

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

In 1942, America and most nations were involved in World War II. Though it is not yet July 4, 2006, this address is as relevant today as it was in 1942.

July 4, 1942

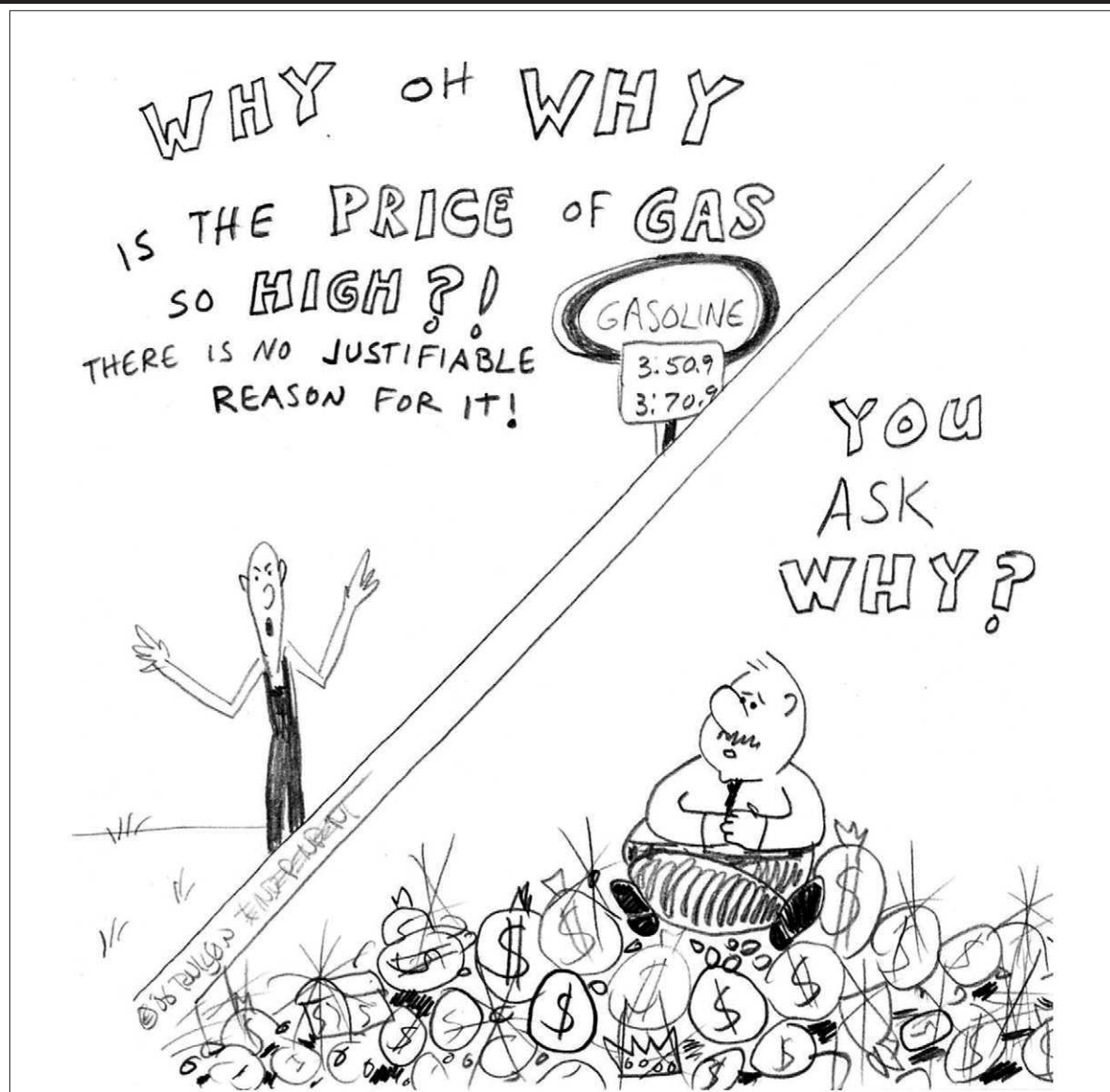
Address delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

For 166 years this Fourth Day of July has been a symbol to the people of our country of the democratic freedom which our citizens claim as their precious birthright. On this grim anniversary its meaning has spread over the entire globe--focusing the attention of the world upon the modern freedoms for which all the United Nations are now engaged in deadly war.

On the desert sands of Africa, along the thousands of miles of battle lines in Russia, in New Zealand and Australia, and the islands of the Pacific, in war-torn China and all over the seven seas, free men are fighting desperately--and dying--to preserve the liberties and the decencies of modern civilization. And in the overrun and occupied nations of the world, this day is filled with added significance, coming at a time when freedom and religion have been attacked and trampled upon by tyrannies unequalled in human history.

Never since it first was created in Philadelphia, has this anniversary come in times so dangerous to everything for which it stands. We celebrate it this year, not in the fireworks of make-believe but in the death-dealing reality of tanks and planes and guns and ships. We celebrate it also by running without interruption the assembly lines which turn out these weapons to be shipped to all the embattled points of the globe. Not to waste one hour, not to stop one shot, not to hold back one blow--that is the way to mark our great national holiday in this year of 1942.

To the weary, hungry, unequipped Army of the American Revolution, the Fourth of July was a tonic of hope and inspiration. So is it now. The tough, grim men who fight for freedom in this dark hour take heart in its message--the assurance of the right to liberty under God--for all peoples and races and groups and nations, everywhere in the world.



More on President Roosevelt's July 4, 1942 address:



Pres. Roosevelt's address was a call to the nation for maintaining vigilance amidst the nation's hour of darkness. Through his encouragement many continued working, not taking a day off on Independence Day.

"War agencies of the government operated regardless of the holiday. The War and Navy Departments put in a regular day's work, as did the Post Office and State Departments," and other agencies of the government.

"President Roosevelt set the example for the nation by scheduling a full day of

work at the White House." Many businesses and corporations in the private sector remained opened. Employees of IBM, for example, were hard at work. The few ceremonies held that day were mostly military-related exercises. In Philadelphia at the base of the Liberty Bell, 200 young men were inducted into the armed forces while in New York citizens there heard over 400 air raid sirens wail at noon. There was a marked absence of fireworks that night due to blackouts in all cities and towns. In Washington, D.C., "civilian protective forces" were in place.

(Source: New York Times, 5 July 1942, 23.) Researched by James R. Heintze. American University, Washington, D.C.

NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Thursday of each month. Because there are five Thursdays in June, the next issue will not be published until July 6, 2006.

The deadline for articles and ads for the July 6 issue will be Friday, June 30, 2006.