

April 15, 1943

[Warm Springs Foundation]

FDR Speech File

EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS
OF THE
P R E S I D E N T
AT
WARM SPRINGS FOUNDATION
APRIL 15, 1941

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I don't have to tell the Warm Springs family how very happy I am to be back with us again. I have really stolen these few moments -- just twenty-four hours. I am not here. You may read about it in another week. In other words, I am perpetrating what the newspapers call a "scoop" for your benefit -- seven or eight days ahead of time.

I am awfully happy in the knowledge, in the White House, that all goes well in Warm Springs. I haven't got much time, as you may realize; and I was thinking today, as we motored from Fort Benning, that the last time I was here was on the thirtieth of November, 1941. At that time, because of certain things that happened in Washington and Tokyo, I had failed to arrive on Thanksgiving Day. I came a week later, and we had a family party in this room.

The next morning, one of those psychological things happened -- what you and I would call a hunch. I telephoned to Washington to the Secretary of State, and I said to him, "You know, I am worried. I don't know why I am worried, but I am too far away from Washington."

And he said, "I know just how you feel, because I am worried too. There has been no news in the past twenty-four hours to cause additional worry, but I am just worried and I

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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.

wish you were here in Washington."

And so the next day I left here and went back. And when I got him on the phone, I said, "You know, I think we are all rather silly, but I had a feeling that something is hanging over our heads."

And just one week later came the unwarranted surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

Well, things have gone a lot better since then. And one thing I think we can make a pretty good guess about, and that is that here at Warm Springs we are going to have, in the days to come, a great many more men in uniform. After all, infantile paralysis is not a respecter of age; and in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, including the WAAGs, WAVES and the other girls, we are going to have, out of more than seven million Americans, a good many cases of infantile paralysis, even if we don't have any great epidemic in this country.

And Warm Springs is preparing to do all it can to undertake to care for our boys in uniform, and our girls in uniform, even if we have to take -- what? -- half a hundred more patients than we think we have room for. And in doing that, we must always remember that we still have a duty to the civilian population of the country; because after all, the work we are taking part in -- doctors, patients, physiotherapists, management, and everything else -- is creating a very profound effect, not just here but all over the United States.

We are doing pioneering work, and other people

that haven't got the same advantages we have here are in large measure copying what we are doing in all the different localities, in counties and states all through the country. That means a very definite effect on the health and wellbeing of all the people throughout the nation -- grown-ups, boys and girls. And that is why I said in the White House I am very happy to know this constructive work is keeping on going at Warm Springs. I don't need to tell you that it makes my heart glad.

I can be here only for dinner. I have to leave for other parts -- training stations, camps, and everything else, just to keep in touch with the great war effort that this whole nation is engaged in.

I hope I can come back in the autumn, but that is no promise. I am not the master of my own calendar. So, I do hope to see you this autumn, and it doesn't make much difference whether it is Thanksgiving Day or not, as I find I can come here in April and still have turkey and cranberry sauce.

So I do hope to see you all very soon. And may I suggest we carry out the old tradition. I am going over by the door and stand, and meet all of you boys and girls who have come here since I was here last, and all of you other boys and girls, and Dr. Ed Irwin, Mr. Fred Botts, Cornelia Dewey and all the gang -- and that will do my heart good, too.