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**Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”**  
**The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945**

**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR  
and the New Deal**

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**File No. 912**

**1936 September 6**

**Fireside Chat #8 –  
Reporting on Drought Conditions**

48

Drought Etc. Sept. 6 - 1936

*Original Reading Copy*

I have been on a journey of husbandry. I went primarily to see at first-hand conditions in the drought states; to see how effectively Federal and local authorities are taking care of pressing problems of relief and also how they are to work together to defend the people of this country against the effects of future droughts.

I saw drought devastation in nine states.

I talked with families who had lost their wheat crop, lost their corn crop, lost their livestock, lost the water in their well, lost their garden and come through to the end of the summer without one dollar of cash resources, facing the winter without feed or food -- facing a planting season without seed to put in the ground.

That was the extreme case but there are thousands and thousands of families on western farms who share the same difficulties.

I saw cattlemen who because of lack of grass or lack of winter feed have been compelled to sell all but their breeding stock and will need help to carry even these through the coming winter. I saw livestock kept alive only because

water had been brought to them long distances in tank cars. I saw other farm families who have not lost everything but who because they have made only partial crops must have some form of help if they are to continue farming next spring.

I shall never forget the fields of wheat so blasted by heat that they cannot be harvested. I shall never forget field after field of corn stunted, earless and stripped of leaves, for what the sun left the grasshoppers took. I saw brown pastures which would not keep a cow on fifty acres.

Yet I would not have you think for a single minute that there is permanent disaster in these drought regions, or that the picture I saw meant depopulating these areas. No cracked earth, no blistering sun, no burning wind, no grasshoppers are a permanent match for the indomitable American farmers and stockmen and their wives and children who have carried on through desperate days, and inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity and their courage. It was their fathers' task to make homes; it is their task to keep those homes; it is our task to help them win their fight.

First let me talk for a minute about this autumn and the coming winter. We have the option, in the case of families who need actual subsistence, of putting them

on the dole or putting them to work. They do not want to go on the dole and they are one thousand percent. right. We agree, therefore, that we must put them to work for a decent wage; and when we reach that decision we kill two birds with one stone, because these families will earn enough by working, not only to subsist themselves, but to buy food for their stock, and seed for next year's planting. Into this scheme of things there fit of course the government lending agencies which next year, as in the past, will help with production loans.

Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of providing work for these farm families, just as every Governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.

If then we know, as we do today, the approximate number of farm families who will require some form of work relief from now on through the winter, we face the question of what kind of work they should do. Let me make it clear that this is not a new question because it has already been answered to a greater or less extent in every one of the

drought communities. Beginning in 1934, when we also had serious drought conditions, the state and Federal governments cooperated in planning a large number of projects -- many of them directly aimed at the alleviation of future drought conditions. In accordance with that program literally thousands of ponds or small reservoirs have been built in order to supply water for stock and to lift the level of the underground water to protect wells from going dry. Thousands of wells have been drilled or deepened; community lakes have been created and irrigation projects are being pushed.

Water conservation by means such as these is being expanded as a result of this new drought all through the Great Plains area, the western corn belt and in the states that lie further south. In the Middle West water conservation is not so pressing a problem. Here the work projects run more to soil erosion control and the building of farm to market roads.

Spending like this is not waste. It would spell future waste if we did not spend for such things now. These emergency work projects provide money to buy food and clothing for the winter; they keep the livestock on the farm; they provide seed for a new crop, and, best of all, they

will conserve soil and water in the future in those areas most frequently hit by drought.

If, for example, in some local area the water table continues to drop and the top soil to blow away, the land values will disappear with the water and the soil. People on the farms will drift into the nearby cities; the cities will have no farm trade and the workers in the city factories and stores will have no jobs. Property values in the cities will decline. If, on the other hand, the farms within that area remain as farms with better water supply and no erosion, the farm population will stay on the land and prosper and the nearby cities will prosper too. Property values will increase instead of disappearing. That is why it is worth our while as a nation to spend money in order to save money.

I have, however, used <sup>this</sup> the argument in relation only to a small area -- it holds good in its effect on the nation as a whole. Every state in the drought area is now doing and always will do business with every state outside it. The very existence of the men and women working in the clothing factories of New York, making clothes worn by farmers and

their families; of the workers in the steel mills in Pittsburgh, in the automobile factories of Detroit, and in the harvester factories of Illinois, depend upon the farmers' ability to purchase the commodities they produce. In the same way it is the purchasing power of the workers in these factories in the cities that enables them and their wives and children to eat more beef, more pork, more wheat, more corn, more fruit and more dairy products, and to buy more clothing made from cotton, wool and leather. In a physical and a property sense, as well as in a spiritual sense, we are members one of another.

I want to make it clear that no simple panacea can be applied to the drought problem in the whole of the drought area. Plans must depend on local conditions, for these vary with annual rainfall, soil characteristics, altitude and topography. Water and soil conservation methods may differ in one county from those in an adjoining county. Work to be done in the cattle and sheep country differs in type from work in the wheat country or work in the corn belt.

The great Plains Drought Area Committee has given me its preliminary recommendations for a long time program for that region. Using that report as a basis we are cooperating successfully and in entire accord with the Governors and state planning boards. As we get this program into operation the people more and more will be able to maintain themselves securely on the land. That will mean a steady decline in the relief burdens which the federal government and states have had to assume in time of drought; but, more important, it will mean a greater contribution to general national prosperity by these regions which have been hit by drought. It will conserve and improve not only property values, but human values. The people in the drought area do not want to be dependent on federal, state or any other kind of charity. They want for themselves and their families an opportunity to share fairly by their own efforts in the progress of America.

The farmers of America want a sound national agricultural policy in which a permanent land use program will have an important place. They want assurance against another year like 1932 when they made good crops but had to sell them for prices that meant ruin just as surely as did the drought. Sound policy must maintain farm prices in good crop years as well as in bad crop years. It must function when we have drought; it must also function when we have bumper crops.

The maintenance of a fair equilibrium between farm prices and the prices of industrial products is an aim which we must keep ever before us, just as we must give constant thought to the sufficiency of the food supply of the nation even in bad years. Our modern civilization can and should devise a more successful means by which the excess supplies of bumper years can be conserved for use in lean years.

On my trip I have been deeply impressed with the general efficiency of those agencies of the Federal, state and local governments which have moved in on the immediate task created by the drought. In 1934 none of us had preparation; we worked without blue prints and made the mistakes of inexperience. Hindsight shows us this. But as time has gone on we have been making fewer and fewer mistakes. Remember

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that the Federal and state governments have done only broad planning. Actual work on a given project originates in the local community. Local needs are listed from local information. Local projects are decided on only after obtaining the recommendations and help of those in the local community who are best able to give it. And it is worthy of note that on my entire trip, though I asked the question dozens of times, I heard no complaint against the character of a single works relief project.

The elected heads of the States concerned, together with their State officials and their experts from agricultural colleges and state planning boards have shown cooperation with and approval of the work which the Federal government has headed up. I am grateful also to the men and women in all these states who have accepted leadership in the work in their locality.

In the drought area people are not afraid to use new methods to meet changes in nature, and to correct mistakes of the past. If overgrazing has injured range lands, they are willing to reduce the grazing. If certain wheat lands should be returned to pasture they are willing to cooperate. If trees should be planted as wind-breaks or to stop erosion

they will work with us. If terracing or summer fallowing or crop rotation is called for they will carry them out. They stand ready to fit, and not to fight, the ways of nature.

We are helping, and shall continue to help the farmer to do those things, through local soil conservation committees and other co-operative local, state and federal agencies of government.

I have not the time tonight to deal with other and more comprehensive agricultural policies.

With this fine help we are tiding over the present emergency. We are going to conserve soil, conserve water and conserve life. We are going to have long-time defenses against both low prices and drought. We are going to have a farm policy that will serve the national welfare. That is our hope for the future.

There are two reasons why I want to end by talking about re-employment. Tomorrow is Labor Day. The brave spirit with which so many millions of working people are winning their way out of depression deserves respect and admiration. It is like the courage of the farmers in the drought areas.

That is my first reason. The second is that healthy employment conditions stand equally with healthy

agricultural conditions as a buttress of national prosperity. Dependable employment at fair wages is just as important to the people in the towns and cities as good farm income is to agriculture. Our people must have the ability to buy the goods they manufacture and the crops they produce. Thus city wages and farm buying power are the two strong legs that carry the nation forward.

Re-employment in industry is proceeding rapidly. Government spending was in large part responsible for keeping industry going and putting it in a position to make this re-employment possible. Government orders were the backlog of heavy industry; government wages turned over and over again to make consumer purchasing power and to sustain every merchant in the community. Businessmen with their businesses, small and large, had to be saved. Private enterprise is necessary to any nation which seeks to maintain the democratic form of government. In their case, just as certainly as in the case of drought-stricken farmers, government spending has saved.

Government having spent wisely to save it, private industry begins to take workers off the rolls of the government relief program. Until this Administration we had no free employment service, except in a few states and cities. Because

there was no unified employment service, the worker, forced to move as industry moved, often travelled over the country, wandering after jobs which seemed always to travel just a little faster than he did. He was often victimized by fraudulent practices of employment clearing houses, and the facts of employment opportunities were at the disposal neither of himself nor of the employer.

In 1933 the United States Employment Service was created - a cooperative State and Federal enterprise, through which the Federal Government matches dollar for dollar the funds provided by the States for registering the occupations and skills of workers and for actually finding jobs for these registered workers in private industry. The Federal-State cooperation has been splendid. Already employment services are operating in 32 States, and the areas not covered by them are served by the Federal Government.

We have developed a nation-wide service with seven hundred District offices, and one thousand branch offices, thus providing facilities through which labor can learn of jobs available and employers can find workers.

Last Spring I expressed the hope that employers would realize their deep responsibility to take men off the relief rolls and give them jobs in private enterprise.

Subsequently I was told by many employers that they were not satisfied with the information available concerning the skill and experience of the workers on the relief rolls. On August 25th I allocated a relatively small sum to the employment service for the purpose of getting better and more recent information in regard to those now actively at work on WPA projects - information as to their skills and previous occupations - and to keep the records of such men and women up-to-date for maximum service in making them available to industry. Tonight I am announcing the allocation of two and a half million dollars more to enable the Employment Service to make an even more intensive search than it has yet been equipped to make, to find opportunities in private employment for workers registered with it.

Tonight I urge the workers to cooperate with and take full advantage of this intensification of the work of the Employment Service. This does not mean that there will be any lessening of our efforts under our WPA and PWA and other work relief programs until all workers have decent jobs in private employment at decent wages. We do not surrender our responsibility to the unemployed. We have had ample proof that it is the will of the American people that those who represent them in national,

state and local government should continue as long as necessary to discharge that responsibility. But it does mean that the government wants to use <sup>scarcely</sup> resource to get private work for those now employed on government work, and thus to curtail to a minimum the government expenditures for direct employment.

Tonight I ask employers, large and small, throughout the nation to use the help of the state and Federal Employment Service whenever in the general pick-up of business they require more workers.

Tomorrow is Labor Day. Labor Day in this country has never been a class holiday. It has always been a national holiday. It has never had more significance as a national holiday than it has now. In other countries the relationship of employer and employee has been more or less accepted as a class relationship not readily to be broken through. In this country we insist, as an essential of the American way of life, that the employer-employee relationship should be one between free men and equals. We refuse to regard those who work with hand or brain as different from or inferior to those who live from their property. We insist that labor is entitled to as much respect as property. But our workers with hand and brain deserve more than respect for their labor. They deserve practical

protection in the opportunity to use their labor at a return adequate to support them at a decent and constantly rising standard of living, and to accumulate a margin of security against the inevitable vicissitudes of life.

The average man must have that twofold opportunity if we are to avoid the growth of a class conscious society in this country.

There are those who fail to read both the signs of the times and American history. They would try to refuse the worker any effective power to bargain collectively, to earn a decent livelihood and to acquire security. It is those shortsighted ones, not labor, who threaten this country with that class dissension which in other countries has led to dictatorship and the establishment of fear and hatred as the dominant emotions in human life.

All American workers, brain workers and manual workers alike, and all the rest of us whose well-being depends on theirs, know that our needs are one in building an orderly economic democracy in which all can profit and in which all can be secure from the kind of faulty economic direction which brought us to the brink of common ruin seven years ago.

There is no cleavage between white collar workers

and manual workers, between artists and artisans, musicians and mechanics, lawyers and accountants and architects and miners.

Tomorrow, Labor Day, belongs to all of us.

Tomorrow, Labor Day, symbolizes the hope of all Americans.

Anyone who calls it a class holiday challenges the whole concept of American democracy.

The Fourth of July commemorates our political freedom -- a freedom which without economic freedom is meaningless indeed. Labor Day symbolizes our determination to achieve an economic freedom for the average man which will give his political freedom reality.

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

September 6, 1936

I have been on a journey of husbandry. I went primarily to see at first hand conditions in the drought states; to see how effectively Federal and local authorities are taking care of pressing problems of relief and also how they are to work together to defend the people of this country against the effects of future droughts.

I saw drought devastation in nine states.

I talked with families who had lost their wheat crop, lost their corn crop, lost their livestock, lost the water in their well, lost their garden and come through to the end of the summer without one dollar of cash resources, facing a winter without feed or food -- facing a planting season without seed to put in the ground.

That was the extreme case, but there are thousands and thousands of families on western farms who share the same difficulties.

I saw cattlemen who because of lack of grass or lack of winter feed have been compelled to sell all but their breeding stock and will need help to carry even these through the coming winter. I saw livestock kept alive only because water had been brought to them long distances in tank cars. I saw

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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other farm families who have not lost everything but who, because they have made only partial crops, must have some form of help if they are to continue farming next spring.

I shall never forget the fields of wheat so blasted by heat that they cannot be harvested. I shall never forget field after field of corn stunted, earless and stripped of leaves, for what the sun left the grasshoppers took. I saw brown pastures which would not keep a cow on fifty acres.

Yet I would not have you think for a single minute that there is permanent disaster in these drought regions, or that the picture I saw meant depopulating these areas. No cracked earth, no blistering sun, no burning wind, no grasshoppers, are a permanent match for the indomitable American farmers and stockmen and their wives and children who have carried on through desperate days, and inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity and their courage. It was their fathers' task to make homes; it is their task to keep those homes; it is our task to help them with their fight.

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we must put them to work for a decent wage; and when we reach that decision we kill two birds with one stone, because these families will earn enough by working, not only to subsist themselves, but to buy food for their stock, and seed for next year's planting. Into this scheme of things there fit of course the government lending agencies which next year, as in the past, will help with production loans.

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Spending like this is not waste. It would spell future waste if we did not spend for such things now. These emergency work projects provide money to buy food and clothing for the winter; they keep the live stock on the farm; they provide seed for a new crop, and, best of all, they will conserve soil and water in the future in those areas most frequently hit by drought.

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no farm trade and the workers in the city factories and stores will have no jobs. Property values in the cities will decline. If, on the other hand, the farms within that area remain as farms with better water supply and no erosion, the farm population will stay on the land and prosper and the nearby cities will prosper too. Property values will increase instead of disappearing. That is why it is worth our while as a nation to spend money in order to save money.

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HOLD FOR RELEASE

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FOR THE PRESS

September 6, 1936

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House, is for release in editions of newspapers appearing on the streets not earlier than 9:45 P. M., EASTERN STANDARD TIME.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY

Assistant Secretary to the President

Kraft

Perkins

I have been on a journey of husbandry. I went primarily to see at first-hand conditions in the drought states; to see how effectively Federal and local authorities are taking care of pressing problems of relief and also how they are to work together to defend the people of this country against the effects of future droughts.

I saw drought devastation in nine states.

I talked with families who had lost their wheat crop, lost their corn crop, <sup>lost their live-stock,</sup> lost the water in their well, lost their garden and come through to the end of the summer without one dollar of cash resources, facing a winter without feed <sup>or food</sup> ~~for their cattle, their pigs or their chickens~~ -- facing a <sup>plenty of</sup> ~~spring~~ without seed to ~~sow~~ <sup>plant</sup> in the ground.

That was the extreme case but there are thousands and thousands of families on western farms who share the same difficulties.

I saw cattlemen who because of lack of grass or lack of winter feed have been compelled to sell all but their breeding stock and will need help to carry even these through the coming winter. I <sup>don't</sup> ~~have seen~~ live

stock kept alive only because water had been brought to them long distances in tank cars. I ~~have seen~~<sup>Q. and</sup> other farm families who have not lost everything but who because they have made only partial crops must have some form of help if they are to continue farming next spring.

I shall never forget the fields of wheat so blasted by heat that they cannot be harvested. I shall never forget field after field of corn stunted, earless and stripped of leaves, for what the sun left the grasshoppers took. I ~~have seen~~<sup>Q. and</sup> brown pastures which would not ~~support~~<sup>keep</sup> a cow on fifty acres.

Yet I would not have you think for a single minute that there is permanent disaster in these drought regions, or that the picture I saw meant depopulating these areas. No cracked earth, no blistering sun, no burning ~~wheat~~<sup>wind</sup>, no grasshoppers are a permanent match for the indomitable American <sup>and stockman</sup> farmers and their wives and children who have carried on through desperate days, and inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity and their courage. It was their fathers' task to make ~~these~~ homes; it is their task to keep <sup>o</sup> these homes; it is our task to help them win their fight.

First let me talk for a minute about this autumn and the coming Winter. We have the option, in the case of families who need actual subsistence, of putting them on the dole or putting them to work. They do not want to go on the dole and they are one thousand percent. right. We agree <sup>therefore,</sup> that we must put them to work for a decent wage; and when we reach ~~that~~ that decision we kill ~~two~~ two birds with one stone, because these families will earn enough by working, not only to subsist themselves, but to buy food for their stock, and seed for next year's planting. Into this scheme of things ~~these~~ fit of course the government lending agencies which next year, as in the past, will help with production loans.

Every Governor with whom I have talked is in full accord with this program of providing work for these farm families, just as every Governor agrees that the individual states will take care of their unemployables but that the cost of employing those who are entirely able and willing to work must be borne by the Federal Government.

If then we know, as we do today, the approximate number of farm families who will require some form of work relief from now on through the winter, we face the question of what kind of work they should do. Let me make it clear

that this is not a new question because it has already been answered to a greater or less extent in every one of the drought communities. Beginning in 1934, when we also had serious drought conditions, the state and Federal governments cooperated in planning a large number of projects -- ~~many large number~~ <sup>in many</sup> of them directly aimed at the alleviation of future drought conditions. In accordance with that program literally thousands of ponds or small reservoirs have been built in order to supply water for stock and to lift the ~~water table~~ <sup>level of the underground water</sup> to protect wells from going dry. Thousands of wells have been drilled or deepened; community lakes have been created and irrigation projects are being pushed.

Water conservation by means such as these is being expanded as a result of this new drought all through the Great Plains area, the western corn belt and in the states that lie further south. ~~Further south~~ <sup>Go</sup> in the Middle West water conservation is not ~~so~~ pressing a problem. Here the work projects run more to soil erosion control and the building of farm to market roads.

Spending like this is not waste. It would spell future waste if we did not spend for such things now. These emergency work projects provide money to buy food and clothing for the winter; they keep the live stock on the farm; they provide seed for a new crop, and, best of all, they will conserve soil and water in the future in those areas most frequently hit by drought.

If, for example, in some local area the water table continues to drop and the top soil to blow away, the ~~land~~ <sup>land</sup> ~~estate~~ values will disappear with the water and the soil. People on the farms will drift into the nearby cities; the cities will have no farm trade and the workers in the city factories and stores will have no jobs. Property values in the cities will decline. If, on the other hand, the farms within that area remain as farms with better water supply and ~~no~~ <sup>no</sup> erosion, the farm population will stay on the land and prosper and the nearby cities will prosper too. Property values will increase instead of disappearing. That is why it is worth our while as a nation to spend money <sup>in order to</sup> to save money.

I have, however, used the argument in relation only to a small area → it holds good in its effect on the nation as a whole. Every state in the drought area is now doing and always will do business with every state outside it. The very existence of the men and women working in the clothing factories of New York, making clothes worn by farmers and their families; <sup>of</sup> the workers in the steel mills in Pittsburgh, in the automobile factories of Detroit, and in the harvester factories of ~~Chicago~~ <sup>Illinois</sup>, depend upon the farmers' ability to purchase the commodities they produce. In the same way it is the purchasing power of the workers in these factories in the cities that enables them and their wives and children to eat more beef, more pork, more wheat, more corn, more fruit and more dairy products, and to buy more clothing made from cotton, wool and leather. In a physical and a property sense, as well as in a spiritual sense, we are members one of another.

I want to make it clear that no simple panacea can be applied to the drought problem in the whole of the drought area. Plans must depend on local conditions, for

these vary with annual rainfall, soil characteristics, altitude and topography. Water and soil conservation methods may differ in one county from those in <sup>an</sup> ~~the~~ adjoining counties. Work to be done in the cattle country <sup>and where</sup> differs in type from work in the wheat country or work in the corn belt. <sup>A</sup> The great Plains Drought Area Committee has given me its preliminary recommendations for a long time program for that region. Using that report as a basis we are cooperating <sup>successfully</sup> with the <sup>state</sup> government and state planning boards, ~~successfully, and with~~ <sup>in the</sup> ~~entire record~~ <sup>record</sup>. As we get this program into operation the people more and more will be able to maintain themselves securely on the land. That will mean a steady decline in the relief burdens which the federal government and states have had to assume in time of drought; but, more important, it will mean a greater contribution to general national prosperity by these regions which have been hit by drought. It will conserve and improve not only property values, but human values. The people in the drought area do not want to be dependent on federal, state or any other kind of ~~charity~~ <sup>charity</sup>. They want for themselves and their ~~skitxax~~ families and opportunity to share fairly by their own efforts in the progress of America.

The farmers of America want a sound national agricultural policy in which a permanent land use program will have an important place. They want assurance against another year like 1932 when they made good crops but had to sell them for prices that meant <sup>ruin</sup> ~~a financial loss~~ just as surely as did the drought. Sound policy must maintain farm prices in good crop years as well as in bad crop years. It must function when we have drought; it must also function when we have bumper crops.

The maintenance of a fair equilibrium between farm prices and the prices of industrial products is an aim which we must keep ever before us, just as we must give constant thought to the sufficiency of the food supply of the nation even in bad years. ~~Perhaps~~ <sup>Our</sup> modern civilization can and should devise <sup>a more successful</sup> ~~ways and~~ means by which the excess supplies of bumper years can be conserved for use in lean years.

On my trip I have been deeply impressed with the general efficiency of those agencies of the Federal, state and local governments which have moved in on the immediate task created by the drought. In 1934 none of us had preparation; we ~~made~~ worked without blue prints and made the mistakes of inexperience. Hindsight shows us this. But as time has gone on we have been making fewer and fewer mistakes. Remember

that the Federal and state governments <sup>have done</sup> ~~are~~ only broad planning. Actual work on a given project originates in the local community. Local needs are listed from local information. Local projects are decided on only after obtaining the recommendations and help of those in the local community who are best able to give it. And it is worthy of note that on my entire trip, though I asked the question dozens of times, I heard no complaint against the character of a single works relief project.

The elected heads of the States concerned, together with their State officials and their experts from agricultural colleges and state planning boards have shown cooperation with and approval of the work which the Federal government has headed up. I am grateful also to the men and women in all these states who have accepted leadership in the work in their locality.

*Amint 8-10*

With this fine help we are tiding over the present emergency. We are going to conserve soil, conserve water and conserve life. We are going to have long-time defenses against both low prices and drought. We are going to have a farm policy that will serve the national welfare. That is our hope for the future.

Inserting 9

people are

In The drought area ~~the selected~~ ~~population is~~  
not afraid to use new methods ~~to~~ to meet changes in  
nature, and to correct mistakes of the past. If over-  
grazing has injured range lands, they are willing to reduce  
the grazing. If certain wheat lands should be returned to  
pasture they are willing to cooperate. If trees should be  
planted as wind-breaks or to stop erosion they will work with  
us. If ~~turning~~ or summer fallowing or ~~grass~~ crop <sup>rotation</sup> ~~rotation~~  
is called for they will carry them out. They stand ready to  
fit, and not to fight, the ways of nature.

We are helping, and shall continue  
to help the farmer to do three things,  
through local soil conservation committees  
and other co-operative local, state and  
federal agencies of government.

I have not the time tonight to  
deal with other and more comprehensive  
agricultural policies.

There are two reasons why I want to end by talking about re-employment. Tomorrow is Labor day. The brave spirit with which so many millions of working people are winning their way out of depression deserves respect and admiration. It is like the courage of the farmers in the drought areas.

That is my first reason. The second is that healthy employment conditions stand equally with healthy agricultural conditions as a buttress of national prosperity. Dependable employment at fair wages is just as important to the people in the towns and cities as good farm income is to agriculture. Our people must have the ability to buy the goods they manufacture and the crops they produce. Thus city wages and farm buying power are the two strong legs that carry the nation forward.

Re-employment in industry is proceeding rapidly. Government spending was in large part responsible for keeping industry going and putting it in a position to make this re-employment possible. Government orders were the backlog of heavy industry; government wages turned over and over again to make consumer purchasing power and sustain every merchant in the community. Businessmen with their businesses, small and large, <sup>had to be saved</sup> ~~were worth saving~~. <sup>Private enterprise is necessary</sup> ~~They are needed~~ in any nation

which seeks to maintain the democratic form of government. In their case, just as certainly as in the case of drought-stricken farmers, government spending has saved.

Government having spent wisely to save it, private industry begins to take workers off the rolls of the government relief program. Until this Administration we had no free employment service, except in a few states and cities. Because there was no unified employment service, the worker, forced to move as industry moved, often travelled over the country, wandering after jobs which seemed always to travel just a little faster than he did. He was often victimized by fraudulent practices of employment clearing houses, and the facts of employment opportunities were at the disposal of neither of himself nor of the employer.

In 1933 the United States Employment Service was created - a cooperative State and Federal enterprise, through which the Federal Government matches dollar for dollar the funds provided by the States for registering the occupations and skills of workers and for actually finding jobs for these registered workers in private industry. The Federal-State cooperation has been splendid. Already employment services

are operating in 32 States, and the areas not covered by them are served by the Federal government. ⑦

We have developed a nation-wide service with seven hundred District offices, and one thousand branch offices, thus providing facilities through which labor ~~has an~~ opportunity <sup>can</sup> to learn of jobs available and employers can ~~have~~ ~~access to labor supply.~~ find workers.

Last Spring I expressed the hope that employers would realize their deep responsibility to take men off the relief rolls and give them jobs in private ~~industry~~ enterprise. Subsequently I ~~have been~~ <sup>was</sup> told by many employers that they ~~are~~ <sup>were</sup> not satisfied with the information ~~was~~ available concerning the skill and experience of the workers on the relief rolls. On August 25th I allocated a relatively small sum to the employment service for the purpose of getting better and more recent information in regard to those now actively at work on WPA projects - information as to their skills and previous occupations - and to keep the records of such men and women up-to-date for maximum service in making them available to industry.

Tonight I am announcing the allocation of two and a half million dollars more to enable the Employment Service to make an even more intensive search than it has yet been equipped to make, to find opportunities in private employment for workers registered with it.

Tonight I urge the workers to cooperate with and take full advantage of this intensification of the work of the Employment Service. This does not mean that there will be any lessening of our efforts under our WPA and PWA and other work relief programs until all workers have decent jobs in private employment at decent wages. We do not surrender our responsibility to the unemployed. We have had ample proof that it is the will of the American people that those who represent them in national, state and local government should continue as long as necessary to discharge that responsibility. But it does mean that the government wants to use <sup>wisdom</sup> ~~every means in its power~~ to get private work for those now employed on government work, and thus to curtail to a minimum the government expenditures for direct employment.

Tonight I ask employers, large and small, throughout the nation to use the help of the state and Federal Employment Service whenever in the general pick-up of business they require more workers.

Tomorrow is Labor day. Labor <sup>Day</sup> in this country has never been a class holiday. It has always been a national holiday. It has never had more significance as a national holiday than it has now. In other countries the relationship of employer and employee has been more or less accepted as a class relationship not readily to be broken through. In this country we insist, as an essential of the American way of life, that the employer-employee relationship should be one between free men and equals. We refuse to regard those who work with hand or brain as different from or inferior to those who live from their property. We insist that labor is entitled to as much respect as property. But our workers with hand and brain deserve more than respect for their labor. They deserve practical protection in the opportunity to use their labor at a return adequate to support them at a decent and constantly rising standard of living, and to accumulate a margin of security against the inevitable vicissitudes of life.

~~We must give~~ <sup>must have</sup> the average man that twofold opportunity

~~unmistakably~~ <sup>Q-2</sup>, if we ~~wish~~ to avoid the growth of a class conscious society in this country.

There are those who fail to read both the signs of the times and American history. They would try to refuse the worker any effective power to bargain collectively, to earn a decent livelihood and to acquire security. It is those shortsighted ones, not labor, who threaten this country with that class dissension which in other countries <sup>led</sup> led to dictatorship and the establishment of fear and hatred as the dominant emotions in human life.

All American workers, brain workers and manual workers alike, and all the rest of us whose well-being depends on theirs, know that our ~~interest~~ needs are one in building an orderly economic democracy in which all can profit and in which all can be secure from the kind of faulty economic direction which brought us to the brink of common ruin seven years ago.

There is no cleavage between white collar workers and manual workers, between artists and artisans, musicians and mechanics, lawyers and accountants and architects and miners.

Tomorrow, Labor day, belongs to all of us. Tomorrow, Labor day, symbolizes the hope of all Americans. Anyone who <sup>calls it</sup> ~~challenges it as~~ a class holiday challenges the whole concept of American democracy.

The Fourth of July commemorates our political freedom -- a freedom which without economic freedom is meaningless indeed. Labor day symbolizes our determination to achieve an economic freedom for the average man which will give his political freedom reality.

By or through  
Hessick

~~Indust. Eng.  
State. Gov. N.Y.~~

This morning I returned from an inspection journey into the drouth area. The trip took me, and others responsible for the government's drouth relief operations, over a route of nearly five thousand miles and into the heart of the region where the drouth has done its worst. Tonight I want to report to the nation upon the effects of drouth as I myself have seen them. I want to talk with you about the emergency measures which are already being taken and which must be expanded in order to bring hundreds of thousands of human beings safely through the winter months. More than that, I want to discuss the need for a long-time program to create effective future defenses against drouth. I am convinced that such a great program would be in the interests of the national welfare and that it should soon take its place as a permanent part of sound national agricultural policy. Remember that while drouth has cheated many farmers out of their 1936 share in the general farm advancement, the income of agriculture as a whole shows another big gain this year. These gains must be preserved and we must go on to great progress in the future.

In the past ten days I have seen broad fields of grain so blasted by heat that they were never out. I have seen field after field of corn that was stunted and earless, range that had been ruined by overgrazing and drouth and pastures that had no green grass in them. I have seen men and women and children who had to depend on tank car shipments of water to drink. And in several places I have shared first-hand in the encouragement that new rains brought.

Traveling over the great plains and the corn belt, I have seen new and inspiring evidence of the courage of our people. They are determined to win through and stay on the land. I came back to Washington with the profound conviction that with their cooperation the nation is not going to let drouth stop our recovery but that we will continue our advance of the past three years. We can and must give farmers greater security by developing permanent defenses against drouth in the future. We must strengthen our farm program to give agriculture the assurance of better days to come.

I wish that all of you listening tonight could have been with me to see for yourselves what I have seen. And I would like to have included especially any who in the security of homes perhaps in cities remote from drouth may look upon agricultural production as being merely a local

matter without relation to the national welfare and without function except to produce cheap food. I am sure that for them as for me the drouth trip would have demonstrated the interdependence of different groups of our people and the links that bind city and country into a common whole. It would have demonstrated beyond any possible doubt that such vast economic problems as drouth are in fact national problems. The national government must be equipped with powers to help states and communities to deal with them. Because often the individual citizen is helpless to deal with them alone.

I talked with farmers who have lived twenty years or more in the plains area. Many were made destitute by drouth and I have seen these men at work on WPA and Resettlement Administration projects. They love their homes and they love the land. They want to remain there. Their WPA wages will help them to stay, ready to produce food for the nation in future years. I saw farmers who have had to haul water for miles this year, helping to build dams in the draws and coulees of the Great Plains. They told me how thousands of ponds back of such dams will supply water for stock and lift the water table to protect wells from going dry. These emergency work projects provide money to buy food and clothing for the winter. They are a start

toward a long-time program to make the country a better place to live in. City people have many reasons for deep sympathy with these operations. For one thing, the cities have their own employment problems and these works projects keep drouth-stricken farmers from swelling the ranks of the city unemployed.

In my visits with farmers and conferences with officials and planning boards of a dozen states, we have studied three different phases of the drouth problem. These are, first, action to meet the emergency this summer and fall; second, emergency measures for the coming winter to keep people from suffering from hunger and cold, to provide seed for a new crop and feed to carry live stock through to spring; and third, the long-time program for permanent betterment of the people and conservation of soil and water in the areas most frequently hit by drouth.

In both its emergency and long-time phases, the drouth problem is related to the general problem of employment and relief. Later in this talk I want to deal with that problem. We have now reached a point where recovery is solid and where industry is absorbing and can continue to absorb more and more of those who have been on work relief rolls.

With this in view, the government plans a new and systematic effort to help those on work relief to get better jobs in private industry. But before reaching definite conclusions, I wanted to see the drouth areas at first-hand because in them we will need for some months to concentrate upon preventing hunger and suffering until these regions also gain their full share of national recovery.

At Bismarok, the Great Plains Drouth Area Committee reported to me its preliminary recommendations for a long-time program for that region. With this report as a basis, I am sure we can work out with state planning boards effective ways to cooperate with nature instead of fighting against nature. As we get such a program into operation the people will more and more be able to maintain themselves securely on the land. This will mean a steady decline in the relief burdens which the Federal Government and the States have had to assume in time of drouth. More important still, it will mean greater contributions to national prosperity by the regions hit by drouth. It will mean the conserving of human values too precious to estimate. The people in the drouth areas do not want to be dependent upon Federal, State or any other kind of charity. They want for themselves and their children an opportunity to share fairly

by their own efforts in the progress of America.

Responsibility for conditions in the Great Plains area often does not rest with the individual farmers. In many cases the Federal Government itself is responsible. During the war by appeals to patriotism it encouraged the farmers to plow up for wheat millions of acres which should have been left in grass. By a mistaken homesteading policy, thousands of farm families were settled on tracts of land so small or so poor that the people became the condemned victims of recurring drouth. By 1920 we began to reap the results of the twin evils of periodic price collapse and planless settlement. These results have included aimless migrations of people to and from chronic drouth areas, loss of farm homes, and an alarming increase in tenancy in the plains and corn belt states. All told, our lack of planning cost a vast amount of needless human suffering.

*Figures  
like c  
drouth.*

It is high time to undo some of these mistakes. It is high time for adoption of a program to develop and maintain the best possible income and standard of living for this region. What the farmers in the drouth regions want is not only help for the present. They need hope and assurance for the future. Not merely jobs, not merely relief grants, not merely seed or feed loans -- though these pressing needs are now, thank God,

recognized as too vital to be neglected as it was the habit to neglect them a few short years ago.

The farmers of America want a sound national agricultural policy, a policy in which a permanent land use program will have an important place. Without the assurance of a better time to come, what farmer wants to fight through the next twelve months? If he can only see ahead of him another 1932 -- if he gets a good crop -- or another 1936 -- if he gets a poor one -- why should he struggle?

Collapse of farm prices can ruin farmers just as completely as a drouth, with effects upon business just as devastating. Therefore, sound national agricultural policy must maintain farm income in good crop years as well as bad. It must function when drouth visits itself upon us. It must also function when we have bumper crops.

Such a policy can be the nation's great gift to agriculture. Such a policy will mean a large scale effort to bring about better land use. The farmers clearly need help in expanding their programs for conserving soil and water. These programs must encourage expansion of acreages of drouth-resistant and soil-building crops in some areas and summer-fallowing in others. The problem, of course, shows wide regional variations

and the remedy must be adapted carefully to local needs. Right now in the Great Plains and western part of the corn belt we can concentrate the work of men made destitute by drouth upon expansion of pond and dam building, so that any future drouth will find these regions supplied with thousands of watering places to help man and animal through. Other areas have other plans better suited to their special needs. In some places, irrigation by pumping in river valleys would permit reserve feed supplies to be grown in dry years. Some places are greatly interested in planting trees, creating natural windbreaks to check wind erosion and in restoring grass cover. Dams on the headwaters of streams will help transform flood dangers into drouth preventives. We need to push forward vigorously our programs of soil building and erosion prevention, and we need to preserve our ranges from overgrazing in the future. The whole problem of better land use is one which has interested me for many years, first in my home state of New York and then throughout the nation.

The farmers want to stay on the land and they should have the soil, the water and the acreage that will maintain a family on a good standard of living in average years. I think a good many states will want to push their soil surveys ahead so as to reveal those families which are not now so situated and

which therefore have been fighting a losing fight.

While we are forging ahead with the program of soil and water conservation and adapting it to local needs, we must keep constantly in mind the other vital factors in sound national agricultural policy. We must remember the essential factors of price, of stability of farm income and of sufficiency of food supply even in bad years. The AAA benefit payments gave farmers assurance of income, even when drouth destroyed their crops. This year the Triple A's soil conservation payments will serve the same good purpose. But I believe we can make still more use of the socially great principle of insurance. Even where grain yields are widely variable, each region can minimize its risks by crop insurance with premiums and compensation paid in kind - that is, for example, paid in wheat if the wheat farmers should want to be the first to utilize crop insurance. In this way, excess supplies of the bumper years can be conserved for use in poor years, just as in ancient Egypt Joseph stored his grain of the seven good years for use in the lean years. We need a modern adaption of the Joseph plan, safeguarded to prevent the stored surplus from ruinously depressing the market as the Farm Board let it do. Grain held in an insurance pool against the time of drouth would protect both farmer and consumer from the hardships

of excessive swings in weather, prices and supplies. The Triple A corn loan and storage plan worked out like insurance and except for small administrative expense it didn't cost the government a cent but netted a little profit. For that matter, many of us have life insurance, accident, liability and fire insurance and the protection is worth far more to society than it costs. Why shouldn't the farmers have crop insurance? Crop insurance, conservation of soil and water, better land use and fair and stable farm income are keystones in sound agricultural policy.

To accomplish these things will require the co-operation of states, communities and individuals. It will require general public sympathy and support, without which we could not do much of anything. We will need more help from state planning boards and farmers' state and county conservation committees. The national should be wholeheartedly grateful for the earnest and intelligent assistance which already has been given by the men and women who have accepted leadership in the work in their localities.

In the past ten days' conferences with the Governors, the elected heads of the states concerned showed cooperation with and approval of the work which the Federal Government has headed up. They showed a desire that the Federal agencies

involved shall continue not only their present efforts but also their plans for the future. Such cooperation is of great importance. It means for example that the state agricultural colleges will work with the United States Department of Agriculture in conducting surveys of soil and of surface and underground water supplies, in gathering information about feed and seed for next year's crops and in adapting all programs to regional needs and potentialities. It means that the state authorities also cooperate through local agencies in checking up with the Works Progress and Resettlement Administrations on the actual living conditions in families that need help. Furthermore, each project on which families needing help are put to work is checked, approved and in most cases initiated by local authorities before the work begins. It is an interesting fact that on the entire trip over country in which many thousands of these work projects are completed or under way, I did not hear one complaint of the character of a single project.

With this kind of cooperation, I believe we can carry on a national agricultural policy which will mean greater prosperity and more security for all the people. In the months while we have to fight to keep folks alive, we will make that fight, knowing it must be made and knowing that local and state cooperation will be forthcoming. But at the same time, we are

going to promise ourselves that a longer and harder fight also will be made to do more than just keep people alive. We are going to struggle for a program for the next year and the next toward the day when the drouth area farmer can stand up under almost any kind of a blow from the weather. We are going to conserve soil, conserve water and conserve life. We are going to have long-time defenses against both low prices and drouth. We are going to have a farm policy that will serve the national welfare. That is our hope for the future.

There are two reasons why I choose to end this talk with a discussion of employment problems. Tomorrow is Labor day. Tonight seems a fitting time to invite the nation to join on the morrow in a tribute to labor. The brave spirit with which so many millions of working people have come back and are winning their way out of depression deserves the sincerest respect and admiration. It is like the courage of the farmers in the drouth areas.

That is my first reason. The second is that healthy employment conditions stand equally with healthy agricultural conditions as a buttress of national prosperity. Dependable employment at fair wages is just as important to the people in the towns and cities as good farm income is to

agriculture. We learned in depression and the lesson is being driven home by recovery that mass production must be balanced by mass purchasing power. Our people must have the ability to buy the goods that they create. Thus city employment and farm buying power might be called two strong legs which carry the nation forward.

Step by step they have been keeping pace. Three short years ago the problem of feeding and caring for the unemployed was the gravest of all the crises with which the Federal Government was faced.

By 1932, the problem of unemployment had reached a state as bad as the situation that then confronted agriculture. The collapse of industry was lengthening breadlines. Millions of jobless people were fearful of hunger, and for too many those fears came true.

Most of our people were agreed that such conditions were not humane and that it was not right and not even safe to neglect them any longer. Of course there were objections from a few selfish or shortsighted interests. But I was sure then and I am still sure that the vast majority of our people were united with Congress and with me, and that our great democracy had made its decision to take the course of action that was for

the public good. We had to act and we did act. The powers and agencies of the Federal Government were put to use. We sought and secured the cooperation of states and communities in a large scale effort to get jobless people back to work. If they could not get work in private industry the government put them to work. I hear it said that there have been mistakes in administration. I answer that of course there have been mistakes and these we are correcting. But the substitution of a federal employment program for the dangers the nation faced in nineteen thirty two and early thirty three was no mistake. It was democracy's determination to shake off defeat and go forward instead of backward.

Since those dark days great gains have been made. More than five million men who were made jobless by depression have now gone back to private employment. In fact, our degree of gain in farm income has a close parallel in the advance made in factory payrolls. Industrial improvement is continuing at the present time. Almost every index we have of business conditions reflects healthy improvement. Within the past year industry has shown a gain of just about one million workers. In that time there has been an increase in the amount paid out in weekly wages of almost forty-two million dollars. The recovery this represents in the buying power of city consumers, together with the improved

purchasing power of agriculture as a whole, is reflected in much better incomes for professional people, for white collar workers and businessmen in towns and cities.

The Federal Government under my Administration proposes to carry on its program of re-employment. We are not going to risk slipping back into the chaos of 1932. If men who need work to sustain the lives of themselves, their wives and their children cannot find it in private employment, then the government will do its best to give them work on useful public projects.

But what I am sure the nation most wants accomplished for agriculture, it also most wants accomplished for employment. Labor does not want to look forward to just some job, just any job on a works project. These jobs have been life-giving in emergency, and far better than to be idle and hungry. But more than just a job most people want healthy business and industrial recovery - recovery that will restore opportunities to work and grow and look forward to advancement. That is our hope, and that is the aim of our employment program.

So, as a vital part of its industrial recovery plans, the Federal Government has equipped itself with machinery to help people on work relief find better places in private

employment. This is the United States Employment Service which was established by Act of Congress early in the summer of 1933. (One of the services to American labor and American industry of Senator Robert F. Wagner and Representative Theodore F. Poyser of New York was their sponsorship of that legislation) The United States Employment Service has functioned steadily and well. It has won the staunch support of organized labor and the cooperation of an ever-increasing number of employers. It will have an important part in carrying out the social security program now getting under way. In three years ending last June thirtieth, the United States Employment Service has in three and a half million instances found either temporary or regular jobs in private industry for workers registered with it. In order to help men find jobs, this Service keeps a complete record of the address, experience and aptitude of each man registered -- and there have been nearly twenty-three million such records to keep. It is a democratic, cooperative enterprise, working closely with the state and local governments and their employment agencies, and matching dollar for dollar the funds provided by state and local subdivisions. I believe the United States Employment service has the public confidence. The fact that in no year since

its establishment have the local contributions of funds for its support been less than a million dollars would seem to prove it.

Our solid and encouraging industrial recovery now creates an opportunity to make greater use of the United States Employment Service. We want it to give workers and employers more help in bringing men and jobs together. We want to increase still further the present trek of workers back ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ from work relief rolls to factories, stores and offices. Of course we want the works relief system to function so as to reward not shiftlessness but to help most those who most want to help themselves.

In order to assure more effective Federal cooperation to this end, I specifically propose to strengthen the work of the United States Employment Service. I am announcing tonight the allocation of \$2,500,000 to enable the Employment Service to make a more intensive search for opportunities in industry for those on work relief rolls. In August we still had 3,890,000 of these. This represents a net decline of 385,000 in the past year. But excluding the drouth area, the decline is 535,000 or 12½ per cent in the year. It now is clear that the progressive industrial improvement can absorb continually larger numbers from relief into private industry.

Many of those employed on WPA ~~xxxxxxx~~ projects came from better jobs than the government work made available to them. Others less well trained have taken advantage of WPA employment to develop new qualifications for better jobs than they ever had before. The additional money now being allocated plus \$1,500,000 which was allotted on last August twenty-fifth, will be used by the United States Employment Service for a nation-wide reclassification of WPA workers. It will be used to seek out those workers who are needed by industry and help them find better opportunities in private employment. I believe this is an undertaking in which industry, government and workers all can join.

In my relief message to Congress last March eighteenth, I asked private business to cooperate in extending its operations and in absorbing more of the unemployed. Outstanding progress has been made since that time.

I now renew my suggestion of last March, that the managers of private industry accept their responsibility for further efforts toward increased employment. Industry of course is responsible for the taking of people into its employ. I earnestly invite to <sup>to</sup> cooperation of industry on the basis of the assurance I have already given that the government will do its part.

So my Labor day message to farmers, to business and to workers is that we can go forward together if we will. The great majority among the workers and farmers do not want to live on any kind of charity. Most of them want a chance to do useful work, to care for the family and to educate the children, with hope and better opportunities ahead.

Labor has made tremendous strides. Workers have earned the right to organize into unions, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing without interference from employers. That right should not be abridged in this country. We must preserve our wage gains and our advances in improving hours and conditions of labor. Legal ways urgently need to be found for affording special protection for women and children in industry (and for myself I have always been in favor of adopting the Child Labor Amendment to the Constitution)?

I have been talking a great deal tonight about human rights. But I hope all of you who are listening have been thinking too of the social responsibilities which are always set over against those rights. Every man and woman in agriculture, labor, industry and government should be

inspired by a wish and hope to become most useful not only to himself but in making some permanent contribution to the public good. We all strive naturally to increase our material welfare. But along with physical well being, there can be great value in self respect and the satisfaction of personal service to the welfare of mankind. In talking about agriculture, labor and industry, I like to think of them as stars on the team that includes us all. I like to think of them as cooperating together in producing the increased but properly balanced output which is the physical basis of a steadily progressing national welfare. If each of us does his part, devotes his earnest thought and effort not for himself alone but for the general good, this will become a greater, better, finer nation.

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