



*His Vision  
Our Freedoms  
Still Alive*



Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum  
Hyde Park, New York 12538  
[www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu](http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu)



# *His Vision Our Freedoms Still Alive*



Franklin Delano Roosevelt, America's 32<sup>nd</sup> president, led the United States through two of the gravest crises in its history—the Great Depression and World War II.

This exhibit highlights FDR's enduring achievements, using historic photographs, documents, cartoons and posters from the rich collections of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum.

The FDR Library and Museum, located in Hyde Park, New York, is one of twelve presidential libraries administered by the National Archives and Records Administration. The Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute, a private nonprofit organization, supports the Library's work and mission.



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# The Great Depression



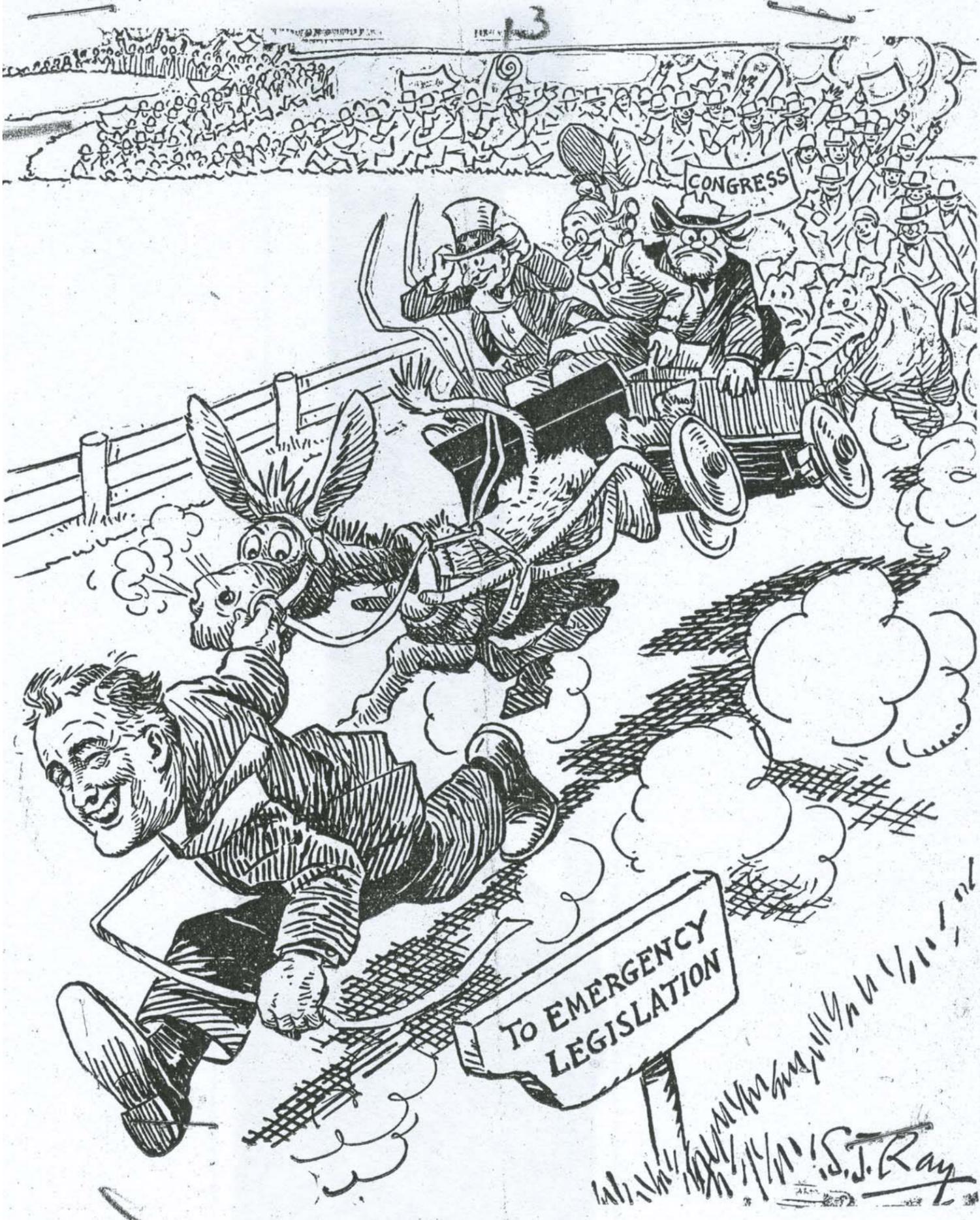
When Franklin Roosevelt took the oath of office as President in March 1933, the nation was in the depths of the Great Depression. The country's banking system was on the verge of collapse and nearly one in four American workers were unemployed.



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# First 100 Days

LOOKS AS IF THE NEW LEADERSHIP WAS REALLY GOING TO LEAD.



During his first one hundred days in office, President Roosevelt launched an unprecedented legislative program to combat the Great Depression and restore economic confidence. He called his program the "New Deal."



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# Fireside Chats

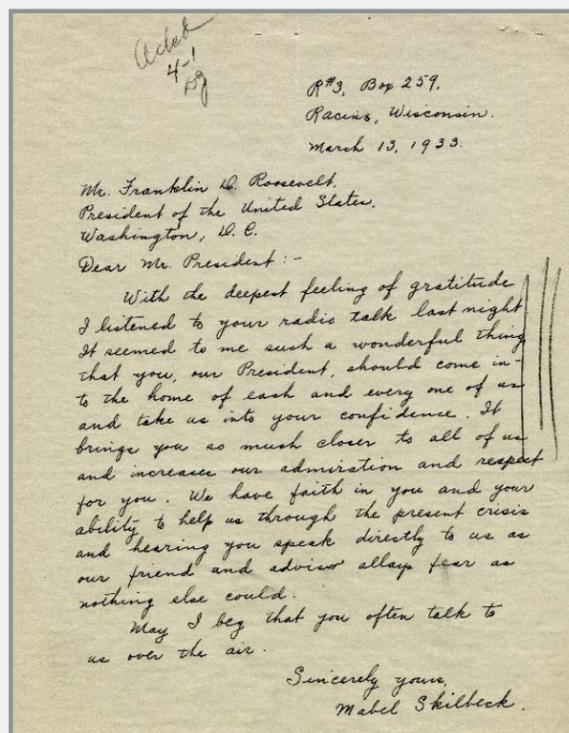
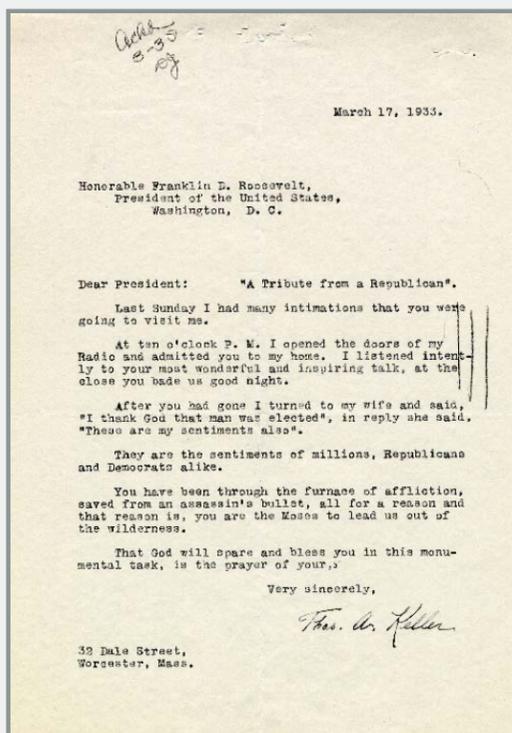


Radio was the great mass communication device of the 1930s and FDR made masterful use of the new medium to speak directly to the American public about his policies. His conversational radio addresses were known popularly as "Fireside Chats."



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# Fireside Chats



FDR's "Fireside Chats" on the radio struck a powerful chord with Americans. Many people felt he was speaking directly to them. FDR delivered twenty-seven of these informal addresses during his presidency. Thousands responded to the talks with personal letters to the President.



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# The New Deal



FDR's New Deal reformed America's banking and credit systems, aided organized labor, and put millions of unemployed people back to work. Agencies like the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) built roads, bridges, dams, playgrounds, and other public works that changed the face of America. New Deal programs gave work to unemployed artists and brought art into the lives of millions.



# Social Security

ask  
8-15-41

4 City ave  
New Britain Conn  
August 7, 1941.

AUG 11 1941

Mrs Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Dear First Lady,

I am a widow, my husband died nine months ago, and since then I have received my Social Security each month, fifteen dollars and ninety three cents.

I want to express my thankfulness to our President for being the means of this big help in being able to

carry on.  
my son and his little girl lives with me, he is a Telegraphist by trade, but being unable to find that kind of work, is at present working as a gatetender for The R.R. at 0.43 cents an hour, 8 hour day. We would have to part, go each our own way, if it were not for this money that help us pay the rent, \$25.00 a month.

Please forward my deep appreciation. I am  
yours respectfully  
Petra Engebretson Hartman

In the years following the passage of the Social Security Act, many Americans wrote FDR and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt to thank them for the program.



# Social Security

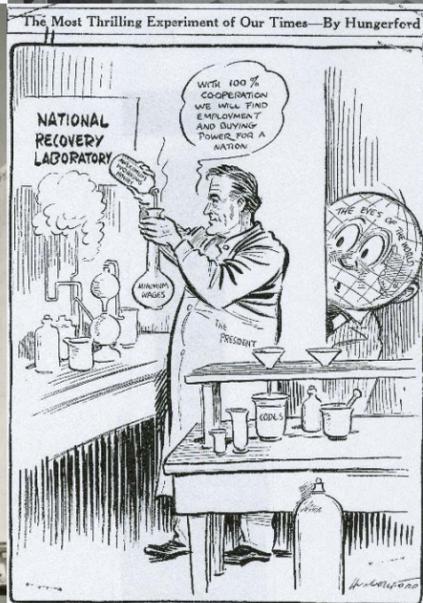


On August 14, 1935, FDR signed the landmark Social Security Act. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, the first woman to serve in the Cabinet, stands to the President's left. The new law, FDR declared, "will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age."



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# Support For Unions



IMMEDIATE RELEASE July 5, 1935  
FOR THE PRESS 510

The President today signed the so called Wagner Bill -- an Act to diminish the causes of labor disputes burdening or obstructing interstate and foreign commerce, to create a National Labor Relations Board, and for other purposes."

At the same time, the President issued the following statement:

"This Act defines, as a part of our substantive law, the right of self-organization of employees in industry for the purpose of collective bargaining, and provides methods by which the Government can safeguard that legal right. It establishes a National Labor Relations Board to hear and determine cases in which it is charged that this legal right is abridged or denied, and to hold fair elections to ascertain who are the chosen representatives of employees.

"A better relationship between labor and management is the high purpose of this Act. By assuring the employees the right of collective bargaining it fosters the development of the employment contract on a sound and equitable basis. By providing an orderly procedure for determining who is entitled to represent the employees, it aims to remove one of the chief causes of wasteful economic strife. By preventing practices which tend to destroy the independence of labor, it seeks, for every worker within its scope, that freedom of choice and action which is justly his.

"The National Labor Relations Board will be an independent quasi-judicial body. It should be clearly understood that it will not act as mediator or conciliator in labor disputes. The function of mediation remains, under this Act, the duty of the Secretary of Labor and of the Conciliation Service of the Department of Labor. It is important that the judicial function and the mediation function should not be confused. Compromise, the essence of mediation, has no place in the interpretation and enforcement of the law.

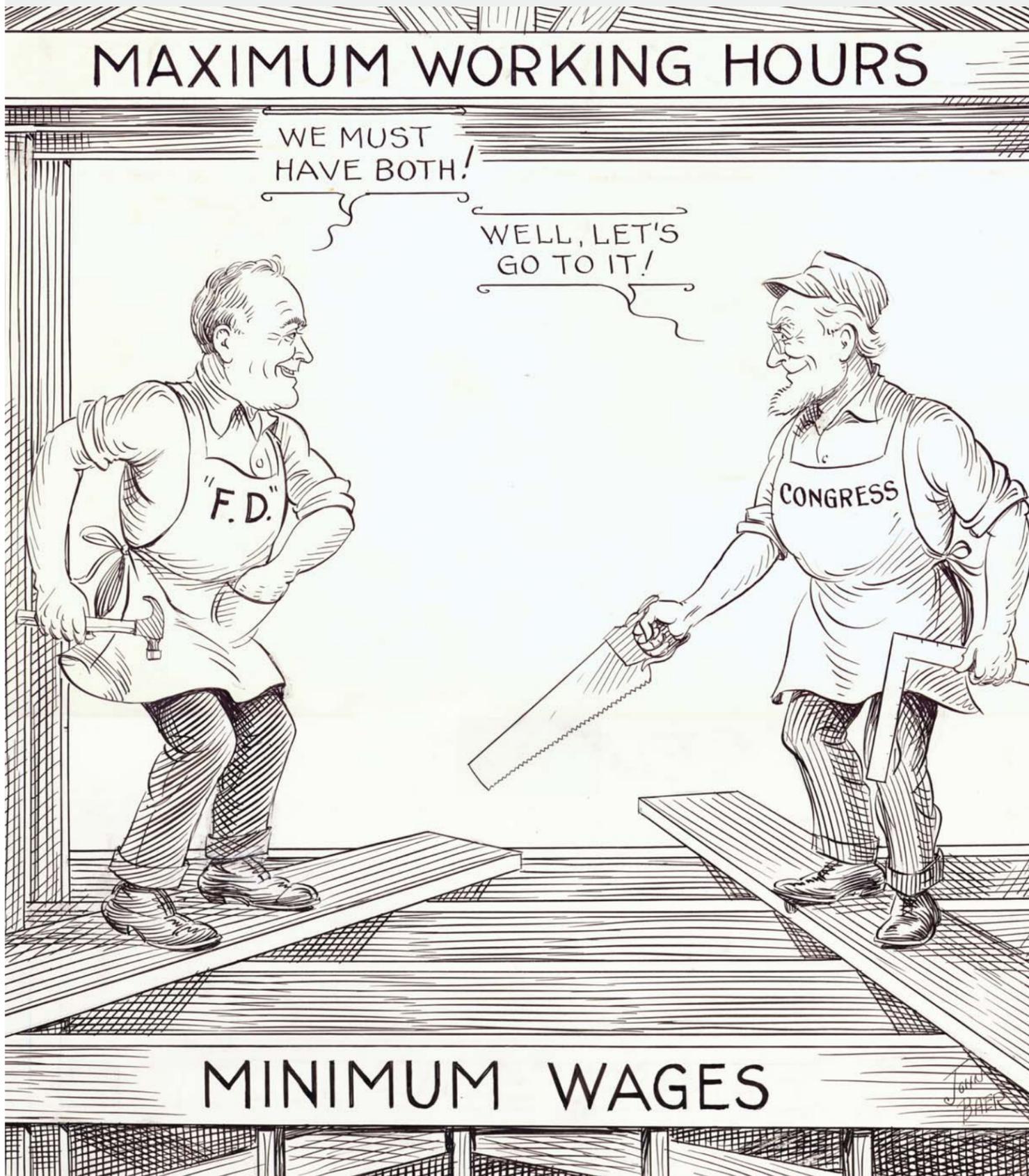
"This Act, defining rights, the enforcement of which is recognized by the Congress to be necessary as both an act of common justice and economic advance, must not be misinterpreted. It may eventually eliminate one major cause of labor disputes, but it will not stop all labor disputes. It does not cover all industry and labor, but is applicable only when violation of the legal right of independent self-organization would burden or obstruct interstate commerce. Accepted by management, labor and the public with a sense of sober responsibility and of willing cooperation, however, it should serve as an important step toward the achievement of just and peaceful labor relations in industry."

FDR forged a powerful bond with organized labor. The National Labor Relations Act (also known as the Wagner Act), which he signed into law on July 5, 1935, curbed unfair labor practices by employers and required them to bargain collectively with their workers' chosen representatives. It established the National Labor Relations Board to enforce the Act. The Wagner Act helped labor dramatically expand the number and size of unions. During FDR's presidency, union membership jumped from 3 to 14 million.



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# Protecting Workers



On January 3, 1938, Roosevelt urged Congress to enact a federal law "to end starvation wages and intolerable hours." The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 led to the reduction of the standard work week and the establishment of a national minimum wage for many American workers. The Act also prohibited the employment of children under the age of 16 in most occupations.



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# Pearl Harbor



On December 7, 1941, America entered World War II when Japan unleashed a surprise attack on U.S. military installations in the Pacific. The worst blow came at the Pearl Harbor naval base in Hawaii. The American dead included 1,177 crewmen of the USS *Arizona*, which sank when a bomb ignited its forward ammunition magazine.



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# Day of Infamy Speech

DRAFT No. 1  
December 7, 1941.

PROPOSED MESSAGE TO THE CONGRESS

Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in ~~world history~~ <sup>infamy</sup>  
the United States of America was ~~unprovokedly~~ <sup>suddenly</sup> and deliberately attacked  
by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. ~~It is a day which will live in world history.~~

The United States was at the moment at peace with that nation and was ~~conducting~~ <sup>still in</sup> conversations with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in ~~Hawaii and the Philippines~~ <sup>Oahu</sup> the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a ~~former~~ <sup>recent transmission</sup> message ~~from the~~ <sup>to</sup> Secretary. ~~This reply contained a statement that diplomatic negotiations must be considered at an end, but contained no threat or hint of an armed attack.~~ <sup>While stated it seemed useless to continue to negotiate.</sup>

It will be recorded that the distance ~~between~~ <sup>between</sup> especially of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the ~~attack~~ <sup>attack</sup> deliberately planned many days ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

Late in the afternoon of December 7, 1941, FDR dictated the first draft of a war message to Congress. His handwritten revisions—visible in the first draft—made the Day of Infamy speech one of the most memorable in American history.



# War Leader



FDR attended many famous Allied wartime meetings. His first conference with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill took place in August 1941 aboard two warships at sea in the North Atlantic. The two leaders developed a close personal bond during the war years.



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# Home Front



Under FDR's wartime leadership, America's economy was transformed and profound social changes were unleashed. The war opened up economic opportunities for women, African Americans, and other minorities. In 1941, FDR signed a landmark executive order barring racial discrimination in defense industries. Under his leadership, women were encouraged to take untraditional jobs in war plants. They also joined America's military in large numbers.



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# Four Freedoms

FIFTH DRAFT

18 178  
- 27 -

The first is freedom of speech and expression everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want — which translated into ~~international~~ <sup>world</sup> terms means economic understandings which will secure to every nation ~~everywhere~~ a healthy peace time life for its inhabitants — *everywhere in the world*

The fourth is freedom from fear — which translated into ~~international~~ <sup>world</sup> terms means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation ~~anywhere~~ will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor — *anywhere in the world.*

*A-17A.* That kind of a world is the very antithesis of the so-called "new order" which the dictators seek to create ~~at the point of a gun~~ <sup>with the crash of a bomb</sup> in Europe and in Asia.

To that "new order" we oppose the greater conception <sup>the</sup> moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear. It has no need either for the one or for the other.

FDR framed World War II in universal terms—as a struggle to defend freedom around the world. His most enduring expression of this concept came in his 1941 Annual Message to Congress, when he described his vision of a world founded upon "four essential human freedoms": Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom From Want, and Freedom From Fear. This draft of the speech contains FDR's handwritten revisions.



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# War Leader



Albert Einstein  
Old Grove Rd.  
Massau Point  
Peconic, Long Island  
August 2nd, 1939

F.D. Roosevelt,  
President of the United States,  
White House  
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

Some recent work by E.Fermi and L. Szilard, which has been communicated to me in manuscript, leads me to expect that the element uranium may be turned into a new and important source of energy in the immediate future. Certain aspects of the situation which has arisen seem to call for watchfulness and, if necessary, quick action on the part of the Administration. I believe therefore that it is my duty to bring to your attention the following facts and recommendations:

In the course of the last four months it has been made probable - through the work of Joliot in France as well as Fermi and Szilard in America - that it may become possible to set up a nuclear chain reaction in a large mass of uranium, by which vast amounts of power and large quantities of new radium-like elements would be generated. Now it appears almost certain that this could be achieved in the immediate future.

This new phenomenon would also lead to the construction of bombs, and it is conceivable - though much less certain - that extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed. A single bomb of this type, carried by boat and exploded in a port, might very well destroy the whole port together with some of the surrounding territory. However, such bombs might very well prove to be too heavy for transportation by air.

-3-

The United States has only very poor ores of uranium in moderate quantities. There is some good ore in Canada and the former Czechoslovakia, while the most important source of uranium is Belgian Congo.

In view of this situation you may think it desirable to have some permanent contact maintained between the Administration and the group of physicists working on chain reactions in America. One possible way of achieving this might be for you to entrust with this task a person who has your confidence and who could perhaps serve in an unofficial capacity. His task might comprise the following:

a) to approach Government Departments, keep them informed of the further development, and put forward recommendations for Government action, giving particular attention to the problem of securing a supply of uranium ore for the United States;

b) to speed up the experimental work, which is at present being carried on within the limits of the budgets of University laboratories, by providing funds, if such funds be required, through his contacts with private persons who are willing to make contributions for this cause, and perhaps also by obtaining the co-operation of industrial laboratories which have the necessary equipment.

I understand that Germany has actually stopped the sale of uranium from the Czechoslovakian mines which she has taken over. That she should have taken such early action might perhaps be understood on the ground that the son of the German Under-Secretary of State, von Weizsäcker, is attached to the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut in Berlin where some of the American work on uranium is now being repeated.

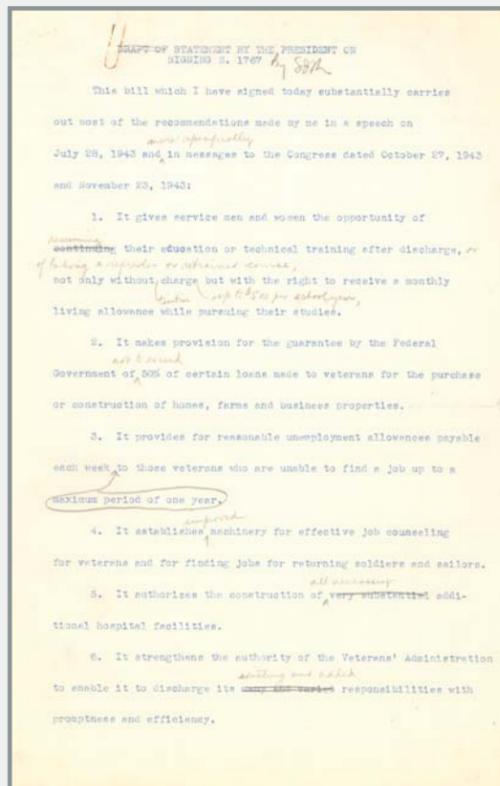
Yours very truly,  
*A. Einstein*  
(Albert Einstein)

As America's Commander in Chief, FDR directed strategic planning for a conflict that literally spanned the globe. The President's wartime travels included trips to Africa, the Middle East, and the Pacific. His many decisions included authorizing a program to build an atomic bomb. FDR acted after Albert Einstein wrote him, describing the potential for an atomic weapon and warning that nuclear research was underway in Germany.



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# GI Bill



FDR believed America owed a special debt to the generation who served in World War II. With his strong support, Congress passed S. 1767—the “GI Bill of Rights”—in 1944. It provided millions of veterans with generous educational and medical benefits and loans for homes, farms, and businesses. The bill gave an entire generation the means to enter the middle class.



# Economic Bill of Rights

## *The Rights we Fight for*

THE BILL OF RIGHTS, *December 15, 1791*

**C**ONGRESS shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against him-

self, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise re-examined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively or the people.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES ON THE STATE OF THE UNION, *January 11, 1944*

**I**N OUR DAY these economic truths have become accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all—regardless of station, race, or creed.

Among these are:

The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries, or shops or farms or mines of the Nation;

The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation;

The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living;

The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad;

The right of every family to a decent home;

The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health;

The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment;

The right to a good education.



All of these rights spell security. And after this war is won, we must be prepared to move forward, in the implementation of these rights, to new goals of human happiness and well-being.

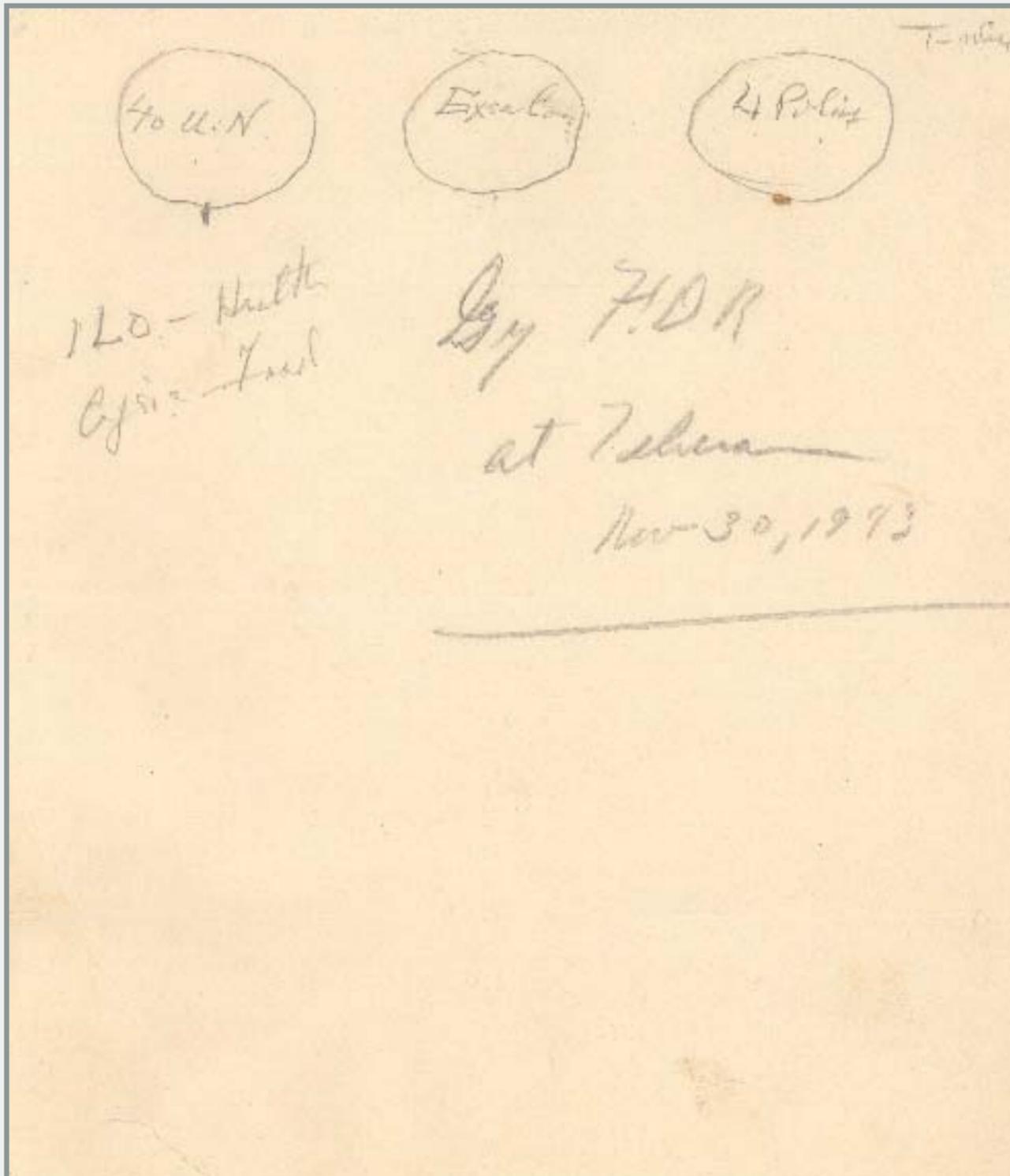
America's own rightful place in the world depends in large part upon how fully these and similar rights have been carried into practice for our citizens. For unless there is security here at home there cannot be lasting peace in the world.

After World War II, FDR hoped to enact an "Economic Bill of Rights" that would provide Americans with greater economic security. This wartime poster advertised FDR's vision.



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# United Nations

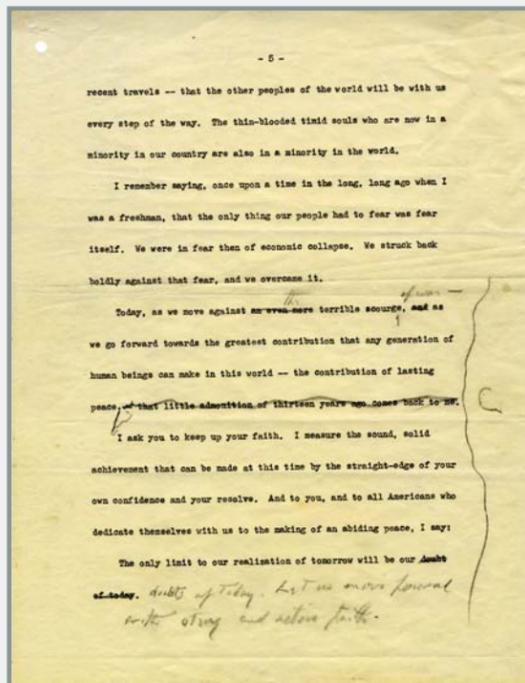
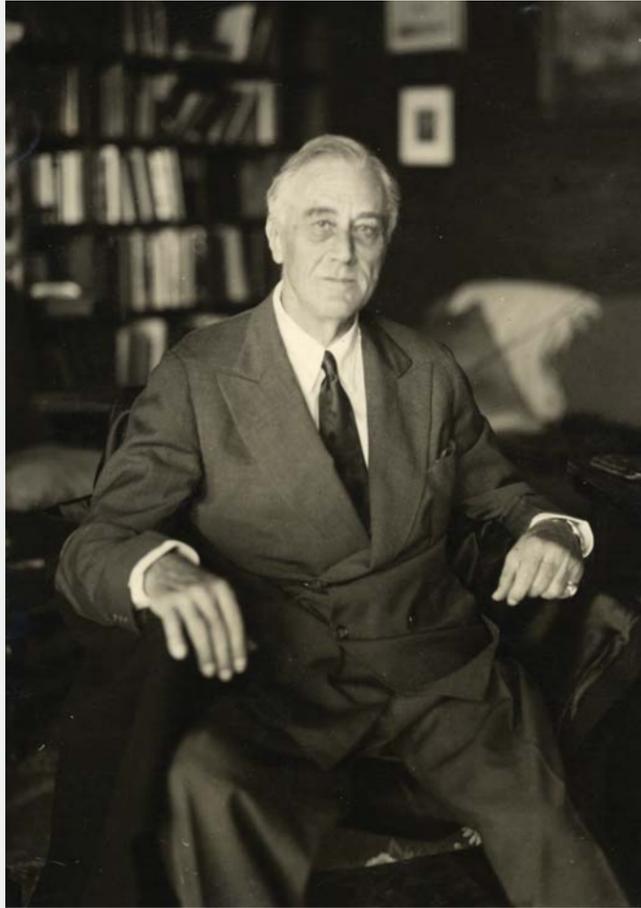


From the earliest days of World War II, FDR worked to create a postwar organization dedicated to global cooperation and peace through collective security. This sketch, made by FDR during the 1943 Teheran Conference, reflects his early concept of how a United Nations organization might be structured. The circles refer to broad concepts for a General Assembly, Secretariat, and Security Council (in FDR's words "The Four Policemen").



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# Let Us Move Forward



On April 12, 1945, Franklin Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage at his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia. He had led America through the Great Depression and to the brink of victory in World War II. This image—taken the day before his death—is the last photographic portrait of him. The final page of a speech he was working on shortly before his death bears witness to his unconquerable optimism.



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