

Franklin Delano Roosevelt on freedom. [New York, Amalgamated Lithographers of America. c1963].

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT on Freedom

So first of all let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

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 world terms, means economic understanding, which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear, which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

I see an America where the workers are really free and through their great unions, undominated by any outside force or any dictator within, can take their proper place in the council tables with the owners and managers of business; where the dignity and security of the working man and woman are guaranteed by their strength and fortified by the safeguards of law.

Democracy alone, of all forms of government, enlists the full force of men's enlightened will...It is the most humane, the most advanced and in the end the most unconquerable of all forms of human society...The democratic aspiration is no mere recent phase of human history. It is human history.

A world turned into a stereotype, a society converted into a regiment, a life translated into a routine, make it difficult for either art or artists to survive. Crush individually in society and you crush art as well. Nourish the conditions of a free life and you nourish the arts, too.

If the fires of freedom and civil liberties burn low in other lands, they must be made brighter in our own. If in other lands the press and books and literature of all kinds are censored, we must redouble our efforts here to keep them free. If in other lands the eternal truths of the past are threatened by intolerance, we must provide a safe place for their perpetuation.

Yet, most of all grant us brotherhood, not only for this day but for all years— a brotherhood not of words but of acts and deeds.

We are all of us children of the earth— grant us that simple knowledge.

If our brothers are oppressed, then we are oppressed. If they hunger, we hunger. If their freedom is taken away, our freedom is not secure.

Grant us a common faith that man shall know bread and peace— that he shall know justice and righteousness, freedom and security, an equal opportunity and an equal chance to do his best, not only in our lands, but throughout the world...

Roosevelt

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