

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library & Museum

Collection: Grace Tully Archive

Series: Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers

Box 13; Folder = Speech Drafts:

Jackson Day Dinner Address, Washington DC, January 8, 1936

Tully Archive; FDR Papers

Speech Drafts: Jackson Day Dinner Address, Washington DC,
January 8, 1936

JACKSON DAY SPEECH

January 8, 1936

This meeting tonight, held in the City of Washington,

insert in

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

throughout the forty-
even aboard ships
(President,
on.

party, in the
ive and illustrious
tings. The
has offered

session. I am
ive and declare
light of the average
was the same issue,
ted Andrew Jackson.

years of my public
he people of this
ression of my ap-
members of the

I know you will not be surprised
by ~~my~~ lack of ~~preliminary~~ comment
on my part tonight on the
~~recent~~ decision by the Supreme
Court ~~42 days~~ ago. Unlike
~~some~~ people I cannot ~~in good~~
~~conscience~~ render off hand ~~judgment~~
without studying ~~with the utmost care~~ two of the
most momentous opinions ever
rendered in a case before the
Supreme Court. ^{ultimate} ~~The~~ ^{results} ~~effects~~
of the language of these opinions
will, presumably, affect the lives
~~of the people and the~~

party and to all those who, in the name of the ideals and
purposes of our party, have joined with us, I extend the cordial
hand of fellowship.

JACKSON DAY SPEECH

final copy

This meeting tonight, held in the City of Washington, is one of many hundreds ~~of meetings~~ ^{being} held throughout the forty-

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

*of Americans for years at
once - It is enough to say
that the ~~great~~ attainment
of justice and prosperity for
the American agriculture
remain an immediate and
constant objective of my
Administration.*

even aboard ships
of President,
son.

party, in the
tive and illustrious
etings. The

has ~~offered~~

ssession. I am

tive and declare

ight of the average

was the same issue,

ted Andrew Jackson.

years of my public

the people of this

pression of my ap-

~~the~~ members of the

the ideals and

party and to all those who, in the

purposes of our party, have joined with us, I extend the cordial

hand of fellowship.

JACKSON DAY SPEECH

final copy

This meeting tonight, held in the City of Washington, is one of many hundreds ~~meetings~~ ^{being} held throughout the forty-eight States and Territorial possessions, and even aboard ships at sea, in honor of the memory of ^A *a great General and President,* Andrew Jackson.

To all of those members of the party, in the formation of which Jackson played such a positive and illustrious part, I extend my most sincere and hearty greetings. The Democratic Party has been generous to me. It has ~~offered~~ conferred upon me the highest honor in its possession. I am happy tonight to stand here as its representative and declare to you that the real issue before us is the right of the average man to live a finer and a better life. This was the same issue, more than one hundred years ago, that confronted Andrew Jackson.

I hope that whatever I, in the years of my public service, have contributed to the welfare of the people of this country may, in some small measure, be an expression of my appreciation for these high honors. To all ~~these~~ members of the party and to all those who, in the name of the ideals and purposes of our party, have joined with us, I extend the cordial hand of fellowship.

I am talking tonight to this Democratic gathering in the same language as if I were addressing a Republican gathering, an Independent gathering, a Progressive gathering, a gathering of businessmen or a gathering of workers or farmers. There is nothing that I am saying here tonight that does not apply to every citizen in the country, no matter what his political affiliations are and no matter what his personal preference may be at the present time. In the grave questions confronting this country today I am thinking of them, and I hope you are thinking of them, not ~~holding~~^{hoping} in a partisan sense as Republicans or Democrats but first, foremost and preeminently as Americans.

Members of those party organizations supporting and in sympathy with the present Congress and the present Administration, have a real reason to look on this occasion with ~~sympathetic~~ sympathetic understanding and warm support. Andrew Jackson is to them a vital reality. To honor his great memory is to dedicate themselves once more to the things in which he ~~played~~ believed and the personal qualities for which the people of his generation gave him their love, loyalty and devotion.

In a real sense Andrew Jackson was the Father of party government as we have known it in these past hundred years.

Under the forms of Democracy, men have risen to the mastery of the terms and conditions under which they live their lives and have developed the political party as a means of expression of their ideals of government. It enables them to gather into a common cause the many different variations of them which are involved in a common ideal. It enables them, by united action, to make of that ideal a living, breathing, prevailing force. Such common action in behalf of an ideal is the most effective substitute yet devised to take the place of older, autocratic forms of public power. The political party, rightly used, becomes the people's protection against autocratic or oligarchic aggression. It becomes the shield and the sword of social justice. The millions of ~~their~~ free members of the party getting together bring out that spirit of tolerance, of cooperative action and of mutual understanding that are the very essentials of popular government everywhere.

Andrew Jackson, quite appropriately, has become the symbol of many of his party's ideals. To a large degree he shares that destiny with Jefferson. I like best to think of Andrew Jackson as a man whom the average American deeply and fundamentally understands and has understood. To the masses of his countrymen his purposes and his character were an open book.

Collection: Grace Tully Archive; Series: Franklin D. Roosevelt Papers
Box 13; Folder= Speech Drafts: Jackson Day Dinner Address, Washington DC, January 8, 1936

They loved him well because they understood him well -- his passion for justice, his championship of the cause of the exploited and the downtrodden and his ardent and ~~fast~~ flaming patriotism.

If at times his passionate devotion to justice lent an excessive zeal to his thoughts, speech and actions, the people loved him the more for it. He was intensely human and thoroughly American. The people of his day realized the intensity of the attacks of his enemies. Those who, because of his policies, had been thrust from position and power, pursued him with relentless hatred.

Those who had benefited by the conditions which Jackson destroyed pursued him with all the violence their political passion could generate.

We take confidence tonight in the fact that issues, once matters of grim controversy and bitter debate in the days of Andrew Jackson, are today accepted as a matter of course. The whole progress of the world has been the result of trial and error and through these movements the one great hope has been that the human has striven for higher ideals and richer opportunities for the average man. In the long view right has been forever triumphant -- in the short view wrong forever on the throne.

The political party of which Andrew Jackson was the leader was compelled to fight ~~for~~ every inch for its ideals and

policies. An overwhelming proportion of the wealth of the country was arrayed against him. The great agencies of public opinion, in general, were against him. Haughty and sterile intellectualism was against him. Musty reaction disapproved of him. Hollow and outworn financial traditionalism shook a trembling finger at him.

There have been other examples in national elections where the people have been swayed by lack of information, by false information, by information successfully spread abroad by one side and left unanswered, for one reason or another, by the other side. In the earlier days money also played an important part in many elections.

I believe we are fortunate in these later days in that we have escaped, to a great degree, from the effects of one-sided influence in our national elections. I do not believe that elections can be bought no matter what the sum expended by one side may be. I do not believe that conditions can exist today under which truth can be obscured by the mere use of propoganda.

We have many examples of candidates or issues approved by the majority of voters despite the united opposition of the power and the attack of special groups seeking and defending their own interests — yes, even a hostile Press — owned and controlled by those seeking special privilege.

It seems, to me, therefore, that it is the duty of the average voter, who seeks to cast an intelligent ballot, to sift for himself or herself, to find the actual facts, the definite truth. It is inevitable that many general charges and countercharges will be heard in the months to come from the many people who have special axes to grind.

Some form of political party organization is, of course, necessary and is in keeping with American traditions -- with the traditions of Jackson and Jefferson. The very great majority of citizens, however, are, as we know, not personal participants in the active work of party committees. To this great majority, therefore, I make this specific recommendation -- that each and every one of you who are interested in obtaining the facts, in getting at the truth of these charges and countercharges, constitute yourself a committee of one.

As a committee of one it is your duty to yourself as a voter to insist on facts and truth. If someone tells you that so-and-so, the candidate of such and such a party, is a reactionary* at heart or is owned and controlled by some selfish group, get his record. Trace his course in public life. Find out not only what his general aims have been but find out for yourself the position he has taken during his public life. In this connection I urge

you to make an inventory in every city, town, hamlet, village and country side of this country to locate and determine the reasons for the opposition to those who are today trying to strike down the forces for popular rights and a better and a freer opportunity for the average man.