Franklin D. Roosevelt Library & Museum

Collection: Grace Tully Archive
Series: Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers
Box 13; Folder = Speech Drafts:
Address at the Dedication of the Triborough Bridge,
New York City, July 11, 1936
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land. Many years ago, my own great-grandfather crossed the Manhattan approach to this bridge. In those days there was no need for a great highway between Manhattan and the mainland. The population had needed it, human skill could not have built it.

We are charged with the responsibilities of state and federal, pause from time to time to consider whether human needs and human change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generation that has passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs - needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions.

It is also because growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land.

Many years ago, my own great-grandfather built a bridge on the Manhattan approach to this bridge. There was no need for a great bridge Island and Manhattan and the main-
population had needed it, human skill could not have built it.

We are charged with the responsibilities of State and Federal, pause from time to time whether human needs and human change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generation that has passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs - needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions.

It is also because growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land. 

A thousand years ago, my own great-grandfather laid the Manhattan approach to this bridge. 

There was no need for a great skill to build the Manhattan Island and Manhattan and the main-island population had needed it, human need had needed it, human skill could not have built it.

We are charged with the responsibilities of both state and federal, pause from time to time whether human needs and human change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generations that have passed. It is not alone that as time goes by, needs are confronted with new needs - needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions.

It is also because growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land.

A century ago, my own great-grandfather, who approached this bridge, the Manhattan approach to this bridge, there was no need for a great Island and Manhattan and the main-

population had needed it, human skill could not have built it. are charged with the responsibilities of State and Federal, pause from time whether human needs and human change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generation that has passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs - needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions. It is also because growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land.

A century ago, my own great-grandfather, who lived on a farm near the Manhattan approach to this bridge, would surely find it hard to believe that whereas there was no need for a great bridge across the Island and Manhattan and the mainland, the present population had needed it, human ingenuity and human skill could not have built it.

Today, we are charged with the responsibilities of the State and Federal Government, to pause from time to time and to inquire whether human needs and human progress have been so great as to call for the extension of the ever-increasing amenities of life which have been made possible by the growth of knowledge and the recognition of the needs of the human race.

It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs—needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions. It is also because the growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land. Fifty years ago, my own great-grandfather made the Manhattan approach to this bridge. Those days there was no need for a great bridge from Long Island and Manhattan and the main-northern population had needed it, human engineering skill could not have built it.

We are charged with the responsibilities of State and Federal, pause from time to time and consider whether human needs and human change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generations that have passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs — needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions.

It is also because growth in knowledge has changed many things which in the olden days we thought of as normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
Many of you who are here today can remember that when you were boys and girls the greater part of what are now the Boroughs of the Bronx and Queens were cultivated as farm land. Not much over 100 years ago, my own great-grandfather owned a farm close to the Manhattan approach to this bridge.

In the older days there was no need for a great structure connecting Long Island and Manhattan and the mainland; and even if a vast population had needed it, human ingenuity and engineering skill could not have built it.

Some of us who are charged with the responsibilities of government, local and state and federal, pause from time to time to ask ourselves whether human needs and human invention are going to change as greatly in the generations to come as they have in the generation that has passed. It is not alone that as time goes by we are confronted with new needs - needs created by hitherto undreamed of conditions.

It is also because growth in knowledge labels as needs many things which in the olden days we thought of as a normal part of our civilized life.

For instance, no one used to protest against the
dumping of sewage and garbage into our rivers and harbors. No one used to protest that our schoolhouses were badly ventilated and badly lighted. No one used to protest because there were no playgrounds for children in crowded tenement areas. No one used to protest against firetraps or factory smoke.

In those days government was not interested in helping to provide bathing beaches and swimming pools and recreational areas; nor had those who toil conceived the thought that they were entitled to at least one day of rest in seven and an annual vacation.

There are a few among us who still, consciously or unconsciously, live in a state of constant protest against the daily processes of meeting modern needs. Most of us are willing to recognize change and to give it reasonable and constant help.

This Triborough Bridge was neither in its conception nor in its building a matter of purely local concern. Nation, state and city, each in its own way, has contributed to the gigantic undertaking. It will serve the people in all the boroughs of this largest of cities;
It will serve the people of Long Island, of up-State New York and our neighbors of Connecticut and New Jersey; and it will serve the hundreds of thousands of those, \[\text{who}\] living in all the other states and in foreign countries, visit New York on matters of business and of pleasure.

At a time of great human suffering the construction of this bridge was undertaken among the very first of the tens of thousands of projects launched by states and counties and municipalities and financed in part with Federal funds.

You, Governor Lehman, and you, Mayor LaGuardia, are personally familiar with this great array of public improvements. You know of the other tunnels and bridges, of the sewage disposal programs, of the schoolhouse construction, of the additions and repairs to public buildings and public enterprises of every kind. Because of your deep personal interest in all of this work, you have visualized its progress in every part of the Nation. I am grateful to both of you for the cooperation you have given me as President of the United States.

And I am grateful to you, the workers, skilled and unskilled, here at the site and \[\text{those}\] in the mills and shops many miles distant, without whose strong arms, willing hands,
and clear heads there would be no celebration here today.

May the Triborough Bridge, in the years to come, justify our efforts and our hopes by serving truly the city, the state and the nation.