
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 3: “The Four Freedoms” and FDR in World War II

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1944 November 8

Election Eve Address to the Nation

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HYDE PARK

NOVEMBER 6, 1944

As we sit quietly this evening in our home at Hyde Park, our thoughts, like those of millions of other Americans, are most deeply concerned with the well-being of all our American fighting men. We are thinking of our own sons -- all of them far away from home -- and of our neighbors' sons and the sons of our friends.

That concern rises above all others in this critical period of our national life.

In great contrast to the quiet which is ours here in America in our own secure homes is the knowledge that most of those fighting men of ours have no quiet times, and little leisure at this hour to reflect on the significance of our American Election Day, tomorrow.

Some are standing at battle stations on shipboard, tense in the excitement of action; some lie in wet foxholes, or trudge doggedly through the sticky mud, firing as they go. Still others are high above the earth, fighting Messerschmidts or Zeros.

All of them are giving everything they have got to defeat our enemies, and uppermost in all their minds is the one thought: to win the war as soon as possible, so that they may return to the quiet and peace of their homes.

But -- in the midst of fighting -- in the presence of our brutal enemies -- our soldiers and sailors and airmen will not forget Election Day back home.

Millions of these men have already cast their own ballots, and they will be wondering about the outcome of the election, and what it will mean to them in their future lives. And sooner or later all of them will be asking questions as to whether the folks back home looked after their interests, their liberties, their government, their country -- while they themselves were off at war.

Our boys are counting on us to show the rest of the world that our kind of government is the best in the world -- and the kind we propose to keep! And so, when our people turn out at the polls tomorrow -- and I sincerely hope that it will be fifty million strong -- the world will respect our democracy, and the grand old Stars and Stripes will wave more proudly than ever before.

These brave fighters of ours have taken on enemies on both sides of our world, enemies who were nurtured since childhood in militarism. These boys of ours, wisely led, and using the matchless weapons which you here at home have sent to them, have outfought those ruthless enemies, outfought them on the land, outfought them on the sea, outfought them in the skies. They are winning the victory for all of us. Many are giving life itself.

And it is for us to make certain that we win for them --
the living and the dead-- a lasting peace.

There is nothing adequate which any one in any
place can say to those who are entitled to display the
gold star in their windows. But each night as the people
of the United States rest in their homes which have been
safe from violence during all these years of the most
violent war in all history -- I am sure that all of them
silently give thought to their feelings of deep gratitude
to the brave departed and to their families for the
immeasurable sacrifice that they have made for the cause
of decency and freedom and civilization.

I do not want to talk to you tonight of partisan
politics. The political battle is finished. Our task
now is to face the future as a militant and a united
people -- united here at home as well as on the battlefronts.

Twice in twenty-five years our people have had to put on a brave, smiling front as they have suffered the anxiety and the agony of war.

No one wants to endure that suffering again.

When we think of the speed and long distance possibilities of air travel to the remotest corners of the earth, we must consider the devastation wrought on the people of England by the new long-range bombs. Another war would be bound to bring even more devilish and powerful instruments of destruction to wipe out civilian populations. No coastal defences, however strong, could prevent these silent missiles of death, fired perhaps from planes or ships at sea, from crashing deep within the United States.

This time, THIS time, we must be certain that the peace-loving nations of the world band together in determination to outlaw and prevent war.

Tomorrow, you the people of the United States, again vote as free men and women, with full freedom of choice -- with no secret police watching over your shoulders. And for generations to come Americans will continue to prove their faith in free elections.

But when the ballots are cast, your responsibilities do not cease. The public servants you elect cannot fulfill their trust unless you, the people, watch and advise them, raise your voices in protest when you believe your public servants to be wrong, back them up when you believe them to be right.

But not for one single moment can you now or later forget the all important goals for which we are aiming -- to win the war and unite our fighting men with their families at the earliest moment, to see that all have honorable jobs; and to create a world peace organization which will prevent this disaster from ever coming upon us again.

To achieve these goals we need strength and wisdom which is greater than is bequeathed to mere mortals. We need Divine help and guidance. We people of America have ever had a deep well of religious strength, far back to the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.

And so, on this thoughtful eve, I believe that you will find it fitting that I read a prayer sent to me not long ago:

"Almighty God, of Whose righteous will all things are and were created, Thou hast gathered our people out of many lands and races into a great nation.

We commend to Thy overruling providence the men and women of our forces by sea, by land and in the air; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hands both them and the cause they serve.

Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And grant that, whether by life or by death, they may win for the whole world the fruits of their sacrifice and a just peace.

Guide, we beseech Thee, the nations of the world, into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the reward of righteousness.

Make the whole people of this land equal to our high trust, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness.

Enable us to guard for the least among us the freedom we covet for ourselves; make us ill content with the inequalities of opportunity which still prevail among us. Preserve our union against all the divisions of race and class which threaten it.

"And now may the blessing of God Almighty rest upon this whole land; may He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, charity to unite us, now and forever more.

Amen".

*orig. in the copy
from the V. L. records*

1224
words

FIRST DRAFT

~~As ~~the~~ ~~President~~ ~~and~~ I~~ ^{we} sit quietly this evening

in our home at Hyde Park, our thoughts, like those of millions of other Americans, are most deeply concerned with the well-being of all our American fighting men, ~~who are now~~

~~far away from home.~~ *we are thinking of our own sons - all of them far away from home, and of our neighbors and the sons of our friends.*

That concern rises above all others in this critical period of our national life.

In great contrast to the quiet which is ours here in America in our own secure homes is the knowledge that most of those fighting men of ours have no quiet times, and little leisure at this hour to reflect on the significance of our American Election Day, tomorrow.

Some are standing at battle stations on shipboard, tense in the excitement of ~~vigilant~~ action; some lie in wet foxholes, or trudge doggedly through the sticky mud, firing as they go. Still others are high above the earth, fighting ~~off the~~ Messerschmidts or ~~the~~ Zeros, — ~~watching for the targets on which to unload their bombs.~~

All of them are giving everything they have got to defeat our enemies, and uppermost in all their minds is the one thought: to win the war as soon as possible, so

~~11/9/44~~ ~~with~~ ~~insert~~ ~~without~~

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7/11/44

that they may return to their ^{and peace of their} quiet homes, ~~in a land of peace~~
~~and plenty.~~

But -- in the midst of fighting -- in the presence of
our brutal enemies -- our soldiers and sailors and airmen ~~have~~ ^{would not}
~~forget~~ ~~not forgotten that this is~~ Election Day back home.

~~Election Day is one of the essential American things~~
~~for which they fight.~~

They picture the familiar scenes in their home towns --
their families and their friends and all the home folks going
to the polling places to cast ballots with freedom from
fear.

Millions of ^{these} ~~our fighting~~ men have already cast their
own ballots, and they will be wondering about the outcome of
the election, and what it will mean to them in their future
lives. And sooner or later all of them will be asking questions
as to whether the folks back home looked after their interests,
their liberties, their government, their country -- while they
themselves were off at war.

Our boys ~~have~~ been counting on us here at home to keep
them supplied with the best weapons and ammunition, with food
and clothing, and the best possible medical care. We have not

~~failed them in this. They are also~~ *our boys are* counting on us to show the rest of the world that our kind of government is the best in the world -- and the kind we propose to keep! And so, when *-- and I sincerely hope that it will be* our people turn out at the polls tomorrow *^* fifty million strong, the world will respect our democracy, and the grand old Stars and Stripes will wave more proudly than ever before.

These brave fighters of ours have taken on enemies on both sides of our world, enemies who were nurtured since childhood in militarism. These boys of ours, wisely led, and using the matchless weapons which you here at home have sent to them, have outfought those ruthless enemies, outfought them on the land, outfought them on the sea, outfought them in the skies. They are winning the victory for all of us. Many are giving life itself. And it is for us to make certain that we win for them -- the living and the dead -- a lasting peace.

There is nothing adequate which any one in any place can say to those who are entitled to display the gold star in their windows. But each night as the people of the United States rest in their homes which have been safe from violence during all these years of the most violent war in all history -- ~~and each day, as our people go to their jobs or their fields or their offices in their tasks of pushing this war to victory,~~

I am sure that all of them silently give thought to their feelings of ^{deep} gratitude ~~and deep devotion~~ to the brave departed and to their families for the immeasurable sacrifice that they have made for the cause of decency and freedom and civilization.

I do not want to talk to you tonight of partisan politics. The political battle is finished. Our task now is to face the future as a militant and a united people -- united here at home as well as on the battlefronts.

Twice in twenty-five years our people have had to put on a brave, smiling front as they have suffered the anxiety and the agony of war.

No one wants to endure that suffering again.

~~Maximalist defense, the strong possibility of~~

~~silence and silence and silence~~

THIS ^{caps}

This time, ~~this~~ time, we must be certain that the peace-loving nations of the world band together in determination to outlaw and prevent war.

No individual, or small group of individuals, can control this great country of ours, unless the people themselves repudiate the traditional principles of freedom which are the backbone of our Republic.

Insert A

When we think of the speed and long distance possibilities of air travel to the remotest corners of the earth, we must consider the devastation wrought on the people of England by the ^{1500 long range} ~~new~~ bombs. ~~This is no new~~ ~~French invention of this war.~~ Another war could be bound to bring even more devilish and powerful instruments of destruction to wipe out civilian populations. No coastal defenses, however strong, could prevent these silent missiles of death, fired perhaps from ^{planes} ships at sea, from crashing ^{down} within the ~~doors~~ ~~of our own~~ United States.

~~I have no fear of any such eventuality, because for one hundred and fifty-five years we have proved our faith in the US rat box.~~ Tomorrow, you the people of the United States, again ~~will prove that faith~~, proudly voting ^C as free men and women, with full freedom of choice -- with no secret police watching over your shoulders. And for generations to come Americans will continue to prove ~~that~~ ^{their} faith ^{in free elections}.

But when the ballots are cast, your responsibilities do not cease. ~~You will have elected men and women according to the sacred law of this land.~~ But ~~these~~ ^{the} public servants ^{you elect} cannot fulfill their trust unless you, the people, watch and advise them, raise your voices in protest when you believe your public servants to be wrong, back them up when you believe them to be right.

^{B.T} ~~Not~~ not for one single moment can you now or later forget the all important goals for which we are aiming -- to win the war and unite our fighting men with their families at the earliest moment, to see that all have honorable jobs; and to create a world peace organization which will prevent this disaster from ever coming upon us again.)

To achieve these goals we need strength and wisdom which is greater than is bequeathed to mere mortals. We need

Divine help and guidance. We people of America have ever had a deep well of religious strength, ^{far}~~many~~ back to the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.

~~We are a people full of hope, and full of faith, a faith and hope which spring from and are sustained by our belief in Almighty God.~~

~~The peace of the world now and in the days to come can be achieved only by an abiding and universal faith in Him.~~

And so, on this thoughtful eve, I believe that you will find it fitting that I read a prayer sent to me not long ago:

"Almighty God, of Whose righteous will all things are and were created, Thou hast gathered our people out of many lands and races into a great nation.

~~Thou hast planted us in a goodly land and laid upon us a great trust.~~

We commend to Thy overruling providence the men and women of our forces by sea, by land and in the air; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hands both them and the cause they serve.

Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And grant that, whether by life

or by death, they may win for the whole world the fruits of their sacrifice and a just peace.

Guide, we beseech Thee, the nations of the world, into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the reward of righteousness.

Make the whole people of this land equal to our high trust, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness.

Enable us to guard for the least among us the freedom we covet for ourselves; make us ill content with the inequalities of opportunity which still prevail among us. Preserve our union against all the divisions of race and class which threaten it. (Hold us in obedience to Thy holy will, and may our deepest trust be in Thee, the Lord of nations and King of kings.

"And now may the blessing of God Almighty rest upon this whole land; may He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, ~~and~~ charity to unite us, now and forever more. Amen."

ADDRESS Of The President
From Hyde Park, New York
Broadcast Nationally
November 6, 1944
Around 10.45 p.m., a.w.t.

Ladies and gentlemen:

As we sit quietly this evening in our home at Hyde Park, our thoughts, like those of millions of other Americans, are most deeply concerned with the well-being of all our American fighting men. We are thinking of our own sons -- all of them far away from home -- and of our neighbors' sons and the sons of our friends.

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In great contrast to the quiet which is ours here in America, in our own secure homes, is the knowledge that most of those fighting men of ours have no quiet times, and little leisure at this hour to reflect on the significance of our American Election Day, tomorrow.

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All of them are giving everything they have got to defeat our enemies, and uppermost in all their minds is the

one thought: to win the war as soon as possible, so that they may return to the quiet and peace of their own homes.

But -- in the midst of fighting -- in the presence of our brutal enemies -- our soldiers and sailors and airmen will not forget Election Day back home.

Millions of these men have already cast their own ballots, and they will be wondering about the outcome of the election, and what it will mean to them in their future lives. And sooner or later all of them will be asking questions as to whether the folks back home looked after their interests, their liberties, their government, their country -- while they themselves were off at war.

Our boys are counting on us to show the rest of the world that our kind of government is the best in the world -- and the kind we propose to keep! And so, when our people turn out at the polls tomorrow -- and I sincerely hope that it will be fifty million strong -- the world will respect our democracy, and the grand old Stars and Stripes will wave more proudly than ever before.

These brave fighters of ours have taken on enemies on both sides of the (our) world, enemies who were nurtured since childhood in militarism. These boys of ours, wisely led, and using the matchless weapons which you here at home have sent to them, have outfought these ruthless enemies, outfought them on the land, outfought them on the sea, outfought them in the skies. They are winning the victory for all of us. Many are giving life itself.

And it is for us to make certain that we win for them -- the living and the dead -- a lasting peace.

There is nothing adequate which anyone in any place can say to those who are entitled to display the gold star in their windows. But each night as the people of the United States rest in their homes which have been safe from violence during all these years of the most violent war in all history -- I am sure (that) all of them silently give thought to their feelings of deepest (deep) gratitude to the brave departed and to their families for the immeasurable sacrifice that they have made for the cause of decency and freedom and civilization.

I do not want to talk to you tonight of partisan politics. The political battle is finished. Our task now is to face the future as a militant and a united people -- united here at home as well as on the battlefronts.

Twice in twenty-five years our people have had to put on a brave, smiling front as they have suffered the anxiety and the agony of war.

And no one wants to endure that suffering again.

When we think of the speed and long distance possibilities of air travel of all kinds to the remotest corners of the earth, we must consider the devastation wrought on the people of England, for example, by the new long-range bombs. Another war would be bound to bring even more devilish and powerful instruments of destruction to wipe out civilian populations. No coastal defenses, however strong, could prevent these silent missiles of death, fired perhaps from planes or ships at sea,

from crashing deep within the United States itself.

This time, THIS time, we must be certain that the peace-loving nations of the world band together in determination to outlaw and to prevent war.

Tomorrow, you the people of the United States, again vote as free men and women, with full freedom of choice -- with no secret police watching over your shoulders. And for generations to come Americans will continue to prove their faith in free elections.

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But not for one single moment can you now or later forget the all important goals for which we are aiming -- to win the war and unite our fighting men with their families at the earliest moment, to see that all have honorable jobs; and to create a world peace organization which will prevent this disaster -- or one like it -- from ever coming upon us again.

To achieve these goals we need strength and wisdom which is greater than is bequeathed to mere mortals. We need Divine help and guidance. We people of America have ever had a deep well of religious strength, far back to the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.

And so, on this thoughtful evening (eve), I believe that you will find it fitting that I read a prayer sent to

me not long ago:

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"We commend to Thy over-ruling providence the men and women of our forces by sea, by land and in the air; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hands both them and the cause they serve.

"Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And grant that, whether by life or by death, they may win for the whole world the fruits of their sacrifice and a just peace.

"Guide, we beseech Thee, the nations of the world, into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the reward of righteousness.

"Make the whole people of this land equal to our high trust, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness.

"Enable us to guard for the least among us the freedom we covet for ourselves; make us ill content with the inequalities of opportunity which still prevail among us. Preserve our union against all the divisions of race and class which threaten it.

"And now, may the blessing of God Almighty rest upon the (this) whole land; may He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, charity to unite us, now and forever more.

Amen."

W. L. ...

STATEMENTS FILE

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HYDE PARK

NOVEMBER 6, 1944

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But -- in the midst of fighting -- in the presence of our brutal enemies -- our soldiers and sailors and airmen will not forget Election Day back home.

Millions of these men have already cast their own ballots, and they will be wondering about the outcome of the election, and what it will mean to them in their future lives. And sooner or later all of them will be asking questions as to whether the folks back home looked after their interests, their liberties, their government, their country -- while they themselves were off at war.

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This time, THIS time, we must be certain that the peace-loving nations of the world band together in determination to outlaw ^{and} prevent war. ^

Tomorrow, you the people of the United States, again vote as free men and women, with full freedom of choice -- with no secret police watching over your shoulders. And for generations to come Americans will continue to prove their faith in free elections. *elections*

But when the ballots are cast, your responsibilities do not cease. The public servants you elect cannot fulfill their trust unless you, the people, watch and advise them, raise your voices in protest when you believe your public servants to be wrong, back them up when you believe them to be right.

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And so, on this thoughtful eve², I believe that you will find it fitting that I read a prayer sent to me not long ago:

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Amen*.

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

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We commend to Thy overruling providence the men and women of our forces by sea, by land and in the air; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hands both them and the cause they serve.

Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And grant that, whether by life or by death, they may win for the whole world the fruits of their sacrifice and a just peace.

Guide, we beseech Thee, the nations of the world, into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the reward of righteousness.

Make the whole people of this land equal to our high trust, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness.

Enable us to guard for the least among us the freedom we covet for ourselves; make us ill content with the inequalities of opportunity which still prevail among us. Preserve our union against all the divisions of race and class which threaten it.

"And now may the blessing of God Almighty rest upon this whole land; may He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, charity to unite us, now and forever more. Amen".

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

ADDRESS Of The President
From Hyde Park, New York
Broadcast Nationally
November 6, 1944

Around 10.45 p.m., e.w.t. 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.

Ladies and gentlemen:

As we sit quietly this evening in our home at Hyde Park, our thoughts, like those of millions of other Americans, are most deeply concerned with the well-being of all our American fighting men. We are thinking of our own sons -- all of them far away from home -- and of our neighbors' sons and the sons of our friends.

That concern rises above all others in this critical period of our national life.

In great contrast to the quiet which is ours here in America, in our own secure homes, is the knowledge that most of those fighting men of ours have no quiet times, and little leisure at this hour to reflect on the significance of our American Election Day, tomorrow.

Some are standing at battle stations on shipboard, tense in the excitement of action; some lie in wet foxholes, or trudge doggedly through the sticky mud, firing as they go. Still others are high above the earth, fighting Messerschmidts or Zeros.

All of them are giving everything they have got to defeat our enemies, and uppermost in all their minds is the

one thought: to win the war as soon as possible, so that they may return to the quiet and peace of their own homes.

But -- in the midst of fighting -- in the presence of our brutal enemies -- our soldiers and sailors and airmen will not forget Election Day back home.

Millions of these men have already cast their own ballots, and they will be wondering about the outcome of the election, and what it will mean to them in their future lives. And sooner or later all of them will be asking questions as to whether the folks back home looked after their interests, their liberties, their government, their country -- while they themselves were off at war.

Our boys are counting on us to show the rest of the world that our kind of government is the best in the world -- and the kind we propose to keep! And so, when our people turn out at the polls tomorrow -- and I sincerely hope that it will be fifty million strong -- the world will respect our democracy, and the grand old Stars and Stripes will wave more proudly than ever before.

These brave fighters of ours have taken on enemies on both sides of the (our) world, enemies who were nurtured since childhood in militarism. These boys of ours, wisely led, and using the matchless weapons which you here at home have sent to them, have outfought those ruthless enemies, outfought them on the land, outfought them on the sea, outfought them in the skies. They are winning the victory for all of us. Many are giving life itself.

And it is for us to make certain that we win for them -- the living and the dead -- a lasting peace.

There is nothing adequate which anyone in any place can say to those who are entitled to display the gold star in their windows. But each night as the people of the United States rest in their homes which have been safe from violence during all these years of the most violent war in all history -- I am sure (that) all of them silently give thought to their feelings of deepest (deep) gratitude to the brave departed and to their families for the immeasurable sacrifice that they have made for the cause of decency and freedom and civilization.

I do not want to talk to you tonight of partisan politics. The political battle is finished. Our task now is to face the future as a militant and a united people -- united here at home as well as on the battlefronts.

Twice in twenty-five years our people have had to put on a brave, smiling front as they have suffered the anxiety and the agony of war.

And no one wants to endure that suffering again.

When we think of the speed and long distance possibilities of air travel of all kinds to the remotest corners of the earth, we must consider the devastation wrought on the people of England, for example, by the new long-range bombs. Another war would be bound to bring even more devilish and powerful instruments of destruction to wipe out civilian populations. No coastal defenses, however strong, could prevent these silent missiles of death, fired perhaps from planes or ships at sea,

from crashing deep within the United States itself.

This time, THIS time, we must be certain that the peace-loving nations of the world band together in determination to outlaw and to prevent war.

Tomorrow, you the people of the United States, again vote as free men and women, with full freedom of choice -- with no secret police watching over your shoulders. And for generations to come Americans will continue to prove their faith in free elections.

But when the ballots are cast, your responsibilities do not cease. The public servants you elect cannot fulfill their trust unless you, the people, watch and advise them, raise your voices in protest when you believe your public servants to be wrong, back them up when you believe them to be right.

But not for one single moment can you now or later forget the all important goals for which we are aiming -- to win the war and unite our fighting men with their families at the earliest moment, to see that all have honorable jobs; and to create a world peace organization which will prevent this disaster -- or one like it -- from ever coming upon us again.

To achieve these goals we need strength and wisdom which is greater than is bequeathed to mere mortals. We need Divine help and guidance. We people of America have ever had a deep well of religious strength, far back to the days of the Pilgrim Fathers.

And so, on this thoughtful evening (eve), I believe that you will find it fitting that I read a prayer sent to

me not long ago:

"Almighty God, of Whose righteous will all things are and were created, Thou hast gathered our people out of many lands and races into a great nation.

"We commend to Thy over-ruling providence the men and women of our forces by sea, by land and in the air; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hands both them and the cause they serve.

"Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. And grant that, whether by life or by death, they may win for the whole world the fruits of their sacrifice and a just peace.

"Guide, we beseech Thee, the nations of the world, into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the reward of righteousness.

"Make the whole people of this land equal to our high trust, reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, generous in the protection of weakness.

"Enable us to guard for the least among us the freedom we covet for ourselves; make us ill content with the inequalities of opportunity which still prevail among us. Preserve our union against all the divisions of race and class which threaten it.

"And now, may the blessing of God Almighty rest upon the (this) whole land; may He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, charity to unite us, now and forever more.
Amen."