

October 2, 1933

[Chicago Century of Progress Exposition]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
CHICAGO CENTURY OF PROGRESS EXPOSITION  
October 2nd, 1933, 2 P.M.

(At the conclusion of the Luncheon given in the President's honor in the Administration Building, General Dawes said: "It was the President's express desire that there be no speech. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from telling him of the honor he has paid us in visiting our Grounds on this short visit to Chicago. It will be noted throughout the entire country and it greatly encourages us in the effort we are making in this Exposition to express the spirit of progress of the American people."

General Dawes then presented the President with a medal commemorating the Century of Progress as a souvenir.)

In spite of what Mr. Dawes has said about speech-making, while I am not going to make any speeches, I want to thank the Century of Progress for presenting this delightful medal.

I go back quite far in the history of the Century of Progress Exposition because I happened to come back in a steamer in May, 1931, with General Dawes who was on his way back from the Court of St. James with the job of raising six million dollars in the course of one week. I told him that he could not do it. (Laughter) Well, he did.

At the time of which I have been talking -- he

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.

(A) At the conclusion of the President's hour in the Administration Building, General Dawes said: "It was the President's express desire that there be no speech. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from telling him of the honor he has paid us in relating our grounds on this short visit to Chicago. It will be noted throughout the entire country and it greatly encourages us in the effort we are making in this respect to improve the spirit of progress of the American people."

General Dawes then presented the President with a medal commemorating the Century of Progress as a souvenir.

In spite of what Mr. Dawes has said about speech-making, while I am not going to make any speeches, I want to thank the Century of Progress for presenting this delightful medal.

I go back quite far in the history of the Century of Progress Exposition because I happened to come back in a steamer in May, 1921, with General Dawes who was on his way back from the Court of St. James with the job of raising six million dollars in the course of one week. I told him that he could not do it. (Laughter) Well, he did.

At the time of which I have been talking -- he

says I said it and I say he said it -- this was in May, 1931 -- at any rate, one of us said that it was entirely probable that the opening of the Century of Progress in the Spring of 1933 would synchronize with the beginning of the restoration of prosperity in the United States. (Applause) Well, it did, and I am very confident that the soil prepared here this year and the splendid success it has met, has been a real contribution to the restoration of prosperity in every part of the country. It has given us a symbol to go by.

I wish very much that I had the time and capacity to stay here for several days and really see the Century of Progress myself. It is a great disappointment to me that I cannot see the exhibits and the buildings and especially that I cannot be here at night and see them all illuminated. However, it is one of those things that usually turn up -- Cuba is not feeling quite so well this morning -- and I have to leave in the course of an hour or so.

It has been a great pleasure to be here. I congratulate you all on the splendid success of the Century of Progress and I wish there were an opportunity for everyone in the United States to have a chance to see it.

(Applause)