October 9, 1936 [Dubuque, Iowa] 0934

FDR Speech File

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
Dubuque, Iowa
October 9, 1936

My friends, I am glad to come to Dubuque. I had planned this visit a way back last Spring. I planned it with a very great citizen of this state and of this city and I am only sorry he cannot be with us today.

Louis Murphy was a great and kind man, a close friend of mine, and I want to read to you, instead of talking politics, I want to read to you a few sentences from a very wonderful tribute which was made to Louis Murphy at the time of his funeral here. I want to read them to you because these words are not political and yet they are concerned with better government all over the United States.

In this tribute Father Sheehy said this about the late Senator:

"When Senator Murphy was vested with the responsibilities of his high office millions were subject to varying degrees of privation and want. Drastic measures were necessary, and perhaps some of them, as the late Senator himself admitted, may have been unwise. But he could not stand idly by and do nothing.

"The people of Iowa in electing Senator Murphy to the Senate vested him with the responsibility of championing

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

a new social order in which class and privilege would be abolished. Four years of devastating want had all but extinguished the sacred fire of hope in their hearts. Senator Murphy was determined that the young people of this generation might be allowed to live normal, self-respecting lives. He voted for every relief measure, but he knew that the bread of charity was bitter bread and he was concerned that the problem of unemployment should be solved. He had no sympathy for those who would destroy private property. He knew that all rights are human rights. He did not wish to destroy the savings of the industrious and the more fortunate; yet he rejected both in theory and in practice irresponsible individualism.

"To him social justice meant primarily that the common good must, particularly in such times as these, take precedence over personal gain. He was determined that no one should starve in this land of plenty. He fought with all his powers to keep a balance between the prices of farm produce and of products of city workers.

"In his struggle for what he thought right, Senator Murphy kept a cool, detached mind, ignoring the swarming tribe of rabble-rousers who today make both our hearts and our ears ache."

And so, the spirit of Louis Murphy will long hover over the City of Dubuque and the State of Iowa.

It seems to me, my friends, from what I have read there is a great moral lesson; there is a great lesson which points the direction towards which our country must needs go. I am out here on what I suppose some people will consider a political trip, but nevertheless, I am concerned about the future of the country; we all are. I am trying to gain better first-hand information as to the needs of the country in the days to come. It will be useful to me whether I am reelected or not. I am merely one comparatively small unit in the future of the country. The future of the country lies in the hands of you good people, men and women, young people, today and in the days to come, and I am not worried so long as the conduct remains in your hands.

Now, I am going to look at some projects.