

August 14, 1936

[Die, Pennsylvania]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA  
August 14, 1936  
4.15 P.M.

(There were about 10,000 people present.)

My friends: I am very glad to stop in Erie, even if it is only for a minute.

One of the penalties of being on the main line here is that so many people go right through without stopping. (Laughter)

You know, I have one great memory about Erie. In the war days, in the Spring of 1917, when we decided on a great program of building destroyers for the Navy, we picked Erie as a place to make the shafts of those destroyers, and the record that was made here for speed and efficiency pleased everybody throughout the country.

I have been going around to a number of places on what I call a "look-see" trip. (Laughter) I wanted to see some of the conditions at first hand, the conditions in the flood area both of Pennsylvania and the southern tier of New York. I have been up in New England and in about ten days I am going out West to see the

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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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...I know, I have one great memory about Erie.  
In the early days, in the Spring of 1917, when we had  
on a great program of building destroyers for the Navy,  
we picked Erie as a place to make the keels of those  
destroyers, and the record that was made here for speed  
and efficiency pleased everybody throughout the country.  
I have been going around to a number of places  
on what I call a "jack-ass" trip. (Laughter) I wanted  
to see some of the conditions at that time, the condi-  
tions in the flood area both of Pennsylvania and the  
southern tier of New York. I have been up in New England  
and in about two days I am going out West to see the

opposite of floods, to see a number of states that have been very hard hit by the drought. I am doing this because I can get a much better picture of it and a much better understanding than if I sat at a desk in Washington. (Applause)

From all that I hear, Erie, in common with most parts of the country, is looking and acting a whole lot better than a few years ago. ("You are right." Applause)

So, my friends, it has been good to see you and I hope some day that it will be more than just a train stop.

August 14, 1936

[Cleveland Great Lakes Exposition]

FDR Speech File

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INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
CLEVELAND GREAT LAKES EXPOSITION  
CLEVELAND, OHIO  
August 14, 1936

President Crawford, Senator Bulkley, ladies and gentlemen: I am on a real holiday and having an exceedingly good time. I was very glad in fact when the radio announcer said that this was not going to be a political speech (interrupted by clatter of breaking dishes -- laughter) -- I was not only appreciative of the crash (laughter) but I took occasion to wiggle my finger with joy at my old college friend, Chester Bolton. I said I had learned a lot after that drive this morning. After we had gone about three-quarters of the way, the Mayor of Cleveland called attention to the large number of people, and I said, "How many people do you think I have seen?" He said, "Oh, about three million." (Laughter) I congratulate Cleveland on its growth. (Laughter - applause)

There was only one thing I was worried about. We have been trying to put people to work, but I am afraid that today the number of work hours accomplished in this charming city will be away below what they ought to be.

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President Roosevelt, Secretary Bailey, Ladies and

Gentlemen: I am on a real holiday and having an excellent

very good time. I am very glad to have you here.

announced said that this was not going to be a political

speech (interrupted by a burst of cheering and applause)

(laughter) -- I am not only appreciative of the cheer

(laughter) but I took occasion to wiggle my fingers with

joy at my old college friends, Chester Nelson. I said I

had learned a lot from that drive this morning. After

we had come about three-quarters of the way, the Mayor of

Uxbridge called attention to the large number of people

and I said, "How many people do you think I have seen?"

He said, "Oh, about three million." (laughter) I can-

graduate Uxbridge on the ground. (laughter - applause)

There was only one thing I am worried about.

We have been trying to put people to work, but I am afraid

that today the number of work hours accomplished in this

amounting will be very below what they ought to be.

This is the third exposition that I have gone to in 1936. The fact of three great expositions in the country -- and there is a fourth way out on the coast -- all running simultaneously in one year, means something. It means that things are a lot better in the country than they have been for some years past. I learned something else. I had always supposed that an exposition took anywhere from three to five years of planning before it was held. Now we know that we can stage one in six months if the community is behind it. (Applause)

I think you have rendered a real service, not merely to the City and the State, not merely to all of those states which border on the Great Lakes, but also to the whole of the country. I wish I could have spent a good many days, not only looking at the more serious exhibits, but also playing on the Midway. (Laughter)

I am trying to see, as you know, at this time of the year -- during the Summer -- at first hand some of the work which is being carried on by government of all kinds. I have been especially desirous of seeing work that was caused by -- not a depression, not man, but what



we used to call in the old days an act of God. That is why I have been visiting some of the flood areas in the East and shall visit more. That is why I am going out to the great drought area of the West -- because I believe that in seeing things at first hand I can get a better picture and I can have a more useful impression in Washington than if I merely sat at my desk there and read a great many pages of reports and looked at photographs.

What I have seen leads me to believe more and more that the country as a whole recognizes some of these great national problems, such as the prevention of floods and the curtailment of the consequences of drought, not merely from a local point of view but from a national point of view. The destruction of property, the loss of lives in a place like Johnstown, or on the Connecticut River in New England, the serious impairment of health, the destruction of crops and livestock in the far West -- all of these catastrophes affect those of us who are fortunate to live in places that have not been affected by flood and drought, and it is a very encouraging thing, I think, to all of us, to realize that the Nation as a

whole is looking at the Nation as a whole from a national point of view more and more with every passing year.

These expositions further strengthen that purpose of national understanding and national solidarity. I would like to see some exposition started somewhere that would have as its principal objective the drawing of a record number of people from the furthest points of the country as well as from points nearer home. The fact that people all over the East are visiting this Exposition in Cleveland -- that they are coming here from the South -- that the State of Florida put up a fine building here and that people from the Coast are stopping off on their way to and from the East, means that Cleveland is rendering a national service.

Incidentally, it is not just a question of education and instruction -- it is also a question of having a good time. A good many people in this country today are entitled to a good time after the things they have been through and especially after the courage with which they have faced difficult conditions during these past few years.

I am awfully proud of the American people. I was awfully proud, for instance, yesterday, to see the expressions

on the faces of the people of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, who, working together as a unit, came through a very serious disaster to their town. That spirit hasn't failed us in the past and it is not going to fail us in the future.

That is why I think I am entitled to say to you, on behalf of the Nation, that you are doing a fine job here in Cleveland -- a fine job for the Nation.

I only wish I could stay for a whole week and see it all.

## STATEMENTS FILE

Cleveland Great Lakes Exposition - Aug. 14, 1936.

President Crawford, Senator Bulkley, ladies and gentlemen: I am on a real holiday today and having an exceedingly good time. I was very glad in fact when the radio announcer said that this was not going to be a political speech (interrupted by clatter of breaking dishes -- laughter) -- I was not only appreciative of the crash (laughter) but I took occasion to ~~laugh~~ wiggle my finger with joy at my old college friend, Chester Bolton. I said I had learned a lot after that drive this morning. After we had gone about three quarters of the way, the Mayor of Cleveland called attention to the large number of people and I said, "How many people do you think I have seen?" He said, "Oh, about three million." (Laughter) I congratulate Cleveland on its growth. (Laughter - Applause)

There was only one thing I was worried about. We have been trying to put people to work but I am afraid ~~today~~ <sup>today</sup> that the number of work hours accomplished in this charming city will be away below what they ought to be.

This is the third exposition that I have gone to in 1936. The fact of three great expositions in the country -- and there is a fourth way out on the coast -- all running simultaneously in one year means something. It means that things are a lot better in the country than they

have been for some years past. I learned something else. I had always supposed that an exposition took any where from three to five years of planning before it was held. Now we know that we can stage one in six months ~~xxx~~ if the community is behind it. (Applause)

I think you have rendered a real service, not merely to the City and the State, not merely to all of those states which border on the Great Lakes, but also to the whole of the country. I wish I could have spent a good many days, not only looking at the more serious exhibits but also playing on the Midway. (Laughter)

I am trying to see, as you know, at this time of the year -- during the Summer -- at first hand some of the work which is being carried on by government of all kinds. I have been especially desirous of seeing work that was caused by -- not a depression, not man, but what we used to call in the old days an act of God. That is why I have been visiting some of the flood areas in the East and shall visit more. That is why I am going out to the great drought area of the West -- because I believe that in seeing things at first hand ~~we~~ <sup>I</sup> can get a better picture and I can have a more useful impression in Washington than if I merely sat at my desk there and read a great many pages of reports and looked at photographs. ~~It~~ <sup>What</sup> I have seen leads me to believe more and more that the country as a whole recognizes some of these great national problems, such as the prevention

of floods and the curtailment of the consequences of drought, not merely from a local point of view but from a national point of view. The destruction of property, the loss of lives in a place like Johnstown or on the Connecticut River in <sup>New England</sup> ~~Massachusetts~~, the serious impairment of health, the destruction of crops and livestock in the far West -- all of these catastrophes affect those of us who are fortunate to live in places that have not been affected by flood and drought, and it is a very encouraging thing I think to all of us to realize that the Nation as a whole is looking at the Nation as a whole from a national point of view more and more with every passing year.

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That is why I think I am entitled to say to you, on behalf of the Nation, that you are doing a fine job here in Cleveland -- a fine job for the Nation.

I only wish I could stay for a whole week and see it all.

End.