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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. 920**

**1936 September 16**

**Greetings to the Mobilization for Human Needs  
Conference**

*Reading copy -*

MOBILIZATION FOR HUMAN NEEDS  
SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1936  
AT THE WHITE HOUSE

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CHAIRMAN SWOPE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Once more I greet the representatives of our great annual Mobilization for Human Needs.

We are all heartened by clear evidences of returning prosperity. You are here in spite of that fact and because of that fact. Returning prosperity means that you have a right to expect greater assistance for your splendid work in every community. Returning prosperity means, however, that a vast amount of important work, which all of us had to defer during the depression years, can and must be taken up anew.

As I told you in former years, when human distress reaches the point that Government assistance is necessary, Government up to the limit of its local, its State and its Federal resources must and does act. Happily, private organizations are now in a better position to accomplish

greater things than for many years past. Increase in prosperity heightens the obligation of every individual to aid in the relief of distress in his or her own community.

Through you I appeal to every man, woman and child in the United States for a revival throughout the length and breadth of the land of the spirit of charity. But "revival" is not the right word -- for in the difficult years which have passed that spirit of charity showed itself unselfishly and generously. Increase of the spirit of charity would be a better way of putting it -- for I am very proud of the support of the country's welfare services of all kinds in the past seven years.

I resent and you resent, I am sure, those supercilious and uncharitable sneers which from a small element among us have been directed against those in need and against those who were honestly seeking to help those in need.

The cooperation given by the Federal Government in social welfare activities extends rather than contracts the responsibility of private activities for local relief.

Since the low point of the depression great and substantial progress has been made. The national income will soon be double what it was then. Nearly six million more men

and women are now at work in private industry. Three million others are engaged in useful work provided or assisted by Government. Factory payrolls the first quarter of this year were more than \$70,000,000 greater each week than they were in the first quarter of 1933. Systematic and successful efforts to raise the buying power of wage earners and farmers have increased the business of merchants and brought orders to manufacturers. Confidence has returned to the great mass of our people; confidence on the part of all except a small minority who seek to profit from the preaching of fear.

Personal and family insecurity -- that difficult problem of past years -- your Government has undertaken at least to dissipate in part by the enactment of the Social Security Act providing for cooperative Federal and State public welfare, public assistance, unemployment compensation and old age benefits.

To the extent that local and State and Federal Governments help in these fields, to that extent private welfare activities are freed from these appropriate public responsibilities and, therefore, are enabled more effectively and extensively to do those things which private activities are best fitted to carry out.

Efforts of private agencies to encourage private re-employment of those on the relief rolls; efforts of private agencies to continue and extend medical care of all kinds; efforts of private agencies to minister to the hundreds of thousands of cases which present special problems; efforts of private agencies to build up recreational opportunities -- all of these and many more are tasks more fitted to private than to Government administration.

The generosity of our American people is a fine tradition -- we have never failed to heed the call of distress. I have confidence that the appeal about to be launched for this Fifth Mobilization for Human Needs will strike a responsive chord throughout the country. I know that the men and women of the Nation will accept their local responsibilities even more readily than they have ever done before. May you have the success you deserve.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE MOBILIZATION FOR HUMAN NEEDS  
DELIVERED FROM THE SOUTH PORTICO OF THE WHITE HOUSE

September 16, 1936, 10.00 A.M.

Chairman Swope, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am glad once more -- what is it, the third time, Mr. Swope, or the fourth time -- to (Once more I) greet the representatives of (our) this great annual Mobilization for Human Needs.

I think we are all heartened by clear evidences of returning prosperity. You are here in spite of that fact and because of that fact. Returning prosperity means that you have a right to expect greater assistance for (your) the splendid work that you are doing in every community. Returning prosperity means, however, that a vast amount of important work in every field, work which (all of us) we all had to defer during the depression years, that work can and must be taken up anew.

As I told you in former years, when human distress reaches the point that government assistance is absolutely necessary, government up to the limit of its local, its state and its Federal resources must and does act. Happily, private organizations are now in a better position to accomplish greater things than for many years past. This increase in

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.

Chairman Board, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am glad to see you -- what is it, the Ladies Board?  
Mr. Board, or the Ladies Board -- is (one more I) glad the  
representatives of (our) this great national institution for  
human health.

I think we are all heartened by clear evidence of re-  
turning prosperity. You are here in spite of that fact and  
because of that fact. Returning prosperity means that you  
have a right to expect greater assistance for (our) the  
spending work that you are doing in every community. Re-  
turning prosperity means, however, that a vast amount of  
important work is being done, work which (all I can) do  
has to delay during the depression years, that you can and  
must be taken up now.

As I told you in former years, when human distress  
reaches the point that government assistance is absolutely  
necessary, government up to the limit of its power, its state  
and its Federal resources must and does act. Rapidly, private  
organizations are now in a better position to accomplish  
greater things than for any years past. This increase in

prosperity heightens the obligation of every individual to aid in the relief of distress in his or her own community.

So, through you I appeal to every man, woman and child in the United States for a revival throughout the length and breadth of the land of the spirit of charity. But that word "revival" is not the right word -- because (for) in the difficult years which have passed that spirit of charity showed itself unselfishly and generously. Increase of the spirit of charity would be a better way of putting it -- for I am very proud of the support of the country's welfare services of all kinds (in) during the past seven years.

I resent and you resent, I am (sure) very certain, those supercilious and uncharitable sneers which from a small element among us have been directed against those in need and against those who (were) have been honestly seeking to help those in need.

The cooperation (given by) that the Federal Government has undertaken in social welfare activities seems to me to extend(s) rather than contract(s) the responsibility of the private activities for local relief.

Since the low point of the depression, great and substantial progress has been made. The national income, for example, will soon be double what it was (then) at the low point. Nearly six million more men and women are now at work in private industry. Three million others are engaged

in useful work provided or assisted by various forms of Government. Factory payrolls for the first quarter of (this) the year were more than \$70,000,000 greater (each) per week, greater than they were in the first quarter of 1933. Systematic and, I think, successful efforts to raise the buying power of wage earners and farmers have increased the business of merchants and brought orders to manufacturers. Confidence has returned to the great mass of our people; confidence on the part of all except a small minority who seek to profit from the preaching of fear.

Personal and family insecurity -- that difficult problem of past years -- (your Government has) the Federal Government and the State Government have undertaken at least to dissipate in part by the enactment of the Social Security Act providing for cooperative Federal and State public welfare, public assistance, unemployment compensation and what I think is most important of all, old age benefits.

To the extent that local and State and Federal Governments help(s) in these fields, to that extent private welfare activities are freed from these appropriately and public responsibilities and, therefore, are enabled more effectively and extensively to do those things which private activities are best fitted to carry (out) on.

Efforts of private agencies to encourage private re-employment of those on the relief rolls; efforts of private

agencies to continue and extend medical care of all kinds; efforts of private agencies to minister to the hundreds of thousands of cases which present special problems; efforts of private agencies to build up recreational opportunities -- all of these and (many) a dozen more are tasks that are more fitted to private than to Government administration.

The generosity of our (American) people has been and is a fine tradition -- we have never failed to heed the call of distress. I have confidence that the appeal about to be launched for this Fifth Mobilization for Human Needs will strike a responsive chord throughout the country. I know that the men and women of the nation will accept their local responsibilities even more readily than they have ever done before. And so I say to you may you have all the success that you deserve. (Applause)



WORLD FOR RELEASEWORLD FOR RELEASEWORLD FOR RELEASE

This address of the President, to be delivered from the South Portico of the White House at 10:00 A. M., E. S. T., Thursday, September 17, 1936, to the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Mobilization for Human Needs, MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

Release upon delivery, expected about 10:00 o'clock A. M., Eastern Standard Time.

~~Please safeguard~~ against premature release.

## STATEMENTS FILE

Shorthand by Kannee

STEPHEN D. BURN  
Assistant Secretary to the President

CLARENCE SMOKE, LINDA AND GEORGINA:

Once more I greet the representatives of our great annual mobilization for Human Needs.

We are all heartened by clear evidences of returning prosperity. You are here in spite of that fact and because of that fact. Returning prosperity means that you have a right to expect greater assistance for your splendid work in every community. Returning prosperity means, however, that a vast amount of important work which all of us had to defer during the depression years, can and must be taken up anew.

As I told you in former years, when human distress reaches the point that government assistance is necessary, government up to the limit of its local, its state and its Federal resources must and does act. Happily, private organizations are now in a better position to accomplish greater things than for many years past. Increase in prosperity heightens the obligation of every individual to aid in the relief of distress in his or her own community.

Through you I appeal to every man, woman and child in the United States for a revival throughout the length and breadth of the land of the spirit of charity. But "Revival" is not the right word -- for in the difficult years which have passed that spirit of charity showed itself unselfishly and generously. Increase of the spirit of charity would be a better way of putting it -- for I am very proud of the support of the country's welfare services of all kinds in the past seven years.

I resent and you resent, I am sure, those supercilious and uncharitable sneers which from a small element among us have been directed against those in need and against those who ~~were~~ honestly seeking to help those in need.

The cooperation given by the Federal Government in social welfare activities extends rather than contracts the responsibility of private activities for local relief.

Since the low point of the depression, great and substantial progress has been made. The national income will soon double what it was ~~then~~ / clearly six million more men and women are now at work in private industry. Three million others are engaged in useful work provided or assisted by Government. Factory payrolls in the first quarter of this year were more than 370,000,000 greater each week than they were in the first quarter of 1933. Systematic and successful efforts to raise the buying power of wage earners and farmers have increased the business of merchants and brought orders to manufacturers. Confidence has returned to the great mass of our people; confidence on the part of all except a small minority who seek to profit from the prodding of fear.

(L. Kannee  
9/17/36)

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Personal and family insecurity -- that difficult problem of past years -- ~~your Government has~~ undertaken at least to dissipate in part by the enactment of the Social Security Act providing for cooperative Federal and State public welfare, public assistance, unemployment compensation, ~~and~~ old age benefits.

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Efforts of private agencies to encourage private re-employment of those on the relief rolls; efforts of private agencies to continue and extend medical care of all kinds; efforts of private agencies to minister to the hundreds of thousands of cases which present special problems; efforts of private agencies to build up recreational opportunities -- all of these and ~~many~~ more are tasks more fitted to private than to Government administration.

The generosity of our American people is a fine tradition -- we have never failed to heed the call of distress. I have confidence that the appeal about to be launched for this Fifth Mobilization for Human Needs will strike a responsive chord throughout the country. I know that the men and women of the nation will accept their local responsibilities even more readily than they have ever done before. May you have the success you deserve.

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As I told you in former years, when human distress ~~reaches~~ <sup>reaches</sup> the point that government assistance is necessary, government up to the limit of its local, its state and its Federal resources ~~has acted~~ <sup>must act</sup> ~~and must continue~~ <sup>and must continue?</sup> ~~to do~~. Happily, private organizations are now in a better position to accomplish greater things than for many years past. Increase in prosperity heightens the obligation of every individual to aid in the relief of distress in his or her own community.

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