
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**

File No. 915

1936 September 10

Charlotte, NC - Informal remarks

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE GREEN PASTURES RALLY
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
September 10, 1936, 6.30 P.M.

(The President arrived at Charlotte a little under an hour late, in the midst of a thunder shower. As the President mounted the stand, the rain subsided. Just before he started to speak, the sun came out and there was a rainbow in the sky. Mr. Robbins, who headed up the Rally, extended a word of welcome and introduced Mayor Ben E. Douglas of Charlotte. Mayor Douglas introduced Governor Ehringhaus, who introduced the President.)

Governor Ehringhaus, Mr. Mayor, my friends of Charlotte:

I notice that the rainbow shines in the sky (applause)
and it is a fitting climax to two of the most delightful
days that I have ever spent in my life. (Applause)

I am grateful, Governor Ehringhaus, for your hospitality
and may I, through you, thank the people of the Old North
State for the welcome that they have given me.

I am told that this meeting is a Green Pastures Meeting.
And the showers that we have passed through today prove that
the pastures of North Carolina are green. (Applause)

(Green Pastures!) What a memory those words call forth.
In all our schooling, in every part of the land, no matter
to what church we happen to belong, the old twenty-third psalm
is in all probability better known to men, women and children
than any other poem in the English language.

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.

(The President arrived at Charlotte a little under an hour late, in the midst of a thunder shower. As the President mounted the stand, the rain subsided. Just before he started to speak, the sun came out and there was a rainbow in the sky. Mr. Hobbins, who headed up the rally, extended a word of welcome and introduced Mayor Ben E. Douglas of Charlotte, Mayor Douglas introduced Governor E. B. Goddard, who introduced the President.)

Governor E. B. Goddard, Mr. Mayor, my friends of Charlotte:

I realize that the rainbow shines in the sky (applause)

and it is a fitting omen to the new beginning.

I have that I have ever seen in my life. (Applause)

I am grateful, Governor E. B. Goddard, for your hospitality

and say I, through you, thank the people of the Old North

State for the welcome that they have given me.

I am told that this meeting is a Green Pastures Meeting.

And the speakers that we have passed through today prove that

the promises of North Carolina are green. (Applause)

(Green Pastures!) What a memory those words will form.

In all our schooling, in every part of the land, no matter

to what church we happen to belong, the mid-twenty-third Psalm

is in all probability better known to men, women and children

than any other poem in the English language.

And in this great lyric, what do we best remember? --
two lines

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters."

It does not greatly matter whether that symbol of an ideal of human physical and spiritual happiness was written in its original three thousand or five thousand or ten thousand years ago. It might have been written as well in the twentieth century of the Christian era.

Have you ever stopped to think that happiness is most often described in terms of the simple ways of nature rather than in the complex ways of man's fabrications? Perhaps it is because peace is necessary to ultimate happiness. Perhaps, therefore, when we seek a symbol of happiness, we do not go to the rush of crowded city streets or to the hum of machinery to find (the simile) our goal.

The ancient psalmist did not use the parable of the merchants' camel train or the royal palace or the crowded bazaar of the East. He had, in his day, as we have today, the problems of competing trade (of) and social crowding, and I venture to suggest that long before the Christian era, the ancient civilizations of the East were confronted with problems of social economics which, though small in point of (human) numbers and small in point of worldly goods were still, by comparison, as potent in their effect and as difficult in their solution as the extraordinarily similar problems of

social economics that face us in this (century) country today.

Be it remembered then, that (the) those kings and prophets reverted, just as we do today, to the good earth and the still waters when they idealized security of the body and mind.

A recent writer has suggested that the present President of the United States, because perhaps of (birth) where he was born and where he was trained (training) and perhaps because of his natural proclivity, he inevitably reverts to terms of land and water in his approach to any great (public) problem. I fear that I must plead guilty to (this) that charge -- though I do so with the reservation that this is in spite of the fact that during the greater part of my life I have been in far closer contact with the more exciting and more highly competitive give and take of the profession of the law, the practice of business and the exactions of public service.

Green pastures! Millions of our fellow Americans, with whom I have been associating in the past (fortnight) two weeks, out on the Great Plains of America, live with prayers and hopes for the fulfillment of what those words imply. Still waters! Millions of other Americans, with whom I also have been associated of late, (live) living with prayers and hopes either that the floods may be stilled -- floods that bring with them destruction and disaster to fields and flocks, to homesteads and cities -- or else they look for the Heaven-sent

rains that will fill their wells, their ponds and their peaceful streams.

Many years ago, I talked with a learned man about this continent -- about what (it) North America was like when the white man came. I asked him, ("Were) if the Great Plains, which extend hundreds and hundreds of miles (upon hundreds of miles from the Rockies near to the Mississippi, always bare of trees, always the pasturage of great waves of bison and millions of antelope?") from the Mississippi to the Rockies were always bare of trees, always the pasturage of buffalo and antelope.

"Yes," he (replied) said, "For many hundreds of years before the white man came, but it is my belief that trees could have grown and still could grow on those plains, but that they (were) have been prevented from (doing so) growing by the constant succession of prairie fires, (some of them) set either by the lightning (and some of them by) or the red men."

I asked him whether the streams of the Southland were always brown and full of silt before our white ancestors moved in. (He replied,) "No," he said, "in those earlier days, during the greater part of the year, the Southern rivers were clear streams, except perhaps for a week or so in the Springtime, when they had (many) moderate freshets, (and) small floods, (just as we do. When that occurred) and when they occur, some soil but very little soil was

washed from the uplands, (and) from the mountains of the South into the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf, but because (they) these were seasonal only in their effect, and small in volume, the natural accretion of new top soil took the place of that which had run off to the sea."

If history gives a name to the day and age (in which) we are living in, I hope it will call this the era of rebuilding -- for it is my firm conviction that unless we, in our generation, start to rebuild, the Americans of a century hence will have lost the greater part of their natural and national heritage. (Applause)

My friends, it is because (in) I have spent these latter years (I have spent) so much (great a part of my life) in this Southland, and because I have come to know its fine people, its brave history, its many problems, that I speak not as a stranger to you who are gathered here from (the) seven states.

I have seen the denuding of your forests; I have seen the washing away of your top soil; (I have struggled through the red clay roads in the Springtime.) I have slid into the ditch from your red clay highways; and I have taken part in your splendid efforts to save your forests, to terrace your lands, to harness your streams and to push hard-surfaced roads into every county in every state. I have even assumed the amazing role of a columnist for a Georgia newspaper in

order that I might write powerful pieces against burning over the farm woodlot(s) and in favor of the cow, hog and hen program. (Applause)

May I add that it is because of practical experience on my own farm that for many years before I was inaugurated President I came to the conclusion that cotton, as it stood then, was essentially a speculative crop and that the planter of cotton, because he had nothing to say about the price he would receive, could never tell when he put the seed in the ground whether he would make a big profit by selling his crop for twenty-five cents a pound or go broke by selling his crop for five cents a pound. (Applause)

It is perhaps a bit of history hitherto unrecorded that in the month of March, 1933, I said this to Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Wallace: I said, "In respect to cotton," and I talked to him about lots of crops, "I have a definite objective: The cotton farmer has been cursed for a generation by the fact of insecurity. The price for his crop has run up the scale and down the scale and up the scale and down the scale again. In recent years,-- mind you, I was speaking in 1933,-- "in recent years his total aggregate production has been so great that thirteen million bales overhang the market. He will starve on five cent cotton -- the South will starve on five cent cotton -- and just as long as this appalling carryover hangs over the market, he will never get a price

that will even bring him out whole. My objective, Mr. Secretary, is to control and reduce that unwieldy surplus; to get for (him) the cotton planter ten cent cotton (our) the first year we are in office and (to get him) twelve cent cotton or more for the next three years. (Applause) You and I must keep that goal ever before (our eyes) us."

And, my friends, I ask you in simple fairness, have we attained that goal? (Applause)

You know the story of cotton. You know the story of tobacco, too. There again your national government had a goal. I don't believe that the great tobacco growing states of the Nation would wish to go back to the days of "every man for himself and let the Devil take the hindmost." (Applause)

Again, long before I went to Washington, I was convinced that the long road that leads to green pastures and still waters had to begin with (a) reasonable prosperity. It seemed axiomatic to me that a cotton farmer who could get only five cents a pound for his crop could not be in a position properly to fertilize his land, or to terrace it, (or to rotate his crops, or to keep a cow or a few head of cattle,) or to plant a little orchard, or to cultivate a garden -- in other words, to work out for himself and his family a well-rounded, reasonably secure life that would tide him and them over a lean year of drought.

The same thing held true, I thought, in the case of the farmer whose principal crop was tobacco or whose principal

crop was peaches or whose principal crop was corn or wheat or cattle or hogs.

In other words, we could not go ahead to the next step (in the) of prevention of soil erosion throughout the South and indeed throughout the Nation, we could not go ahead to the transfer of thin pastures into forests and the transfer of submarginal plowed land into pastures and trees, (and) we could not go ahead to the use of many modern methods to stop soil erosion and to prevent floods until and unless the farmers of the Southland were able to make a reasonably decent living out of their (main crops) farms.

And what is the answer? Today, because of better prices for farm commodities, we are actually and actively engaged in taking these second steps. Not only have we aroused a public understanding, (and) a public approval of the need of ending soil erosion and water run-off, but we have enabled the public, through a practical prosperity, to begin to pay their debts, to paint their (houses) homes, to buy farm tools and automobiles, to send (mere) more boys and girls through school and college, to put some money in the bank and, incidentally, to know for the first time that the money in the bank is safe. (Applause)

So much for the green pastures and the still waters in their more literal physical terms. Those ancient words apply, however, with equal force to men and women and children. Your life and mine, though we work in the mill or in the

office or in the store, can still be a life in green pastures and beside still waters.

No man, (or) no woman, no family, can hope in any part of the country, to attain security in a city on starvation wages any more than they can hope on a farm to attain security on starvation crop prices. I do not have to tell you, who live in any of these southern states, which have factories in all of them, that a family that tries to subsist on a total wage income of three or four hundred dollars a year is just as much a drag on the prosperity of America as the farm family that seeks to subsist on a yearly cash income of a hundred (dollars) or two hundred dollars a year.

That is why (most) a good many thinking people in and out of finance and business and every other walk of life, believe that the National Recovery Act, during its short term of life, accomplished as much for the restoration of prosperity through the establishment of the minimum wage, the shortening of hours and the elimination of child labor, as any law put on the statute books of the Federal Government in the past century and a half. (Applause)

In the Summer of 1934, the head of one of the great mail order houses said to me, "Do you remember my telling you (in 1933) a year ago that the purchasing power of the South (has) had dropped to almost zero? Look at this report of our sales in all the southern states. All of our sales have increased, but those in the South have come back faster than

any, and the reason is that the South at last has (secured) begun to acquire purchasing power." (Applause)

And finally, (you and I have come) in this fourth year of definite upturn, you and I have come to appreciate another significant and inevitable result. (We) you and I live under three kinds of government -- and to all three we, as citizens, pay taxes. Our local estate taxes, mainly on real estate, go to the support of local and state functions of government such as schools and highways, city and county administrations, water supply, sewer systems, street lighting, peace officers and state institutions. And our Federal taxes, none of which by the way are on real estate, come in the form of tobacco and similar excises, and income, inheritance, (and) corporation taxes and are spent in the running of the Federal Government for national defense, for pensions, for forests, for parks, for highways, for public works of all kinds and for relief (for) of the unemployed.

Four years ago all of us, in every part of the United States, found that without any change in the local or state tax schedules, the tax receipts had fallen off to an alarming degree. The result was that counties (and municipalities) and states were failing to balance their budgets or else were unable to carry out the ordinary and orderly functions and obligations of state and local government. Schools were being closed or curtailed; teachers were unpaid; roads lacked repairs; the borrowing of money for permanent improvements had

were compelled to pay unconscionable and ruinous interest (charges) rates.

History will also record that by the year 1936 a very much larger number of individuals are back in the black, so are most of our small business men, so are most of our corporations and so are almost all of our municipal and county and state governments. (Applause)

History will also record that individuals and corporations and governments are paying today a far more reasonable rate of interest than at any previous time in the history of the American Republic.

In the process of attaining these successful ends, my friends, individual liberties have not been removed, and I believe that the Governor of North Carolina and almost every other Governor in every one of these 48 States will agree also that the inherent rights of the sovereign states have not been invaded. It was obvious, of course, because of the economic unity of the entire (country) Nation in these modern days that no group of individuals and no individual states acting all alone could, by themselves, take the action necessary to restore the purchasing power of the (Nation) United States as a whole. Only the Federal Government could (accomplish that) ask and receive the cooperation of all the States in heading up a nation-wide plan.

And so I speak to you today as common-sense American men and women. You will agree that from the material aspect,

based on the sound concept of restoring purchasing power
and prosperity to the great mass of our citizens, this
Nation's consuming power has been and is being rapidly
restored. I trust, therefore, that you will (likewise)
agree to the other proposition that better conditions on
the farms, better conditions in the factories, (and) better
conditions in the homes of America are leading us to (the)
that beautiful spiritual figure of the old psalmist --
green pastures and still waters. (Prolonged applause)

Miss Helms
Original
Green pastures!

What a memory those words call forth.

In all our schooling, in every part of the land, no matter to what church we happen to belong, the twenty-third psalm is in all probability better known to men, women and children than any other poem in the English language.

And in this great lyric, what do we best remember? --
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"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
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It does not greatly matter whether that symbol of an ideal of human physical and spiritual happiness was written in its original three thousand or five thousand or ten thousand years ago. It might have been written as well in the twentieth century of the Christian era.

Have you ever stopped to think that happiness is most often described in terms of the simple ways of nature rather than in the complex ways of man's fabrications?

Perhaps it is because peace is necessary to ultimate happiness. Perhaps, therefore, when we seek a symbol of happiness, we do not go to the rush of crowded city streets or to the hum of machinery to find the simile.

The ancient psalmist did not use the parable of the merchants' camel train or the royal palace or the crowded bazaar. He had, as we have, the problems of competing trade, of social crowding; and I venture to suggest that long before the Christian era, the ancient civilizations of the East were confronted with problems of social economics which, though small in point of human numbers and small in point of worldly goods, were still, by comparison, as potent in their effect and as difficult in their solution as the extraordinarily similar problems of social economics that face us in this century.

Be it remembered then, that the ancient kings and prophets reverted, just as we do today, to the good earth and the still waters when they idealized security of the body and mind.

A recent writer has suggested that the present President of the United States, because of birth and training and natural proclivity inevitably reverts to terms of land and water in his approach to any great public problem. I fear that I must plead guilty to this charge -- though I do so with the reservation that this is in spite of the fact that during the greater part of my life I have been in far closer contact with the more exciting and more highly competitive give and take of the profession of the law, the practice of business and the exactions of public service.

Green pastures! Millions of our fellow Americans, with whom I have been associating in the past fortnight, out on the Great Plains of America, live with prayers and hopes for the fulfillment of what those words imply. Still waters! Millions of other Americans, with whom I also have associated, live with prayers and hopes either that the floods may be stilled -- floods that bring with them destruction and disaster to fields and flocks, to homesteads and cities -- or else look for the Heaven sent rains that will fill their wells, their ponds and their peaceful streams.

Many years ago, I talked with a learned man about this continent -- what it was like when the white man came. I asked him, "Were the Great Plains, which extend hundreds of miles upon hundreds of miles from the Rockies near to the Mississippi, always bare of trees, always the pasturage of great waves of bison and millions of antelope?"

"Yes," he replied, "For many hundreds of years before the white man came, but it is my belief that trees could have grown and still could grow on those plains, but that they were prevented from doing so by the constant succession of prairie fires, some of them set by the lightning and some of them by the red men."

I asked him whether the streams of the Southland were always brown before our white ancestors moved in. He replied, "No, in those earlier days, during the greater part of the year, the Southern rivers were clear streams, except in the Springtime, when they had many freshets and floods, just as we do. When that occurred, soil was washed from the uplands and the mountains into the Atlantic Ocean, but because they were seasonal only in their effect, the natural accretion of new topsoil took the place of that which had run off to the sea."

If history gives a name to the age in which we are living, I hope it will call this the era of rebuilding -- for it is my firm conviction that unless we, in our generation, start to rebuild, the Americans of a century hence will have lost the greater part of their natural and national heritage.

It is because in these latter years I have spent so great a part of my life in this Southland, and because I have come to know its fine people, its brave history, its many problems, that I speak not as a stranger to you who are gathered here from the seven states.

I have seen the denuding of your forests; I have seen the washing away of your topsoil; I have struggled through the red clay roads in the Springtime. I have taken part in your splendid efforts to save your forests, to terrace your lands, to harness your streams and to push hard-surfaced roads into every county in every state.

I have even assumed the amazing role of a columnist for a Georgia newspaper that I might write powerful pieces against burning over the farm woodlots and in favor of the cow, hog and hen program.

May I add that it is because of practical experience on my own farm that many years before I was inaugurated President I came to the conclusion that cotton, as it stood then, was essentially a speculative crop and that the planter of cotton, because he had nothing to say about the price he would receive, could never tell when he put the seed in the ground whether he would make a big profit by selling his crop for twenty-five cents a pound or go broke by selling his crop for five cents a pound.

It is perhaps a bit of history hitherto unrecorded that in the month of March, 1933, I said this to Secretary of Agriculture Wallace: "In respect to cotton, I have a definite

objective: The cotton farmer has been cursed for a generation by the fact of insecurity. The price for his crop has run up the scale and down the scale and up the scale and down the scale again. In recent years his total aggregate production has been so great that thirteen million bales overhang the market. He will starve on five cent cotton -- the South will starve on five cent cotton -- and just as long as this appalling carryover hangs over the market, he will never get a price that will even bring him out whole. My objective is to control and reduce that surplus; to get for him ten cent cotton our first year in office and to get him twelve cent cotton or more for the next three years. You and I must keep that goal ever before our eyes."

And, my friends, I ask you in simple fairness, have we attained that goal?

You know the story of cotton. You know the story of tobacco, too. There again your national government had a goal. I don't believe that the great tobacco growing states of the Nation would wish to go back to the days of "every man for himself and let the Devil take the hindmost."

Again, long before I went to Washington, I was convinced that the long road that leads to green pastures and still waters had to begin with a reasonable prosperity. It seemed axiomatic to me that a cotton farmer who could get only five cents a pound for his crop could not be in a position properly to fertilize his land, or to terrace it, or to rotate his crops, or to keep a cow or a few head of cattle, or to plant a little orchard, or to cultivate a garden -- in other words, to work out for himself and his family a well-rounded, reasonably secure life that would tide him over a lean year of drought.

The same thing held true, I thought, in the case of the farmer whose principal crop was tobacco or whose principal crop was peaches or whose principal crop was corn.

In other words, we could not go ahead to the next step of the prevention of soil erosion throughout the South, to the transfer of thin pastures into forests and of submarginal plowed land into pastures and trees, and the use of many modern methods to stop soil erosion and to prevent floods until and unless the farmers of the Southland were able to make a reasonably decent living out of their main crops.

Today, because of better prices for farm commodities, we are actually and actively engaged in taking these second steps. Not only have we aroused a public understanding and approval of the need of ending soil erosion and water runoff, but we have enabled the public, through a practical prosperity, to begin to pay their debts, to paint their houses, to buy farm tools and automobiles, to send mere boys and girls through school and college, to put some money in the

bank and, incidentally, to know for the first time that the money in the bank is safe.

So much for the green pastures and the still waters in their more literal physical terms. Those ancient words apply, however, with equal force to men and women and children. Your life and mine, though we work in the mill or in the office or in the store, can still be a life in green pastures and beside still waters.

No man or woman, no family, can hope in any part of the country, to attain security in a city on starvation wages any more than they can hope on a farm to attain security on starvation crop prices. I do not have to tell you, who live in any of these southern states, which have factories in all of them, that a family that tries to subsist on a total wage income of four hundred dollars a year is just as much a drag on the prosperity of America as the farm family that seeks to subsist on a yearly cash income of a hundred dollars.

That is why most thinking people believe that the National Recovery Act, during its short term of life, accomplished as much for the restoration of prosperity through the establishment of the minimum wage, the shortening of hours and the elimination of child labor, as any law put on the statute books of the Federal Government in the past century.

In the Summer of 1934, the head of one of the great mail order houses said to me, "Do you remember my telling you, in 1933, that the purchasing power of the South has dropped to almost zero? Look at this report of our sales in all the southern states. All of our sales have increased, but those in the South have come back faster than any, and the reason is that the South at last has secured purchasing power."

Finally, you and I have come in this fourth year of appreciate definite upturn to / another significant and inevitable result. We live under three kinds of government -- and to

all three we, as citizens, pay taxes. Our local estate taxes, mainly on real estate, go to the support of local and state functions of government such as schools, city and county administrations, water supply, sewer systems, street lighting, peace officers and state institutions. Our Federal taxes, none of which is on real estate, come in the form of tobacco and similar excises, and income, inheritance and corporation taxes and are spent in the running of the Federal Government for national defence, pensions, forests, parks, highways, public works and relief for the unemployed.

Four years ago all of us, in every part of the United States, found that without any change in the local or state tax schedules, the tax receipts had fallen off to an alarming degree. The result was that counties and municipalities and states were failing to balance their budgets or else were unable to carry out the ordinary and orderly functions and obligations of state and local government.

Schools were being closed or curtailed; teachers were unpaid; roads lacked repairs; the borrowing of money for permanent improvements had become impossible. With the Federal Government, despite additional new forms of taxes, receipts of revenue in 1932 had been cut in half.

The value of those tangible private assets on which taxes were levied had fallen so low that even if the income had been there to pay taxes with, the sums received would have put all forms of government increasingly in the red. And even when some remnant of value remained on which to levy a tax, the taxpayer did not have the wherewithal to make the payment and was beginning to lose the very property which was taxed.

That is why I go back to the original thesis that any commonsense, logical governmental policy had to begin with the building up of farm and other property values, and crop values and the increase of workers' wages if that now historic corner was ever to be turned.

History records that only a few years ago farmers were not making both ends meet; workers in factories were not making both ends meet; the small business man was not making both ends meet and the corporation was not making both ends meet. As a logical result, local governments were not making both ends meet and neither were state governments and neither was the National Government. Incidentally, as another result, the individual who had to borrow, the corporation which had to borrow and the government which had to borrow -- all were compelled to pay unconscionable and ruinous interest charges.

History will also record that by the year 1936 a very much larger number of individuals are back in the black, so are most of our small business men, so are most of our corporations and so are almost all of our municipal and county and state governments.

History will also record that individuals and corporations and governments are paying today a far more reasonable rate of interest than at any previous time in the history of the American Republic.

In the process of attaining these successful ends, individual liberties have not been removed, and inherent rights of the sovereign states have not been invaded. It was obvious, of course, because of the economic unity of the entire country that no group of individuals and no individual states could, by themselves, take the action necessary to restore the purchasing power of the Nation. Only the Federal Government could accomplish that.

I speak to you today as commonsense American men and women. You will agree that from the material aspect, this Nation's consuming power has been rapidly restored. I trust that you will likewise agree that better conditions on the farms, in the factories and in the homes of America are leading us to the spiritual figure of the psalmist --- green pastures and still waters.

(End)

Bz. 4-5 Missip

9-21-55

Sum

7/1/36

V Y H E V L
77 - 1

Green pastures! What a memory those words call forth.

In all our schooling, in every part of the land, no matter to what church we happen to belong, the twenty-third psalm is in all probability better known to men, women and children than any other poem in the English language.

And in this great lyric, what do we best remember? --
two lines

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;

He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Greek JK

It does not greatly matter whether that symbol of an ideal ~~of~~ human physical and spiritual ^{happiness} ~~beatitude~~ was written in its original three thousand or five thousand or ten thousand years ago. It might have been written as well in the twentieth century of the Christian era.

Have you ever stopped to think that happiness is most often described in terms of the simple ways of nature rather than in the complex ways of man's fabrications?

Perhaps it is because ~~the requirement of~~ peace exists in the
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ultimate ~~definition of~~ happiness. Perhaps, therefore, when
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crowded city streets or to the hum of machinery to find the
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1st
The ancient psalmist^{1st} did not use the parable of the
merchants' camel train or the royal palace or the crowded
bazaar. He had, as we have, the problems of ~~the~~ competing
trade, ~~of our inventions~~, of social crowding; and I venture
to suggest that long before the Christian era, the ancient
civilizations of the East were confronted with problems of
social economics which, though small in point of human
numbers and small in point of worldly goods, were still, *by comparison*, as
potent in their effect and as difficult in their solution
as the extraordinarily similar problems of social economics
that face us in this century.

Be it remembered then, that the ancient kings and prophets reverted ~~these thousands of years ago~~, just as we do today, to the good earth and the still ~~the~~ waters when they idealized security of the body and mind. ~~of man's mind~~.

A recent writer has suggested that the present President of the United States, because of birth and training and natural proclivity inevitably reverts ^(to) ~~(ed)~~ terms of land and water in his approach to any great public problem.

I fear that I must plead guilty to this charge -- though I do so with the reservation that this is in spite of the fact that during the greater part of my life I have been in far ~~closer~~ ^{closer} contact with the more exciting and more highly competitive give and take of the profession of the law, the practice of business and the exactions of public service.

If history gives a name to the age in which we are living, I hope it will call ^{this} ~~the~~ the era of rebuilding -- for it is my firm conviction that unless we, in our generation, start to rebuild, the Americans of a century hence will have lost the greater part of their natural and national heritage.

It is because in these latter years I have spent so great a part of my life in this ^{South} land, and because I have ~~sought~~ ^{went to know} ~~such an honest understanding of~~ its fine people, its brave history, its many problems, that I speak to you who are gathered here from the seven states not as a stranger.

I have seen the denuding of your forests; I have seen the washing away of your topsoil; I have struggled through the red clay roads in the Springtime. I have taken part in your splendid efforts to save your forests, to terrace your lands, to harness your streams and to push hard-surfaced roads into every county in every state.

I have even assumed the amazing role of a columnist for a Georgia newspaper that I might write powerful pieces against burning over the farm woodlots and in favor of the cow, hog and ~~land~~ ^{lin} program.

May I add that it is because of practical experience on my own farm that many years before I was inaugurated President I came to the conclusion that cotton, as it ^{stood} ~~was~~ then, was essentially a speculative crop and that the planter of cotton, because he had nothing to say about the price he would receive, could never tell when he put the seed in the ground whether he would ^{make a big profit} ~~lose~~ by selling his crop for twenty ^{five} cents a pound or go broke by selling his crop for five cents a pound.

It is perhaps a bit of history hitherto unrecorded that in the month of March, 1933, I said this to Secretary of Agriculture Wallace: "In respect to cotton, I have a definite

You know the story of cotton. You know the story of tobacco, too. There again your national government had a goal. I don't believe that the great tobacco ^{growing} states of the ~~South~~ ^{Nation} would wish to go back to the days of "every man for himself and let the Devil take the hindmost."

Again, long before I went to Washington, I was convinced that the long road that leads to green pastures and still waters had to begin with a reasonable prosperity. It seemed axiomatic to me that a cotton farmer who could get only five cents a pound for his crop could not be in a position to properly ^{to} ~~to~~ fertilize his land, or to terrace it, or to rotate his crops, or to keep a cow or a few head of cattle, or to plant a little orchard, or to cultivate a garden -- in other words, to work out for himself and his family a well-rounded, reasonable, ^{secure} ~~assured~~ life that would tide him over a lean year of drought. ^{He} The same thing held true, I thought, in the case of the farmer whose principal crop was tobacco or whose

principal crop was peaches or whose principal crop was corn.

In other words, we could not go ahead to the next step of the prevention of soil erosion throughout the South, to the transfer of thin pastures into forests and of submarginal plowed land into pastures and trees, and the use of many modern methods to stop soil erosion and to prevent floods until and unless the farmers of the South^{land} were able to make a reasonably decent living out of their main crops.

Today, because of better prices for farm commodities, we are actually and actively engaged in taking these second steps. ^{have an} ~~We have~~ Not only aroused a public understanding and approval of the need of ending soil erosion and water run-off, but we have enabled the public, through a practical

^{begin to pay their debts to bank}
prosperity, to start ~~practical and definite action that is~~
^{their houses, to buy farm tools and automobiles,}
~~already beginning to get results.~~

To send more boys & girls through school and college, to put some money in the bank and incidentally to ^{for the first time} know that the money in the bank is safe

So much for the green pastures and the still waters ~~of~~
~~the ~~country~~land~~ in their more literal physical terms.

These ancient words apply, however, with equal force to men and
women and children. Your life and mine, though we ^{work} ~~live~~ it in
the mill or in the office or in the store, can still be a
^{life} ~~life~~ of green pastures and beside ~~of~~ still waters.

No man or woman, no family, can hope in any part of the
country, to attain security in a city on starvation wages
any more than they can hope on a farm to attain security on
starvation crop prices. I do not have to tell you, who
live in any of these southern states, which have factories
in all of them, that a family that tries to subsist on a
total ^{wage} ~~income~~ of four hundred dollars a year is just as much
^h
a drag on the prosperity of America as the farm family that
seeks to subsist on a yearly cash income of a hundred dollars.

Schools were being closed or curtailed; teachers were unpaid; roads lacked repairs; the borrowing of money for permanent improvements had become impossible. With the Federal Government, despite additional new forms of taxes, receipts of revenue had been cut in half.

^{in 1932}
The value of those tangible ^{private assets} things on which taxes were levied had fallen so low that even if the income had been there to pay taxes with, the sums received would have put all forms of government increasingly in the red. And even when some remnant of value remained on which to levy a tax, the taxpayer did not have the wherewithal to make the payment and was beginning to lose the very property which was taxed.

That is why I go back to the original thesis that any commonsense, logical governmental policy had to begin with the building up of values and the ^{farmland and other property values and increase} ~~connection (accretion?)~~ of workers' wages if that ^{new historic} ~~corner~~ corner was ever to be turned.

History records that only a few years ago farmers were not making both ends meet; workers in factories were not making both ends meet; the small business man was not making both ends meet and the corporation was not making both ends meet. As a logical result, local governments were not making both ends meet and neither were state governments and neither was the National Government. Incidentally, as ^{another} ~~result of these conditions~~, the individual who had to borrow, the corporation which had to borrow and the government which had to borrow -- all were compelled to pay unconscionable and ruinous interest charges.

History will also record that by the year 1936 a very much larger number of individuals ^{are} ~~were~~ back in the black, so ^{are} ~~were~~ most of our small business men, so ^{are} ~~were~~ most of our corporations and so ^{are} ~~were~~ almost all of our municipal and county and state governments.

History will also record that individuals and corporations and governments are paying today a far more reasonable rate of interest than at any previous time in the history of the American Republic.

In the process of attaining these successful ends, ~~neither~~ individual liberties have ^{not} been removed, ~~and~~ ^{not} inherent rights of the sovereign states have been invaded. It was obvious, of course, because of the economic unity of the entire country that no group of individuals and no individual states could, by themselves, take the action necessary to restore the purchasing power of the Nation. ~~Only~~ the Federal Government could accomplish that.

It is true that in the planned process of restoring the credit and purchasing power of individuals, corporations and local and state governments, the Federal Government has been called on to make large outlays.

The net out-of-pocket cost of these outlays in three years and a half have amounted to less than eight billions of dollars. This sum represents about one-third of the increase in annual national income and it represents an infinitely smaller proportion of the total addition to our national wealth during the same period of three and a half years.

It is a simple fact that the Federal Government looks forward in the near future to the day when a still further increase in national prosperity will bring in, without further tax levies, enough additional money on new income to balance the Federal budget and begin once more to reduce the public debt.

I speak to you today as average commonsense American men and women and I am going to ask you to take home with you and ponder over a simple problem in mathematics:

If you could borrow one thousand dollars to increase your income by three thousand dollars a year, would you turn it down or accept it?

It is because you and I, as average commonsense Americans know the answer to that question that we will be mindful also that better conditions on the farms, in the factories and in the homes of America will lead us more quickly to green pastures and still waters.

End

SOUTHERN RAILWAY SYSTEM

Passenger Traffic Department

Washington, D. C.

September 8, 1936

MEMORANDUM OF OPERATING SCHEDULE, WASHINGTON, D. C. TO KNOXVILLE, TENN., ASHEVILLE AND CHARLOTTE, N. C., SEPTEMBER 8-11, 1936.

<u>September 8, 1936</u>		
Lv. Washington	Sou.Ry.	8:00 PM Eastern Time
Ar. Wayburn	"	10:20 PM - Water cars in yard limits
Lv. Wayburn	"	10:25 PM
<u>September 9, 1936</u>		
Ar. Monroe	"	12:25 AM - Change engines and crews
Lv. Monroe	N&W Ry.	12:30 AM in station
Ar. Roanoke	"	2:00 AM - Change engines and crews.
Lv. Roanoke	"	2:10 AM
Ar. Bristol	"	6:15 AM East T. - Change engines
Lv. Bristol	Sou.Ry.	5:25 AM Cent T. and crews and water cars.
Ar. Bulls Gap	"	7:30 AM - Water
Lv. Bulls Gap	"	7:35 AM
Ar. Knoxville	"	9:00 AM Cent T.
Lv. Knoxville	"	9:30 AM Cent T.
Ar. Asheville	"	1:00 PM Cent T.
<u>September 10, 1936</u>		
Lv. Asheville	"	12:00 PM East T.
Ar. Saluda	"	1:00 PM - Inspect train
Lv. Saluda	"	1:05 PM
Ar. Melrose	"	1:15 PM - Water
Lv. Melrose	"	1:18 PM
Ar. Hayne	"	2:15 PM - Change engines and crews
Lv. Hayne	"	2:20 PM
Ar. Charlotte	"	4:30 PM

(See page 2)

MEMORANDUM OF OPERATING SCHEDULE

September 10, 1936

Lv. Charlotte	Sou.Ry.	7:00 PM East T.
Ar. Salisbury	"	8:00 PM - Change engines and crews
Lv. Salisbury	"	8:05 PM
Ar. High Point	"	8:55 PM
Lv. High Point	"	8:57 PM
Ar. Greensboro	"	9:25 PM
Lv. Greensboro	"	9:30 PM
Ar. Pelham	"	10:30 PM

September 11, 1936

Lv. Pelham	"	12:15 AM
Ar. Monroe	"	3:15 AM - Change engines and crews
Lv. Monroe	"	3:20 AM
Ar. Weyburn	"	5:40 AM - Water engine
Lv. Weyburn	"	5:45 AM
Ar. Washington	"	8:30 AM Eastern Time.

W. C. Spencer,
Division Passenger Agent.



(506)

Charlotte, NC 7/10/66

Green Pastures Rly

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STATEMENTS FILE

Shorthand by Kannee

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
CHARLOTTE, N. C.,
SEPTEMBER 10, 1936.

CAUTION: PLEASE SAFEGUARD AGAINST PREMATURE RELEASE.
To be released upon delivery, expected about
5.30 o'clock Eastern Standard Time, Thursday,
September 10th, 1936.

M. H. McINTYRE
Assistant Secretary to the President.

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~~Green pastures~~ What a memory those words call forth.
In all our schooling, in every part of the land, no matter to
what church we happen to belong, the twenty-third psalm is in
all probability better known to men, women and children than
any other poem in the English language.

And in this great lyric, what do we best remember? --
two lines

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters."

It does not greatly matter whether that symbol of an ideal
of human physical and spiritual happiness was written in its
original three thousand or five thousand or ten thousand years
ago. It might have been written as well in the twentieth century
of the Christian era.

Have you ever stopped to think that happiness is most often
described in terms of the simple ways of nature rather than in the
complex ways of man's fabrications? Perhaps it is because
peace is necessary to ultimate happiness. Perhaps, therefore,
when we seek a symbol of happiness, we do not go to the rush of
crowded city streets or to the hum of machinery to find the
~~simple~~.

The ancient psalmist did not use the parable of the merchants'
camel train or the royal palace or the crowded bazaar. He had,
as we have, the problems of competing trade, of social crowding,
and I venture to suggest that long before the Christian era, the
ancient civilizations of the East were confronted with problems
of social economics which, though small in point of human numbers
and small in point of worldly goods, were still, by comparison,
as potent in their effect and as difficult in their solution as
the extraordinarily similar problems of social economics that face
us in this century.

Be it remembered then, that the ancient kings and prophets
reverted, just as we do today, to the good earth and the still
waters when they idealized security of the body and mind.

A recent writer has suggested that the present President of
the United States, because of birth and training and natural pro-
clivity, inevitably reverts to terms of land and water in his
approach to any great public problem. I fear that I must plead
guilty to that charge -- though I do so with the reservation that
this is in spite of the fact that during the greater part of my
life I have been in far closer contact with the more exciting and
more highly competitive give and take of the profession of the law,
the practice of business and the exactions of public service.

Green pastures! Millions of our fellow Americans, with whom I have been associating in the past fortnight, out on the Great Plains of America, live with prayers and hopes for the fulfillment of what those words imply. Still waters! Millions of other Americans, with whom I also have associated, live with prayers and hopes either that the floods may be stilled -- floods that bring with them destruction and disaster to fields and flocks, to homesteads and cities -- or else look for the Heaven sent rains that will fill their wells, their ponds and their peaceful streams.

Many years ago, I talked with a learned man about this continent -- what it was like when the white man came. I asked him, "Were the Great Plains, which extend hundreds of miles upon hundreds of miles from the Rockies near to the Mississippi, always bare of trees, always the pasturage of great waves of bison and millions of antelope?"

"Yes," he replied, "For many hundreds of years before the white man came, but it is my belief that trees could have grown and still could grow on those plains, but that they were prevented from doing so by the constant succession of prairie fires, some of them set by the lightning and some of them by the red men."

I asked him whether the streams of the Southland were always brown, before our white ancestors moved in. He replied, "No, in those earlier days, during the greater part of the year, the Southern rivers were clear streams, except in the Springtime, when they had many freshets and floods, just as we do. When that occurred, soil was washed from the uplands and the mountains into the Atlantic Ocean, but because they were seasonal only in their effect, the natural operation of new topsoil took the place of that which had run off to the sea."

If history gives a name to the age in which we are living, I hope it will call this the era of rebuilding -- for it is my firm conviction that unless we, in our generation, start to rebuild, the Americans of a century hence will have lost the greater part of their natural and national heritage.

It is because in these latter years I have spent so great a part of my life in this Southland, and because I have come to know its fine people, its brave history, its many problems, that I speak not as a stranger to you who are gathered here from the seven states.

I have seen the denuding of your forests; I have seen the washing away of your topsoil; I have struggled through the red clay roads in the Springtime. I have taken part in your splendid efforts to save your forests, to terrace your lands, to harness your streams and to push hard-surfaced roads into every county in every state. I have even assumed the amazing role of a columnist for a Georgia newspaper, that I might write powerful pieces against burning over the farm woodlots and in favor of the cow, hog and hen program.

May I add that it is because of practical experience on my own farm that many years before I was inaugurated President I came to the conclusion that cotton, as it stood then, was essentially a speculative crop and that the planter of cotton, because he had nothing to say about the price he would receive, could never tell when he put the seed in the ground whether he would make a big profit by selling his crop for twenty-five cents a pound or go broke by selling his crop for five cents a pound.

It is perhaps a bit of history hitherto unrecorded that in the month of March, 1933, I said this to Secretary of Agriculture Wallace: "In respect to cotton, I have a definite objective: The cotton farmer has been cursed for a generation by the fact of insecurity. The price for his crop has run up the scale and down the scale and up the scale and down the scale again. In recent years, his total aggregate production has been so great that thirteen million bales overhang the market. He will starve on five cent cotton -- the South will starve on five cent cotton -- and just as long as this appalling carryover hangs over the market, he will never get a price that will even bring him out whole. My objective is to control and reduce that surplus; to get for him ten cent cotton our first year in office and to get him twelve cent cotton or more for the next three years. You and I must keep that goal ever before our eyes."

And, my friends, I ask you in simple fairness, have we attained that goal?

You know the story of cotton. You know the story of tobacco, too. There again your national government had a goal. I don't believe that the great tobacco growing states of the Nation would wish to go back to the days of "every man for himself and let the Devil take the hindmost."

Again, long before I went to Washington, I was convinced that the long road that leads to green pastures and still waters had to begin with a reasonable prosperity. It seemed axiomatic to me that a cotton farmer who could get only five cents a pound for his crop could not be in a position properly to fertilize his land, or to terrace it, or to rotate his crops, or to keep a cow or a few head of cattle, or to plant a little orchard, or to cultivate a garden -- in other words, to work out for himself and his family a well-rounded, reasonably secure life that would tide him over a lean year of drought.

The same thing held true, I thought, in the case of the farmer whose principal crop was tobacco or whose principal crop was peaches or whose principal crop was corn.

In other words, we could not go ahead to the next step in the prevention of soil erosion throughout the South, to the transfer of thin pastures into forests and of submarginal plowed land into pastures and trees, and the use of many modern methods to stop soil erosion and to prevent floods until and unless the farmers of the Southland were able to make a reasonably decent living out of their main crops.

Today, because of better prices for farm commodities, we are actually and actively engaged in taking these second steps. Not only have we aroused a public understanding and approval of the need of ending soil erosion and water run-off, but we have enabled the public, through a practical prosperity, to begin to pay their debts, to paint their houses, to buy farm tools and automobiles, to send more boys and girls through school and college, to put some money in the bank and, incidentally, to know for the first time that the money in the bank is safe.

So much for the green pastures and the still waters in their more literal physical terms. Those ancient words apply, however, with equal force to men and women and children. Your life and mine, though we work in the mill or in the office or in the store, can still be a life in green pastures and beside still waters.

No man or woman, no family, can hope in any part of the country, to attain security in a city on starvation wages any more than they can hope on a farm to attain security on starvation crop prices. I do not have to tell you, who live in any of these southern states, which have factories in all of them, that a family that tries to subsist on a total wage income of four

hundred dollars a year is just as much a drag on the prosperity of America as the farm family that seeks to subsist on a yearly cash income of a hundred dollars. That is why most thinking people believe that the National Recovery Act, during its short term of life, accomplished as much for the restoration of prosperity through the establishment of the minimum wage, the shortening of hours and the elimination of child labor, as any law put on the statute books of the Federal Government in the past century.

In the Summer of 1934, the head of one of the great mail order houses said to me, "Do you remember my telling you, in 1933, that the purchasing power of the South had dropped to almost zero? Look at this report of our sales in all the southern states. All of our sales have increased, but those in the South have come back faster than any, and the reason is that the South at least has secured purchasing power."

Finally, (you and I have come) in this fourth year of definite upturn to appreciate another significant and inevitable result. We live under three kinds of government -- and to all three we, as citizens, pay taxes. Our local estate taxes, mainly on real estate, go to the support of local and state functions of government such as schools, city and county administrations, water supply, sewer systems, street lighting, peace officers and state institutions. Our Federal taxes, none of which are on real estate, come in the form of tobacco and similar excises, and income, inheritance and corporation taxes and are spent in the running of the Federal Government for national defense, pensions, forests, parks, highways, public works and relief for the unemployed.

Four years ago all of us, in every part of the United States, found that without any change in the local or state tax schedules, the tax receipts had fallen off to an alarming degree. The result was that counties and municipalities and states were failing to balance their budgets or else were unable to carry out the ordinary and orderly functions and obligations of state and local government. Schools were being closed or curtailed; teachers were unpaid; roads lacked repairs; the borrowing of money for permanent improvements had become impossible. With the Federal Government, despite additional new forms of taxes, receipts of revenue in 1932 had been out in half.

The value of those tangible private assets on which taxes were levied had fallen so low that even if the income had been there to pay taxes with, the sums received would have put all forms of government increasingly in the red. And even when some remnant of value remained on which to levy a tax, the taxpayer did not have the wherewithal to make the payment and was beginning to lose the very property which was taxed.

That is why I go back to the original thesis that any commonsense, logical governmental policy had to begin with the building up of farm and other property values, and crop values, and the increase of workers' wages if that now historic corner was ever to be turned.

History records that only a few years ago farmers were not making both ends meet; workers in factories were not making both ends meet; the small business man was not making both ends meet and the corporation was not making both ends meet. As a logical result, local governments were not making both ends meet and neither were state governments and neither was the National Government.

Incidentally, as another result, the individual who had to borrow, the corporation which had to borrow and the government which had to borrow -- all were compelled to pay unconscionable and ruinous interest charges.

History will also record that by the year 1936 a very much larger number of individuals are back in the black, so are most of our small business men, so are most of our corporations and so are almost all of our municipal and county and state governments.

History will also record that individuals and corporations and governments are paying today a far more reasonable rate of interest than at any previous time in the history of the American Republic.

In the process of attaining these successful ends, individual liberties have not been removed, and inherent rights of the sovereign states have not been invaded. It was obvious, of course, because of the economic unity of the entire country that no group of individuals and no individual states could, by themselves, take the action necessary to restore the purchasing power of the Nation. Only the Federal Government could accomplish that.

I speak to you today, as commonsense American men and women. You will agree that from the material aspect, this Nation's consuming power has been rapidly restored. I trust that you will likewise agree that better conditions on the farms, in the factories and in the homes of America are leading us to the spiritual figure of the peasant -- green pastures and still waters.

End

W. H. H. Z. S.
M. E. H. S.