

January 2, 1933

[Retiring As Governor]

FDR Speech File

ADDRESS OF RETIRING GOVERNOR AND  
PRESIDENT-ELECT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

*At the inauguration of Governor Lehman of New York  
January 21, 1933*

On taking leave of you my friends, my neighbors and my associates, after four years in Albany, I could not fail to have many regrets at the parting. They have been happy years - made more so by the loyalty and common purpose of the many men and women who have so unselfishly aided me in the conduct of the administrative government of the State. To all of you who have been my colleagues, from the members of my cabinet on through all of the ranks of the Departments and the Civil Service, I extend my personal appreciation.

I have seen much of government of many kinds, and in many places, and I do not hesitate to say to the people of this State that their public servants in the Executive branch of the State Government take high rank for faithful service and high integrity.

Four years ago it fell to me to succeed a Governor who had set a standard founded on unselfish effort and a keen understanding of the needs of the people of the State. To maintain a government of definite action founded on liberal thought has been my aim. It is, therefore, of special moment both to Governor Smith and to myself that we see today the responsibility that was ours, passing into the hands of Governor Lehman.

Any Executive who has been able to put into practical effect a philosophy of government, a measure of accomplishment that transcends mere theory or the mere duties of routine administration, must rejoice that the thirteen million human beings within the borders of our State are to be led for at least two years to come by one who understands human needs and has the purpose to meet them.

A clear view must include all functions of governing. The Governor of this State, while giving full recognition to the desirability of home-rule in local affairs, must, at the same time, encourage every sensible effort to improve the efficiency of local government. Though we have been negligent in the past, the very times in which we live have focused attention on the comparative inefficiency in almost all of our lesser units.

The sovereignty of the state - in other words the people themselves - are, in my judgment rightly, asking both structural changes and the

elimination of unessential personnel and of unnecessary functions. Therein lies a definite relationship between the state governments and the localities themselves.

Less well-defined but of great importance, nevertheless, is another relationship - that between the government of the State and the Government of the federal union. The crisis has brought new problems, and at the same time, new possibilities, whereby Washington and the several state capitals may become more mutually helpful - especially in the matters which with increasing frequency involve overlapping functions. It is time to define more clearly where the federal machinery of government ends, and where the state machinery of government begins. It is time likewise for closer contacts between the President and the Governors.

That is another reason why I rejoice today in the privilege of taking part in the inauguration of my long-time friend and colleague, Governor Lehman. I shall have a friend in Albany and he will have a friend in Washington. In the years to come, may the people of our State give to him the same fine loyalty which they have been good enough to give to me.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

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