
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. 1471

1943 June 10

Remarks on Transfer of a Patrol Vessel to Greece

Remarks of the President in connection with the transfer to the Government of Greece of a ship under the Lend-Lease Act at the Washington Navy Yard at 5:00 P.M. on June 10, 1943

Mr. Ambassador

To most of us gathered here on this occasion, the year 1940 seems a long time ago. Yet in that year occurred an event which shall herald for all time the fact that mere force is not enough to banish man's desire and man's determination for freedom, nor man's willingness to sacrifice life itself that freedom may live.

History will proclaim the date of that event as October 28th 1940. ~~For once~~ *How do we know it* will show you the location ~~as~~ the southern peninsula of the Balkans--an area about the size of New York State. ~~At that time~~ *They have* for ~~for~~ more than two thousand years, poets ~~again will~~ *have sung* of this ~~Belgian~~ *land* Peninsula as the Kingdom of Hellas--~~the country that is~~ known to us as Greece.

Although we had begun to prepare for the evil fates which were ~~to befall us~~ *the world in 1939 and* in 1940, the United States was for the most part an apprehensive onlooker at the terrible pageant of history. ~~In May of that year~~ *April 1940* we saw ~~the~~ *treachery against Norway, the* unprovoked murder of Rotterdam, the fall of the Netherlands and the capitulation of Belgium. In June of that year, Axis hordes marched into Paris as the banner of liberty hung at half-staff throughout the world. On September 27th of that year, Germany, Italy and Japan signed the pact under which they were to force the blessings of the New Order on a neatly parceled-out globe.

28th And then came October 28th, nineteen hundred and forty.

~~In the United States on that day, we had a rather quiet observance of Navy Day.~~ In Athens, ~~Greece~~, the people and the government

were given three hours in which to decide whether to accept Axis slavery or to resist an Axis onslaught from the skies. I repeat--the people and the Government of Greece were given three hours, not three days, or three weeks. If they had been given three years, their choice would have been the same.

Today, Greece is a land of desolation, stripped bare of all the essentials of living. Thousands have died of hunger. Thousands are dying. Today, Greece is a gaunt and haggard sample of what the Axis is so eager and willing to ~~bestow upon~~ ^{hand to} all the world.

But Within their own land, and upon other shores, the Greeks are fighting on. They will never be defeated. And the day will come when liberated Greeks will again ~~hold court~~ ^{maintain their own government with} in the shadow of the Acropolis and the Parthenon.

As an expression of our hopes and our prayers that this day may be hastened, the Government and the people of the United States offer a token of our warm friendship for the Government and the people of Greece. This ship of war, built by American hands in an American yard, is delivered under the terms of Lend-Lease to fighting Greeks wherever they may be. As a part of the Royal Hellenic Navy--and christened King George Second--may she add even more luster to the glory that is Greece.

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History will proclaim the date of that event as October 27th, 1940.)

Your atlas will show you the location as the southern peninsula of the Balkans--an area about the size of New York State.)

As they have for more than two thousand years, poets again will sing of this Balkan Peninsula as the Kingdom of Hellas--the country that is known to us as Greece.

Although we had begun to prepare for the evil fates which were to befall us, in 1940, the United States was for the most part a ^{unfettered} fascinated onlooker at the terrible pageant of history.)

In May of that year we saw the unprovoked murder of Rotterdam, the fall of the Netherlands and the capitulation of Belgium.)

In June of that year, Axis hordes marched into Paris as the banner of liberty hung at half-staff throughout the world.)

On September 27th of that year, Germany, Italy and Japan

SECRET

signed the pact under which they were to force the blessings of the New Order on a neatly parceled-out globe.

¶ And then came October 27th, nineteen hundred and forty.

¶ In the United States on that day, we had a rather quiet observance of Navy Day. In Athens, Greece, the people and the government were given three hours in which to decide whether to accept Axis slavery or to resist an Axis onslaught from the skies. I repeat--the people and the Government of Greece were given three hours, not three days, or three weeks.

If they had been given three years, their choice would have been the same. ¶ For, in less than three minutes, the people and the Government of Greece revised Edgar Allan Poe's deathless line so that it now reads--

"The glory that is Greece.")

In the weeks and months which immediately followed, a gallant Greece taught the free world two very important lessons.

mit
The first was the lesson in which the world saw the legend of Axis invincibility as a gilded image built on a plaster base. Outnumbered, with little equipment, and sometimes fighting with pitchforks or their bare hands, the Greeks struck back with a fury which threatened to drive Italy's vaunted legions headlong into the sea.

And the Greeks have not yet been conquered. Only when an

SECRET

overwhelming Italian force was augmented by an overwhelming German force were the Greeks defeated--and that defeat is still listed as of a temporary nature.

omit
The second lesson exhibited for all the world to see concerns the hypocrisy, the deceit and the brutality which are basic in the Axis' "New Order".

III *H* Today, Greece is a land of desolation, stripped bare of all the essentials of living. Thousands have died of hunger. Thousands are dying.

Today, Greece is a gaunt and haggard sample of what the Axis is so eager and willing to bestow upon all the world.

H Within their own land, and upon other shores, the Greeks are fighting on. They will never be defeated. And the day will come when liberated Greeks will again hold court in the shadow of the Acropolis and the Parthenon.

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SECRET

**THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON**

June 4, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR

S.T.E.

Will you go over this? I
want to take it up on Monday.

F.D.R..

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
ON THE TRANSFER OF A SHIP TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF GREECE
JUNE 10, 1943
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD

Mr. Ambassador:

To most of us gathered here on this occasion, the year 1940 seems a long time ago. Yet in that year occurred an event which shall herald for all time the fact that mere force is not enough to banish man's desire and man's determination for freedom, nor man's willingness to sacrifice life itself that freedom may live.

History will proclaim the date of that event as October 28, 1940. We know the location of the southern peninsula of the Balkans, an area about the size of New York State. For far more than two thousand years, poets have sung of this land as the Kingdom of Hellas -- known to us as Greece.

Although we had begun to prepare for the evil fates which were to befall the world in 1940, the United States was for the most part an apprehensive onlooker at the terrible pageant of history. In April of that year we saw the treachery against Norway, the unprovoked murder of Rotterdam, ^{in May} the fall of the Netherlands and the capitulation of Belgium. In June of that year, Axis hordes marched into Paris as the banner of liberty hung at half-staff throughout the world. On September 27th of that year, Germany, Italy and Japan signed the pact under which they were to force the blessings of the New Order on a neatly parceled-out globe.

And then came October 28th, nineteen hundred and forty.

In Athens, the people and the government were given three hours in which to decide whether to accept Axis slavery or to resist an Axis onslaught from the skies. I repeat -- the people and the Government of Greece were given three hours, not three days, or three weeks. If they had been given three years, their choice would have been the same.

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But within their own land, and upon other shores, the Greeks are fighting on. They will never be defeated. And the day will come when liberated Greeks will again maintain their own government within the shadow of the Acropolis and the Parthenon.

As an expression of our hopes and our prayers that this day may be hastened, the Government and the people of the United States offer a token of our warm friendship for the Government and the people of Greece. This ship of war, built by American hands in an American yard, is delivered under the terms of Lend-Lease to fighting Greeks wherever they may be. As a part of the Royal Hellenic Navy -- and christened KING GEORGE SECOND -- may she add even more luster to the glory that is Greece.

Wing. reading copy-----Franklin D. Roosevelt

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
IN CONNECTION WITH THE TRANSFER TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF GREECE
OF A PATROL VESSEL UNDER THE LEND-LEASE ACT
AT THE
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD
JUNE 10, 1943, AT 5.10 P.M., E.W.T.
RADIO BROADCAST

Mr. Ambassador:

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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.

New Order on a neatly parceled-out globe.

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(applause)

COPY

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STATEMENTS FILE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

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JUNE 10, 1943

The following address of the President in connection with the transfer to the Government of Greece of a patrol vessel under the Lend-Lease Act at the Washington Navy Yard is for release in all newspapers appearing on the streets not earlier than 5:10 P.M., E.W.T., Thursday, June 10, 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

MR. AMBASSADOR:

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