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[Draft: Speech on Dependent Territories]

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One-half of the people of the world live in dependent territories. They, like the rest of us who have labored and shed blood in the common cause, are entitled to the essentials of the good life--bread, health, housing, a decent wage, civilized working conditions and above all that feeling of self-respect known only to free men. We cannot have a free world until the high principles of the Atlantic Charter become real in their lives.

The old idea that it is beneficial to maintain cheap labor and a degraded humanity in the territories from which the world gets its raw materials must be abandoned. It is an essential for world prosperity to improve living standards in colonial areas for experience has shown that a nation's best customer is a prosperous neighbor. To attain these higher standards peoples now dependent must have freedom. They must be given the opportunities that will enable them to govern themselves. Indeed the myth of a master-race, which our Allied Armies are now smashing, must be destroyed in every part of the world.

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In accordance with the traditional interest of the United States in the progress and welfare of dependent peoples our own country is taking some of the necessary steps to accomplish these high purposes. The Congress has enacted legislation advancing the date for the independence of the Philippines. Legislation now pending, which has already been approved by the Senate, will give to the people of Puerto Rico the right to elect their own Governor.

In 1936, we enacted a law which gave to all adults, both men and women, in the Virgin Islands of the United States the right to vote. As a free people and through their own political institutions, they have already brought to their community such benefits as minimum wages, workmen's compensation and the orderly regulation of public utilities.

The international community has an obligation and legitimate interest in the welfare of dependent territories. In some form, this principle of accountability will be incorporated in the plans of the United Nations for the post-war world. As a step in this direction the Governments of the United States and Great Britain created in 1942 the

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Anglo-American Caribbean Commission. This is a regional agency set up for the purpose of promoting, through international cooperation, the economic and social welfare of the peoples of this region. One of its objectives is to provide an official instrument through which the people in dependencies--black and white--can directly make their voice heard. I hope that other countries and territories of the Caribbean area will become partners in this enterprise. Last March, under the auspices of the Commission, there was held in Barbados in the British West Indies the first official international conference of dependent territories. Eight British Colonies and two American territories participated. The results of the conference demonstrated that peoples of dependent territories, through their own representatives, can plan wisely and effectively for their own advancement. I have confidence in the inherent capacity of colonial peoples to become responsible and dignified members of world society, administering their own affairs and at the same time contributing to world security and prosperity.