming eclipse of liberty ~~can~~ ^{can well} become the dawn of more liberty. ~~For~~ ^{those who}

fight the tyranny of our own time will come to learn the old lesson. Among all the peoples of the earth, the cruelties and oppressions of its would-be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. ^{This} ~~That~~ lesson, so bitterly learned, will never be forgotten while this generation lives.

The words which we have chosen for this Memorial speak Jefferson's noblest and most urgent meaning; and we are proud indeed to understand and share it;

"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man".

OFFICE OF
THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS

Harry:

*Is speech for
12/22/94*

This is about
900 or 1000 words.
As the Boss reads
it should run
to 70 maybe 80
minutes.

I hope it's right.
I can be reached
through your W. H.
mitchell. I'll
keep them informed
when it's done.

Harry's #160

file
8-3-43

Speech Material

P.P.F.
1820

A. MacL.

Suggested Draft of an Address at the
Dedication of the Jefferson Memorial

XH-1525

4/13/43

We have met at this place today to pay a debt long
overdue.

Five generations of Americans have honored the memory
of Thomas Jefferson, but not until this two hundredth anniversary
of his birth has it been possible for the American nation, as a
nation, to give its gratitude a fitting form: - to raise here,
in the Capitol of this Republic which owes his memory so much, a
monument worthy of his greatness and our obligation.

It is unfortunate, of course, that so many years have
passed without this national and formal recognition of our debt.
And yet there are, I think, reasons for gratitude that this

occasion falls within our time. Our generation of Americans can understand much in Jefferson's life which intervening generations could not have understood as well as we.

We know what it must have meant to Thomas Jefferson to face the fact that men who will not fight for liberty can lose it. We too have faced that fact.

We know what it must have meant to him to live in a world in which freedom of conscience and freedom of mind were battles to be fought, not principles all men accepted. We too have lived in such a world.

We know what it must have meant to love peace and to love liberty and to be forced to choose between them. We too have been compelled to make that choice.

We understand, therefore, as intervening generations

could hardly have understood, how much, in truth, this country owes to Thomas Jefferson. We know what battles he fought and against what enemies and with what courage. We know why he chose from among the many honors of his life three things to be remembered on his tomb at Monticello: that he was the Author of the Declaration of American Independence; that he was the Author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom; that he was the Father of the University of Virginia. To us also, liberty of mind and liberty of conscience and liberty of action have come, in these last few years, to stand again before all other things.

The generations which understand each other across the distances of history are the generations united by a common experience and a common cause. Jefferson, across a hundred and fifty years of time, is closer by much to living men than most

Americans of the years between. His cause was a cause to which we also are committed, not by our words alone, but by our lives; and his definition of that common cause was a definition which speaks to us as it spoke to his contemporaries.

He believed, as we believe, in Man. He believed, as we believe, that men are capable of their own government, and that no king, no tyrant, no dictator, can govern for them as wisely as they can govern for themselves. He believed, as we believe, that there are certain unalienable rights without which men are not truly men, but something less than men. He believed, as we believe, that those who make war upon these rights make war upon mankind: that those who challenge our liberties, those who attack the freedom of our minds and consciences, are enemies we must fight and overcome. He lived, as we live, in a world in which

there were such enemies. He fought them as we fight them.

There are some who say of Jefferson's struggle for liberty and ours, that Jefferson's was affirmative while ours is negative; that Jefferson fought to establish liberty throughout the world, whereas we fight only to defend so much of liberty as has already been established; that Jefferson lived at the dawn, and we at the evening, of the day of liberty.

To say this is to forget what Jefferson himself would never have forgotten: that the struggle to establish the worth and dignity and freedom of mankind is an ancient struggle with a history of many changes - a history much longer than the history of any age or nation. It is a history of which the principal characteristic from the earliest times was this: that the seeming eclipse of liberty is always the dawn of liberty. It is always when reaction strikes most violently at freedom that the generative

power of freedom is most fiercely renewed. It is always when men have feared most hopelessly to lose their liberties that they see what liberty is worth and can become.

The men who fought the petty tyranny of George the Third were not content merely to end that tyranny. They went on to raise upon its ruins the first great democratic nation the world had ever seen. While the war of the American Revolution was still in progress, Jefferson drafted for the people of Virginia the democratic laws which put the principles of the Revolution into practice and realized in fact a free man's world.

Those who fight the tyranny of our own time will reach the same conclusions. In every country of the earth the cruelties and the oppression of ^{its} ~~their~~ would-be masters have taught this generation what its liberties can mean. That lesson, so bitterly

learned, will never be forgotten while this generation lives.

Had this memorial been erected at another time, other words of Jefferson's might well have been selected for its principal inscription. The words which we have chosen for this stone speak Jefferson's noblest and most urgent meaning to our time - a meaning we are proud indeed to understand and share:

"I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man".

Audrey Turner

Speech material which
the Pres. used on Jeff/Thom.