

Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms 80th Anniversary – 1943-2023 Paul Jehle



On January 6, 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt gave his State of the Union report to Congress. Eleven months before the Pearl Harbor attack, it was a rationale as to why we should aid Britain in its on-going war against Germany, Hitler and the Nazis. It was

also to give reasons why the U.S. should increase its readiness for war.

He had help from advisors and the address went through seven drafts, but the final one was his own creation. The four freedoms did not appear until the fourth draft. In his address, FDR endeavored to make the case that the war in Europe threatened freedom in the entire world. Toward the end of his speech, he stated: *“As men do not live by bread alone, they do not fight by armaments alone.”* He then articulated the values that are to endure in all our hearts.

... We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression...

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

The third is freedom from want... a healthy peace time life for its inhabitants...

The fourth is freedom from fear... no nation will... commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor – anywhere in the world.

The first two listed are embedded in the First Amendment of our Bill of Rights. The other two, *freedom from want*, and *freedom from fear* were articulated in the face of the challenges to defend liberty in the face of tyranny. All are based on America's *“faith in freedom under the guidance of God”* as FDR put it.



In our parade this year, depicting our overall theme of the price of freedom, watch for Norman Rockwell's 1943 portrayal of these four freedoms to remind us of our intrinsic values.