December 16, 1943 [Leaving the U.S.S. Iowa] 1495

FDR Speech File

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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.

got to eliminate from the human race nations like Germany and Japan, eliminate them from the possibility of ruining the lives of a whole lot of other nations. And in these talks in North Africa, Egypt, and Persia, with the Chinese, the Russians, Turks and others, we made real progress.

Obviously, it will be necessary, when we win the war, to make the possibility of a future upsetting of our civilization an impossible thing. I don't say forever. None of us can look that far ahead. But I do say as long as any Americans and others who are alive today are still alive. That objective is worth fighting for. It is a part of democracy which exists in most of the world.

In upper Teheran, where the Prime Minister, Marshal Stalin and I met, in one sense it followed that as heads of governments we were representing between two-thirds and three-quarters of the entire population of the world. We all had the same fundamental aims: stopping what has been going on in these past four years. And that is why I believe from the viewpoint of people -- just plain people -- this trip has been worth while.

We are all engaged in a common struggle. We are making real progress. Take what has happened in the past two years. From Pearl Harbor, from being on the defensive -- very definitely so -- two years ago, from being in the process of building things up to a greater strength a year ago, to where we are today, when we have the initiative in every part of the world. The other fellows may not be on the run backwards

-- yet. That will be the next stage, and then all of us in the service of the country will have a better chance to go home, even if we have to come home to very cold weather like this. I think after what you have seen of Bahia and Freetown and Dakar, that you will agree with me that in the long run, year in and year out, this American climate is better than any other.

And now I have to leave you for the U.S.S. POTOMAC. When I came out on deck quite a while ago, and saw her about a half-mile away, I looked and decided how she had shrunk since I had been on the IOWA.

And so goodbye for a while. I hope that I will have another cruise on this ship. Meanwhile, good luck, and remember that I am with you in spirit, each and every one of you.

STATEMENTS FILE

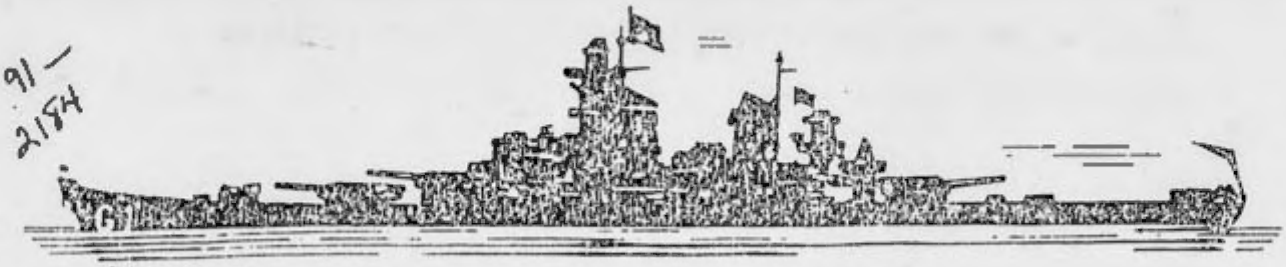
THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON LEAVING THE U.S.S. IOWA,
16 DECEMBER, 1943.

Captain McCrea, officers and men of the IOWA: I had wanted to say a few words to you on the trip east, but I couldn't do it properly because so many of you were mere, miserable pollywogs. Now, I understand that I can talk to you as the Chief Shellback of them all. I have had a wonderful cruise on the IOWA--one I shall never forget. I think that all my staff have behaved themselves pretty well, with one or two lapses. When we came on board from that little French destroyer, I was horrified to note that Major General Watson and Mr. Hopkins came over the rail on all-fours. However, landlubbers like that do have lapses. Outside of that, all the Army and Navy and civilians have been wonderfully taken care of, and I am impressed with two facts--the first is that you had a happy lot of visitors, fellow shipmates. Secondly, from all I have seen and all I have heard, the IOWA is a "happy ship," and, having served with the Navy for many years, I know--and you know-- what that means. It is a part and parcel of what we are trying to do, to make every ship happy and efficient.

One of the reasons I went abroad, as you know, was to try by conversations with other nations, to see that this war that we are all engaged in shall not happen again. We have an idea--all of us, I think--that hereafter we have got to eliminate from the human race nations like Germany and Japan--eliminate them from the possibility of ruining the lives of a whole lot of other nations. And in these talks in North Africa, Egypt, and Persia, with the Chinese, the Russians, Turks, and others, we made real progress. Obviously, it will be necessary, when we win the war, to make the possibility of a future upsetting of our civilization an impossible thing. I don't say forever. None of us can look that far ahead. But I do say as long as any Americans and others who are alive today are still alive. That objective is worth fighting for. It is a part of democracy which exists in most of the world. In upper Teheran, where the Prime Minister, Marshal Stalin and I met, in one sense it followed that as heads of governments we were representing between two-thirds and three-quarters of the entire population of the world. We all had the same fundamental aims--stopping what has been going on in these past four years. And that is why I believe from the viewpoint of people--just plain people--this trip has been worthwhile.

We are all engaged in a common struggle. We are making real progress. Take what has happened in the past two years. From Pearl Harbor, from being on the defensive--very definitely so-- two years

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USS IOWA BB61

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Inclosed is a copy of the talk President Roosevelt gave to the crew of the U.S.S. Iowa BB61 during World war two. I send this to you for your information.

Vincent D. Angilletta
949 Welsh Road
Maple Glen, Pa. 19002

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT ON LEAVING THE IOWA

Introduction by Captain McCrea. Officers and men of the ship's company, IOWA has been singularly honored in being selected for the task just ended. We are further honored this afternoon in that our Commander in Chief has consented to make a few remarks to the ship's company. It is a very high honor and privilege for me to present to you our Commander in Chief, the President.

The President. Captain McCrea, officers and men of the IOWA. I had wanted to say a few words to you on the trip east, but I couldn't do it properly because so many of you were mere, miserable pollywogs. Now I understand that I can talk to you as the Chief Shellback of them all. I have had a wonderful cruise on the IOWA, one I shall never forget. I think that all my staff have behaved themselves pretty well, with one or two lapses. When we came on board from that little French destroyer, I was horrified to note that Major General Watson and Mr. Hopkins came over the rail on all-fours. However, landlubbers like that do have lapses. Outside of that, all the Army and Navy and civilians have been wonderfully taken care of, and I am impressed with two facts - the first is that you had a happy lot of visitors, fellow shipmates. Secondly, from all I have seen and all I have heard, the IOWA is a happy ship, and, having served with the Navy for many years, I know, and you know, what that means. It is a part and parcel of what we are trying to do, to make every ship happy and efficient.

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