

# PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS

To the Senate and House of Representatives: We still continue in a period of unbounded prosperity. This prosperity is not the creature of law, but undoubtedly the laws under which we work have been instrumental in creating the conditions which made it possible, and by unwise legislation it would be easy enough to destroy it. There will undoubtedly be periods of depression. The wave will recede; but the tide will advance.

As a people we have played a large part in the world, and we are bent upon making our future even larger than the past. In particular, the events of the last four years have definitely decided that, for good or for evil, we do not shrink from the struggle before us. There are many problems for us to face at the onset of the twentieth century—grave problems abroad and still graver at home; but we know that we can solve them and solve them well, provided only that we bring to the solution the qualities of head and heart which were shown by the men who, in the days of Washington, founded this government, and, in the days of Lincoln, preserved it.

No country has ever occupied a higher plane of material well-being than ours at the present moment. This well-being is due to no sudden or accidental causes, but to the play of the economic forces in this country for over a century; to our laws, our sustained and continuous policies; above all, to the high individual average of our citizenship. Of course, when the conditions have favored the growth of so much that was good, they have also favored somewhat the growth of what was evil. It is eminently necessary that we should endeavor to cut out this evil, but let us not let a due sense of proportion; let us not let us fix our eyes upon the lesser evil and forget the greater good. The evil is real and some of them are menacing, but they are the outgrowth, not of misery or decadence, but of prosperity—the progress of our gigantic industrial development. This industrial development must not be checked, but side by side with it should go such progressive regulation as will diminish the evils. We should fail in our duty if we did not try to remedy the evils, but we shall succeed only if we proceed patiently, with practical common sense as well as resolution, separating the good from the bad and holding on to the former while endeavoring to get rid of the latter.

## DEALING WITH TRUSTS.

Corporations should be managed under public regulation. In my message to the present Congress at its first session I discussed at length the question of the regulation of those big corporations commonly doing an interstate business, often with a tendency to monopoly, which are popularly known as trusts. The experience of the past year has emphasized, in my opinion, the desirability of the steps I then proposed. A fundamental requisite of social efficiency is a high standard of individual energy and excellence; but this is in no wise inconsistent with power to act in combination for aims which cannot so well be achieved by the individual acting alone. A fundamental base of civilization is the inalienability of property; but this is in no wise inconsistent with the right of society to regulate the exercise of the artificial powers which it confers upon the owners of property, under the name of corporate franchises, in such a way as to prevent the misuse of those powers. Corporations, and especially combinations of corporations, should be managed under public regulation. Experience has shown that the necessary supervision cannot be obtained by State action. It must therefore be achieved by national action. Our aim is not to do away with corporations; on the contrary, these big aggregations are an inevitable development of modern industrialism, and the effort to destroy them would be futile unless accomplished in ways that would work the utmost mischief to the entire body politic. We are not hostile to them; we are merely determined that the public shall be so handled as to subserve the public good. Publicity can do no harm to the honest corporation; and we need not be overdrawn about sparing the dishonest corporation.

In curbing and regulating the combinations of capital which are or may be come injurious to the public we must be careful not to stop the great enterprises which have legitimately reduced the cost of production, not to abandon the places which our country has won in the leadership of the international industrial world, not to strike down wealth with the result of closing factories and mines, of turning the wage worker idle in the streets and leaving the farmer without a market for what he grows. Insistence upon the impossible means delay in achieving the possible, exactly as, on the other hand, the stubborn defense alike of what is good and what is bad in the existing system, the resulting effort to obstruct any attempt at betterment, betrays blindness to the historic truth that wise evolution is the sure safeguard against revolution.

## INTER-STATE COMMERCE.

No more important subject can come before the Congress than this of the regulation of interstate commerce. This country cannot afford to sit supine on the plea that under our peculiar system of government we are helpless in the presence of the new conditions, and unable to grapple with them or to cut out whatever of evil has arisen in connection with them. The power of the Congress to regulate interstate commerce is an absolute and unqualified grant, and without limitations other than those prescribed by the constitution.

I believe that monopolies, unjust discriminations, which prevent or cripple competition, fraudulent overcapitalization, and other evils in trust organizations and practices which injuriously affect interstate trade can be prevented under the power of the Congress to regulate interstate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States through regulations and requirements operating directly upon such commerce, the instrumentalities thereof, and those engaged therein.

I earnestly recommend this subject to the consideration of the Congress with a view to the passage of a law reasonable in its provisions and effective in its operation, upon which the questions can be finally adjudicated that are raised by the necessity of constitutional amendment. If it prove impossible to ac-

complish the purposes above set forth by such a law then, assuredly, we should not shrink from amending the constitution so as to secure beyond peradventure the power sought.

To Enforce Anti-Trust Law. The Congress has not heretofore made any appropriation for the better enforcement of the anti-trust law as it now stands. Very much has been done by the department of justice in securing the enforcement of this law, but much more could be done if Congress would make a special appropriation for this purpose, to be expended under the direction of the Attorney General.

One proposition advocated has been the reduction of the tariff as a means of reaching the evils of the trusts which fall within the category I have described. Not merely would this be wholly ineffective, but the diversion of our efforts in such a direction would mean the abandonment of all intelligent attempt to do away with these evils. Many of the largest corporations, many of those which should certainly be included in any proper scheme of regulation, would not be affected in the slightest degree by a change in the tariff, save as such change interfered with the general prosperity of the country. The question of regulation of the trusts stands apart from the question of tariff revision.

## CONCERNING THE TARIFF.

Fitful and Radical Changes Declared Unadvisable. Stability of economic policy must always be the prime economic need of this country. This stability should not be fossilization. The country has acquiesced in the wisdom of the protective tariff principle. It is exceedingly undesirable that there should be violent and radical changes therein. Our past experience shows that great prosperity in this country has always come under a protective tariff; and that the country cannot prosper under fitful tariff changes, at short intervals. Moreover, if the tariff laws as a whole work well, and if business has prospered under them and is prospering, it is better to endure for a time slight inconveniences and inequalities in some schedules than to upset business by too quick and too radical changes. It is most earnestly to be wished that we would treat the tariff from the standpoint solely of our business needs. Unquestionably these business interests will best be served if together with fixity of principle as regards the tariff we combine a system which will permit us from time to time to make the necessary reapportionment of the principle to the shifting conditions. We must take scrupulous care that the reapportionment shall be made in such a way that it will not amount to a dislocation of our system, the mere threat of which (not to speak of the performance) would produce paralysis in the business energies of the community. The first consideration in making these changes would, of course, be to preserve the principle which underlies our whole tariff system—that is, the principle of putting American business interests at least on a full equality with those abroad, and of always allowing a sufficient rate of duty to more than cover the difference between the labor cost here and abroad. The well-being of the wage worker, like the well-being of the tiller of the soil, should be treated as an essential in shaping our whole economic policy. There must never be any change which will jeopardize the standard of comfort, the standard of wages of the American wage worker.

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Advocates a Tariff Commission. Whenever the tariff conditions are such that a needed change cannot with advantage be made by the application of the reciprocity idea, then it can be made cutting by lowering of duties on a given product. If possible, such change should be made only after the fullest consideration by practical experts, who should approach the subject from a business standpoint, having in view both the particular interests affected and the commercial well-being of the people as a whole. The machinery for providing such careful investigation can readily be supplied. The executive department has already at its disposal methods of collecting facts and figures; and if the Congress desires additional consideration to that which will be given the subject by its own committees, then a commission of business experts can be appointed whose duty it should be to recommend action by the Congress after a deliberate and scientific examination of the various schedules as they are affected by the changed and changing conditions.

The cases in which the tariff can produce a monopoly are so few as to constitute an inconsiderable factor in the question; but of course if in any case it be found that a given rate of duty does promote a monopoly which works ill, no protectionist would object to such reduction of the duty as would equalize competition.

Would Remove Tariff on Coal. In my judgment, the tariff on anthracite coal should be removed, and anthracite put actually, where it now is nominally, on the free list. This would have no effect at all save in crises; but in crises it might be of service to the people.

Banking and Currency. Banks are the natural servants of commerce, and upon them should be placed, as far as practicable, the burden of furnishing and maintaining a circulation adequate to supply the needs of our diversified industries and of our domestic and foreign commerce; and the issue of this should be so regulated that a sufficient supply should be always available for the business interests of the country. It would be both unwise and unnecessary at this time to attempt to reconstruct our financial system, which has been the growth of a century; but some additional legislation, I think, desirable. It is suggested that all future legislation on the subject should be with the view of encouraging the use of such instrumentalities as will automatically sup-



PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

## THE PRESIDENT'S PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S message to Congress is less voluminous than those of many of his predecessors, containing in full only about 12,000 words. It may be called a concise and on the whole optimistic document. The President congratulates the country on the prevailing prosperity, and he assures us that while the prosperous wave will recede and at times there will again come periods of depression, the tide will continue to advance. No country, he says, has ever occupied a higher plane of material well-being than ours at the present moment, and he predicts that the American people will permit of no national retrogression.

The President in dealing with the trust question holds that corporations, and especially combinations of corporations, should be managed under public regulation. Capital, he says, has the right to combine for its own protection and for development along industrial lines, and that labor has equal rights. But that when capital has combined to such an extent as to stifle competition the law-making power should remedy such a condition, and if labor in combining interferes with the rights of others or with the welfare of the general public such combination must likewise be regulated by law. He urges that any defects in the existing law should be eradicated and the power given the Department of Justice to accomplish the real reforms the lawmakers intended when legislation regulating the trusts was enacted.

The President lays some stress on the need of conservative tariff legislation, which, while not attacking the foundation upon which the Republican policy of tariff for protection is built, will remodel it to meet new conditions and remove any evils that the prolonged imposition of present tariffs may have caused.

The foreign relations of this country are reviewed in a very brief and formal manner. No international question is pending in which this country is vitally interested. There is not a cloud on the horizon, the President says, but he advocates provision for a thoroughly efficient navy to insure a continuance of this state of affairs.

On Cuban reciprocity the President stands precisely where his predecessor stood on this question. He favors and urges the largest possible measure of trade reciprocity and pays particular attention to the implied pledges of this government to see to it that Cuba was put upon her feet in a business as well as a political way, and not until that has been done through a measure of reciprocity will the duty of this government toward Cuba have been done.

The unusually large immigration to this country during the last fiscal year and the great proportion of undesirable immigrants that have sought and, in some cases, secured entrance to this country impels the President to recommend corrective legislation along the lines laid down by the present administration of the immigration office.

The strengthening of the civil service receives the approval of the President, and the recent signing of the contract with the Pacific Cable Company is referred to as another step toward the advancement of the interests of this country in the Pacific Ocean and the far East.

The President refers to Congress having already wisely provided that we shall at once build an isthmian canal, if possible at Panama. He reports that a good title can be acquired from the French Panama Canal Company, and that the negotiations with Colombia are still pending.

every legitimate demand of productive industries and of commerce, not only in the amount, but in the character of circulation; and of making all kinds of money interchangeable, and, at the will of the holder, convertible into the established gold standard.

**CAPITAL AND LABOR.** Both kinds of federation, capitalist and labor, can do much good, and as a necessary corollary they can both do evil. Opposition to each kind of organization should take the form of opposition to whatever is bad in the conduct of any given corporation or union—not of attacks upon corporations as such nor upon unions as such, for some of the most far-reaching beneficent work that has ever been accomplished through both corporations and unions. Each must refrain from arbitrary or tyrannical interference with the rights of others. Organized capital and organized labor alike should remember that in the long run the interest of each must be brought into harmony with the interest of the general public, and the conduct of each must conform to the fundamental rules of obedience to the law, of individual freedom, and of justice and fair dealing toward all. Each should remember that in addition to power it must strive after the realization of healthy, lofty, and generous ideals.

**THE ISTHMIAN CANAL.** Will Be the Greatest Engineering Feat Yet Accomplished. The Congress has wisely provided that we shall build at once an isthmian canal, if possible at Panama. The Attorney General reports that we can undoubtedly acquire good title from the French Panama Canal Company. Negotiations are now pending with Colombia to secure her assent to our building the canal. This canal will be one of the greatest engineering feats of the twentieth century; a greater engineering feat than has yet been accomplished during the history of mankind. The work should be carried out as a continuing project without regard to change of administration; and it should be begun under circumstances which will make it a matter of pride for all administrations to continue the policy.

the ground that Cuba must hereafter have closer political relations with us than with any other power. Thus in a sense Cuba has become a part of our international policy of the American continent, and we feel that in return she should be given some of the benefits of becoming part of our economic system. This makes it necessary that in return she should be given some of the benefits of becoming part of our economic system. This makes it necessary that in return she should be given some of the benefits of becoming part of our economic system.

**THE HAZUE TRIBUNAL.** Wherever possible, arbitration or some similar method should be employed in lieu of war to settle difficulties between civilized nations, although as yet the world has not progressed sufficiently to render it possible, or necessarily desirable, to invoke arbitration in every case. The formation of the Hague court, which sits at The Hague, is an event of good omen from which great consequences for the welfare of all mankind may be expected.

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The canal will be of great benefit to America, and of importance to all the world. It will be of advantage to us in that it will improve our military position. It will be of advantage to the countries of tropical America. It is earnestly to be hoped that all of these countries will do as some of them have already done with signal success, and will invite to their shores commerce by recognizing that stability and order are the prerequisites of successful development.

## A Pacific Cable.

During the fall of 1901 a communication was addressed to the Secretary of State, asking whether permission would be granted by the President to a corporation to lay a cable from a point on the California coast to the Philippine Islands by way of Hawaii. A statement of conditions of terms upon which such corporation would undertake to lay and operate a cable was volunteered. The Congress adjourned without taking any action, leaving the matter in exactly the same condition in which it stood when the Congress convened.

Meanwhile the Commercial Pacific Cable Company had proceeded with preparations for laying its cable. It also made application to the President for access to the use of soundings taken by the United States steamer *Nero*, for the purpose of discovering a practicable route for a trans-Pacific cable, pending consideration of the subject, it appeared important and desirable to attach certain conditions to the permission to examine and use the soundings. These conditions, among other things, a maximum rate of \$1,000,000 per annum should be paid for the use of the steamer *Nero*, which, being at present, as is well known, a British ship from Manila to Hong Kong.

The representatives of the cable company have, however, at length acceded to these conditions, and an all-American line between the Pacific coast and the Chinese empire by way of Honolulu and the Philippine Islands is thus provided for and is expected within a few months to be ready for business.

## Porto Rico Is Prosperous.

Of Porto Rico it is only necessary to say that the prosperity of the island and the wisdom with which it has been governed since such as to make it serve as an example of all that is best in insular administration.

## PEACE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Rights of Liberty and Government Reach Limit of Advisability. On July 4 last, on the 13th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, peace and amnesty were proclaimed in the Philippine Islands. Some trouble has since from time to time threatened with the Mohammedan Moros, but with the late insurrectionary Filipinos the war has entirely ceased. Civil government has now been introduced. Not only does each Filipino enjoy such rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as he has never before had in the recorded history of the islands, but the people taken as a whole now enjoy a measure of self-government under their own laws. The Philippine Islands, by any foreign power and greater than that enjoyed by any other Oriental people.

We have not gone too far in granting these rights of liberty and self-government; but we have certainly gone too far in the matter of retaining in the islands people themselves it was wise or just to go. To hurry matters, to go faster than we are now going, would entail calamity upon the islands. No policy ever entered into by the American people has vindicated itself in more signal manner than the policy of holding the Philippine Islands. The triumph of our arms, above all the triumph of our laws and the principles, has come sooner than we had any right to expect.

Constructive Citizenship. Taking the work of the army and the civil authorities together, it may be questioned whether anywhere else in modern times the people of a nation have done so much for the nation and so much for the world as the people of the Philippine Islands. High praise should also be given to the men, the officers and the privates, who have accepted the new conditions and joined with our representatives to work for the best that was possible for the welfare of the islands.

The army has been reduced to the minimum allowed by law. It is very small for the nation, and most certainly should be kept at the highest point of efficiency. The senior officers are given scant consideration in ordinary conditions, but in times of emergency they are called upon to do their duty in time of actual war. A system of maneuvering our army in bodies of some little size has been begun and should be steadily continued.

The measures providing for the reorganization of the militia system and for securing the highest efficiency in the national guard, which has already passed the House, should receive prompt attention and action.

**Naval Manoeuvres and the R. Object.** For the first time in our history naval manoeuvres on a large scale are being held for the purpose of testing the efficiency of the navy. Constantly increasing attention is being paid to the gunnery of the navy, but it is yet far from what it should be. I earnestly urge that the increase asked for by the Secretary of the Navy in the appropriation for improving the gunnery of the navy should be granted.

There should be no lack in the work of building up the navy, providing every available fighting craft. We are a very young country, and the navy is the one of our greatest assets. It is a matter of pride for our country that the United States and Mexico should have been the first to use the good offices of the Secretary of State, Mr. Blaine. I believe reciprocal trade relations will be greatly to the advantage of both.

**POSTAL REVENUES INCREASE.** Business Activity the Cause—Progress of Free Rural Mail Delivery. The striking increase in the revenues of the postal department shows clearly the prosperity of our people and the increasing activity of the business of the country. The receipts of the postoffice department for the fiscal year ending June 30 last amounted to \$121,848,647.28, an increase of \$10,216,852.87 over the preceding year, the largest increase known in the history of the post office. The magnitude of this increase will best appear from the fact that the entire postal receipts for the year 1899 amounted to but \$8,518,067.

Rural free delivery service is no longer in the experimental stage; it has become a fixed policy. The results following its introduction have fully justified the Congress in the large appropriations made for its establishment and extension. The average yearly increase in postoffice receipts in the rural districts of the country is 2.2 per cent. We are now able, by actual results, to show that where rural free delivery service has been established to such an extent as to enable us to make comparisons the yearly increase has been upward of 2 per cent.

On Nov. 1, 1902, 11,650 rural free delivery routes had been established and were in operation, covering about one-third of the territory of the United States available for rural free delivery service. There are now in the far West some 10,748 additional routes. This shows conclusively the want which the establishment of this service has met, and the need of further extending it as rapidly as possible. It is justified both by the direct results and by the indirect benefits to the rural population; it brings the men who live on the soil into close relations with the active business world; it keeps the farmer in direct touch with the markets; it is a potential educational force; it enhances the value of farm property, makes farm life pleasanter and more isolated, and will do much to check the undesirable current from country to city.

It is to be hoped that the Congress will make liberal appropriations for the continuation of the service already established and for its further extension.

**Irrigation of Arid Western Lands.** Few subjects of more importance have been taken up by the Congress in recent years than the inauguration of the system of nationally-aided irrigation for the arid regions of the far West. Good legislation therein has been made. Now that this policy of national irrigation has been adopted, the need of thorough and scientific forest protection will grow in importance throughout the publicland States.

So far as they are available for agriculture, and to whatever extent they may be reclaimed under national ownership, the remaining public lands should be held rigidly for the home builder, the settler who has made his home, and the farmer. In their actual use the desert land law, the timber and stone law, and the commutation clause of the homestead law have been so perfected from the intention of the law that they were enacted as to permit the acquisition of large areas of the public domain for other than actual settlers and the consequent preservation of settlement. Moreover, the approaching exhaustion of the public ranges has of late led to much discussion as to the limitations upon these public lands in the West which are suitable chiefly or only for grazing. The sound and steady development of the West depends upon the limitation of grazing therein. Much of our prosperity as a nation has been due to the operation of the homestead law. On the other hand, we should recognize the fact that in the past we have given the man who corresponds to the homesteader may be unable to settle permanently if only allowed to use the public lands of pasture land that his brother, the homesteader, is allowed to use of arable land.

## Alaska's Need of Better Laws.

I especially urge upon the Congress the need of legislation for Alaska. It is not to our credit as a nation that Alaska, which has been ours for thirty-five years, should still have as poor a system of laws as the case of Nevada, which has long been a valuable possession in mineral wealth, in fisheries, furs, forests, and also in land available for certain kinds of farming and stock raising. It is a strange and wasteful waste of resources, well fitted to support a large permanent population. Alaska needs a good land law and such provisions for homesteads and prairie grants as will encourage permanent settlement.

## How to Deal with the Indian.

In dealing with the Indians our aim should be their ultimate absorption into the body of our people. In many cases this absorption must and should be slow. In portions of the Indian Territory the mixture of blood has gone on at the same time with the progress of civilization, education, so that there are plenty of men with varying degrees of purity of Indian blood who are absolutely indistinguishable in point of social, political, and economic ability from their white associates. There are other tribes which have as yet made no perceptible advance toward such equality. To try to force such tribes fast to prevent their going forward at all.

The first and most important step toward the absorption of the Indian is to reach him to earn his living; yet it is not so easily to be assumed that in each community all Indians must become either tillers of the soil or stock raisers. Industries may properly be diversified, and those who show special desire or adaptability for industrial or even commercial pursuits should be encouraged in every practicable way to follow out his own bent. Every effort should be made to develop the Indian along the lines of natural aptitude, and to encourage the existing industries peculiar to certain tribes, such as the various kinds of basket weaving, canoe building, and such other handicrafts. Above all, the Indian boys and girls should be given confident command of English, and should ordinarily be prepared for a full and complete education, so that there are plenty of men with varying degrees of purity of Indian blood who are absolutely indistinguishable in point of social, political, and economic ability from their white associates. There are other tribes which have as yet made no perceptible advance toward such equality. To try to force such tribes fast to prevent their going forward at all.

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**Science Brought to Farmer's Aid.** In no department of government work in recent years has there been greater success than in that of giving scientific aid to the farming population, the farmer in the low most efficiently to help themselves. There is no need of insisting upon its importance for the welfare of the farmer in any way; it is a necessary part of the welfare of the republic as a whole. In addition to such work as quarantine against animal and vegetable plagues, and such other help which has been rendered to the farmer by the introduction of new plants specially fitted for cultivation under the conditions existing in different portions of the country.

The District of Columbia is the only part of our territory in which the national government exercises local or municipal functions, and where in consequence the government has a free hand in determining certain types of social and economic legislation which must be essentially local or municipal in their character. The government should see to it that the city contains the hygienic and sanitary legislation affecting Washington is of a high character. The evils of slum dwellings, whether in a shape of crowded and congested tenements districts or of the back alley type, should never be permitted to grow up in Washington. The city should be made a model every respect for all the cities of the country.

**Useless Growing Documents.** There is a growing tendency to provide for the publication of masses of documents for which there is no public demand and for the printing of which there is no real necessity. Nothing should be printed by any of the departments unless it contains something of permanent value, and the Congress could with advantage cut down very materially on all the printing which it has now become customary to provide.

Gratifying progress has been made during the year in the extension of the merit system of making appointments in the government service. It should be extended by law to the District of Columbia. It is much to be desired that our consular system be established by law on a basis providing for appointment and promotion only in consequence of proved fitness.

**Additions to President's Residence.** Through a wise provision of the Congress at its last session the White House, which had become disfigured by incongruous additions and changes, has now been restored to what it was to be by Washington. In making the restoration the most care has been exercised to come as near as possible to the early plans and to supplement these plans by the study of such buildings as that of the Jefferson, the White House is the property of the nation. The sturdy simplicity of its architecture is an expression of the character of the period in which it was built, and is in accord with the purposes which it was designed to serve. It is a good thing to preserve such buildings as historic monuments which keep alive our sense of continuity with the nation's past.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.