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. 938

1936 October 8 - 9?

St. Paul, MN - Western Campaign Trip - Informal remarks
As you know, I had planned to visit Minnesota on my trip of inspection to the drought areas the end of August. The untimely death of the Secretary of War kept me away. It was at that time also that this State suffered a very great loss in the passing of a virile and magnetic American leader, Floyd Olson. He had been my friend for many years. I miss him greatly today.

Much water has run over the dam since Floyd Olson presided at the great gathering to which I spoke in the spring of 1932. During these more than four years, one of our most important national achievements has been the strides we have made everywhere in thinking in national terms. Never before has America been so united. We have come to understand that the agricultural prosperity of the Northwest is directly affected by the agricultural prosperity of the rest of the country. Georgia will buy Minnesota flour if Georgia gets a decent price for its cotton. Minnesota will buy overalls made of Georgia cotton if Minnesota gets a decent price for its wheat.
People in the manufacturing cities will find more employment at better wages if the farm families of the Nation have the wherewithal to purchase manufactured goods. And the farmers of the Nation will sell larger crops at better prices if the industrial workers in the cities have more money to buy dairy products, vegetables, fruit, pork and beef.

In our local and sectional relationships - relationships between the various farm regions and between city and country - we have in these four years come to recognize the closeness of the interdependence and the usefulness of the cooperative ideal.

Minnesota is a good place to talk about farm cooperatives. Here dairy and live stock farmers have pioneered and pointed the way. Here and in Wisconsin have been built the greatest cooperative organizations in the Nation for processing and marketing dairy products.

When in 1933 this Administration undertook to meet the desperate and long neglected needs of agriculture, we turned to the cooperative idea, and called to Washington representatives
of the great cooperatives and other farm organizations to work out a program with us.

The Triple A itself had as its foundation and its essence, the cooperative idea. Administered locally by community committees selected by the farmers themselves, it was a picture of economic democracy in action. I pay my tribute - with the rest of the Nation - to the patriotic zeal of the committees of farmers who did so much through their earnest cooperation for our adjustment and conservation program. The farmers of America will not forget what they have done, and what they are doing.

This administration from the very start, came to the support of the cooperative ideal by vigorous action. That support has continued. That support will continue.

It established a central bank for cooperatives with twelve regional banks to aid in marketing and purchasing.

It held out the helping hand of credit to production credit associations to enable farmers to finance production through their own banks.
I am happy in the strengthening of the movement at home. But let us remember that the same spirit of cooperation is an essential part of our relations with the other nations of the world. It is this realistic appreciation of the benefits of cooperation that lies behind our efforts to reestablish foreign markets for our farm products.

In the spring of 1933 our foreign trade had fallen off to about a third of its former value. That was what I inherited.

The very word "trade" means articles of commerce flowing in two directions. It is not a one-way street. At last we understand this in our domestic trade. No single State can produce either crops or merchandise and continue indefinitely to sell them to other States for money alone. Eventually, they have to be paid for in other products.

Foreign trade is just like that. There cannot be a revival of foreign exports without a revival of foreign imports — unless, of course, we do as we did between 1920 and 1930 — lend our money to foreign nations to enable them to buy our own farm and industrial products.
But America has learned her lesson once and for all about that kind of frenzied finance.

The Secretary of State of the United States has spoken in Minnesota clearly and unequivocally in regard to the trade agreements that have been made with fourteen foreign countries for mutual trade advantage. He pointed out to you the chapter and verse of the statistical record which shows what these agreements have accomplished to increase the trade and income not only of the industrial worker but of the farmers of the Nation. It was not a question of winning or losing any treaty. Mutual advantage has been the successful objective; and our exports during the first half of this year, as compared with last year, have increased by one hundred and thirty-two million dollars.

To Canada, our neighbor on the north, the twenty-four million dollars of our increased exports during the first six months have included not only exports of manufactured articles but also agricultural exports. American industry and American agriculture are both benefitting by increased general trade.
The figures prove it, and our growing consumption and better farm prices prove it.

Every American - city dweller and farmer alike - ought to fasten this home truth in his memory: "When the nations of the world, including America, had jacked their tariffs to the highest point and enacted embargoes and imposed quotas - in those days farm prices throughout the world were at their lowest, and world trade had almost ceased to exist."

Today, under the leadership of the United States, other nations of the world are coming to recognize that home truth. Back in 1932, although there was a tariff on wheat of forty-two cents a bushel, you all know that the wheat which you produced up here in the Northwest was selling as low as thirty cents per bushel. There were no farm imports then to worry about; but low prices were plenty to worry about.

Within the past two weeks splendid progress has been made in giving a greater stability to foreign exchange. Within that same time there have been lifted many quotas and embargoes including those on important American agricultural export products.
But, my friends, the increasing restoration of trade, of industry and of employment, serve more than a mere economic end. For three years we have had faith that it would turn us and other nations away from the paths of economic strife which lead to war and toward economic cooperation which leads to international peace.

Peace cannot be attained merely by getting sentimental about it. Peace depends upon the acceptance of the principle and practice of the good neighbor. That practice is founded on the Golden Rule and must be fortified by cooperation of every kind between nations.

Peace makes money; peace saves money for everybody. A prosperous world has no permanent room in it for dictatorship or for war. In striving for peace, I am confident that the American people seek it with their hearts and with their heads as well. Enlightened self interest is justification for what we do.

Confident in the practical wisdom of the ends we seek, with full faith that it will serve in a practical way for peace on earth and good will between men and nations, we shall continue on our way.

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ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
October 9, 1936, 7:20 P.M.

(The President was introduced by Senator Shipstead.)

Senator Shipstead, Chief Justice Devaney,
my friends of Minnesota:

May I first of all tell you of the wonderful thrill that I have had the past two hours in driving through St. Paul and Minneapolis because of the wonderful reception that you have given me.

I am glad to be here on Lief Ericson Day. I only wish that I might stay for that football game tomorrow. My difficulty would be that, as President I would have to be extremely neutral. (Applause)

(The foregoing was extemporaneous.)

As most of you know, I had planned to visit Minnesota on my trip of inspection to the drought areas the end of August. The untimely death of the Secretary of War kept me away. It was at that time also that this State suffered a very great loss in the passing of a
Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from the 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's trip to Minnesota.

May I thank the Senate and the people of Minnesota for the hospitality that has been extended to me on my trip to that beautiful state.

I am happy to be here on this journey of inspection with my colleagues and those who have shown me the beauties of Minnesota.

The following are excerpts from the inspection:

As you know, I have been to many parts of Minnesota on my trip of inspection, and I appreciate the warm welcome I have received wherever I have gone.

The people of Minnesota are very proud of their state, and I believe that you will be interested to learn about the many industries and resources that exist here.

I would like to thank all those who have made this trip possible, and I hope that we will continue to work together to promote the development of our state.
virile (and) magnetic liberal American leader, Floyd Olson. He had been my friend for many years. Let me
tell you from the bottom of my heart that I miss him
(greatly) today.

Much water has run over the dam since (Floyd Olson presided at the great gathering to which I spoke
in the spring of 1932) those days in 1932 when, as
Governor of New York, I was the guest of Governor Olson
in this very building, the same day that he presided at
a great gathering in this City. During these more than
four years, one of our most important national achievements
has been the strides that we have made everywhere in
thinking in national terms. And if I remember it, sitting
in Governor Olson's office with him, occupying at his
insistance his Governor's chair, that was what we were
talking about, making American safe in national terms.
(Never before has America been so united.) And as a
result of those four years America has never been so united
as it is today.

I have used in Iowa and southern Minnesota on
one or two occasions the example that the great industrial
centers of the East are coming to realize that their
prosperity is dependent on the farmers of the West. We have come to understand that the agricultural prosperity of the Northwest is directly affected also by the agricultural prosperity and the city prosperity of all the rest of the country. I have farms, two of them, one in New York and the other in Georgia. Georgia will buy Minnesota flour if Georgia gets a decent price for its cotton. And Minnesota will buy overalls made of Georgia cotton if north Minnesota gets a decent price for its wheat. (Applause)

These are lessons, national lessons that seem very obvious to us today and yet it is not so very long ago that we had no policy at all or else were barking up the wrong tree. People in the manufacturing cities will find more employment at better wages if the farm families of the Nation have the wherewithal to purchase manufactured goods. That is obvious. And the farmers of the Nation will sell larger crops at better prices if the industrial workers in the cities have more money to buy dairy products, vegetables, fruit, pork and beef.

And so also in our local and sectional relationships -- relationships between the various farm regions and between city and country -- we have in these four years
come to recognize the closeness of the interdependence and the usefulness of the cooperative ideal.

It was four years ago that I became greatly interested in a problem of cooperation. It was the building of the nine foot channel all the way down the river. And I told my old friend, your senior Senator, that I expected in the next four years not only that it will be finished but that I will have the pleasure of coming up here to the Twin Cities and getting on a boat and going all the way down to New Orleans. (Applause)

That is one form of cooperation and another one you know about here is the cooperation between the Federal Government, the State Government and the Local Government in conserving the water of this great State. I would like to see millions more of people coming up here to the Land of the Lakes.

Yes, Minnesota is a good place to talk about farm cooperatives. Here dairy and live stock farmers have pioneered and pointed the way. Here and in Wisconsin have been built the greatest cooperative organizations in the Nation for processing and marketing dairy products.

When (in 1933 this) three and a half years ago
the Administration undertook to meet the desperate and long neglected needs of agriculture, we turned to the cooperative idea, and called to Washington representatives of the great cooperatives and other farm organizations to work out a program (with us) for us.

The Triple A itself had as its foundation and its essence, the cooperative idea. Administered locally by community committees selected by the farmers themselves, it was a picture of economic democracy in action. And as you know, I believe in action. (Applause) I pay my tribute -- with the rest of the Nation -- to the patriotic zeal of the committees of farmers who did so much through their earnest cooperation for our adjustment and conservation program. The farmers of America will not forget what they have done, and what they are doing.

Yes, this Administration from the very start, came to the support of the cooperative ideal by vigorous action. That support has continued. That support will continue. (Applause)

(It established a central bank for cooperatives with twelve regional banks to aid in marketing and purchasing.

It held out the helping hand of credit to production credit associations to enable farmers to
finance production through their own banks.

The Triple A has worked directly with the cooperatives in their marketing agreement program. By loans to cooperatives we have helped to bring the comforts of electricity to many farms of the Nation.

We did not stop at merely lending money. When farm prices were threatened, the Administration held them up by purchasing surplus products through farm cooperatives for distribution to hundreds of thousands of families faced with hunger in our great cities.)

Nevertheless, while the Federal Government can help through its resources, and you know the many ways in which we have used national resources to help localities, nevertheless we in Washington have recognized that cooperation and cooperatives must come from the people themselves. Government can see to it that the rules of the game are fair as between cooperative enterprise and other enterprise. But the initiative, the management itself must spring from, and carry on from, the bottom up rather than (from) the top down. (Applause)

(This Administration is) And so we are determined to continue in active support (to) of the ever-growing farm cooperative movement.

I am happy in the strengthening of this movement at home. But, my friends, let us remember that the
same spirit of cooperation is an essential part of our relations with the other nations of the world. It is this realistic factual appreciation of the benefits of cooperation that lies behind our consistent and successful efforts to reestablish foreign markets for our farm products.

You will remember back three and a half years, in the spring of 1933 our American foreign trade had fallen off to about a third of its former value. That was what I inherited. (Applause)

Let us go back to fundamentals some more. The very word "trade" means articles of commerce flowing in two directions. It is not a one-way street. And at last we have come to understand this in our domestic trade within our own borders. For instance, no single state can produce either crops or merchandise and continue indefinitely to sell them to other states for money alone. Eventually, they have to be paid for in other products as well.

Foreign trade is just like that. There cannot be a revival of foreign exports without a revival of foreign imports -- unless, of course, we do as we did
between 1920 and 1930 — lend our money to foreign nations to enable them to buy our own farm and industrial products. (Laughter, applause)

But I have a suspicion that America has learned her lesson once and for all about that kind of frenzied finance. (Laughter, applause)

The Secretary of State of the United States has spoken in Minnesota, the day before yesterday, clearly and unequivocally in regard to the trade agreements that have been made with fourteen foreign countries for mutual trade advantage. He pointed out to you the chapter and verse of the statistical record which shows what these agreements have accomplished to increase the trade and income not only of the industrial workers but of the farmers of the Nation. It was not a question of winning or losing any treaty. Mutual advantage has been the successful objective; and our exports during the first half of this year, as compared with last year, have increased by one hundred and thirty-two million dollars. (Applause)

(To Canada, our neighbor) And to our good neighbors in Canada on the north, the twenty-four
million dollars of our increased exports during the first six months have included not only exports of manufactured articles but also agricultural (exports) products. American industry and American agriculture are both benefitting by increased general trade and, my friends, the figures prove it. (and our growing consumption and better farm prices prove it.)

I wish every American — city dweller and farmer alike — (ought to) could fasten this home truth in his memory; When the nations of the world, including America, had jacked their tariffs to the highest point and enacted embargoes and imposed quotas — in those days farm prices throughout the world were at their lowest, and world trade had almost ceased to exist. (Applause)

But, today, under the leadership of the United States, other nations of the world are coming to recognize that home truth. Back in 1932, although there was a tariff on wheat of forty-two cents a bushel, you all know that the wheat which you produced up here in the Northwest was selling as low as thirty cents (per) a bushel. There were no farm imports then to worry about; but low prices were plenty to worry about. (Applause)
Within the past two weeks, just as an example, splendid progress has been made in giving a greater stability to foreign exchange. Within that same time there have been lifted many quotas and embargoes including those on important American agricultural export products.

But, my friends, the increasing restoration of trade, the increase in (of) industry, (and of) the increase in employment, they serve more than a mere economic end. For three years we have had faith that it would turn us and other nations away from the paths of economic strife which lead to war and toward economic cooperation which leads to international peace. (Applause)

Peace cannot be attained (merely) in this old world of ours just by getting sentimental about it. Peace depends upon the acceptance of the principle and practice of the good neighbor. That practice is founded on the Golden Rule and must be fortified by cooperation of every kind between nations.

Peace makes money; peace saves money for everybody. (Applause) A prosperous world, just the opposite to a bankrupt world - a prosperous world has no permanent
room in it for dictatorship or (for) war. (Applause)

And so, in striving for peace, I am confident that the American people seek it with their hearts and with their heads as well. Enlightened self interest is justification for what we do.

So, my friends, confident in the practical wisdom of the ends we seek, with full faith that it will serve in a practical way for peace on earth and good will between men and nations, (we shall) we are going in the years to come to continue on our way. (Prolonged applause)
As you know, I had planned to visit Minnesota on my trip of inspection to the drought areas the end of August. The untimely death of the Secretary of War kept me away. It was at that time also that this State suffered a very great loss in the passing of a virile and magnetic American leader, Floyd Olson. He had been my friend for many years. I miss him greatly today.

Much water has run over the dam since I spoke at the great-gathering to which I spoke in the spring of 1932. During these more than four years, one of our most important national achievements has been the strides we have made everywhere in thinking in national terms. Never before has America been so united. We have come to understand that the agricultural prosperity of the Northwest is directly affected by the agricultural prosperity of the rest of the country. Georgia will buy Minnesota cotton if Georgia gets a decent price for its cotton. Minnesota will buy Georgia cotton if Minnesota gets a decent price for its wheat.

People in the manufacturing cities will find more employment at better wages if the farm families of the Nation have the wherewithal to purchase manufactured goods. And the farmers of the Nation will sell larger crops at better prices if the industrial workers in the cities have more money to buy dairy products, vegetables, fruit, pork and beef.

In our local and sectional relationships -- relationships between the various farm regions and between city and country -- we have in these four years come to recognize the closeness of the interdependence and the usefulness of the cooperative ideal. Minnesota is a good place to talk about farm cooperatives. Here dairy and live stock farmers have pioneered and pointed the way. Here and in Wisconsin have been built the greatest cooperative organizations in the Nation for processing and marketing dairy products.

When in 1933 this Administration undertook to meet the desperate and long neglected needs of agriculture, we turned to the cooperative idea, and called to Washington representatives of the great cooperatives and other farm organizations to work out a program with us.

The Triple A itself, having as its foundation and its essence, the cooperative ideal, administered locally by community committees selected by the farmers themselves, it was a picture of economic democracy in action. I pay my tribute -- with the rest of the Nation -- to the patriotic zeal of the committees of farmers who did so much through their earnest cooperation for our adjustment and conservation program. The farmers of America will not forget what they have done, and what they are doing.

This administration from the very start, came to the support of the cooperative ideal by vigorous action. That support has continued. That support will continue.
It established a central bank for cooperatives with twelve regional banks to aid in marketing and purchasing.

It held out the helping hand of credit to production credit associations to enable farmers to finance production through their own banks.

The Triple A has worked directly with the cooperatives in their marketing agreement program. By loans to cooperatives we have helped to bring the comforts of electricity to many farms of the Nation.

We did not stop at merely lending money. When farm prices were threatened, the Administration held them up by purchasing surplus products through farm cooperatives for distribution to hundreds of thousands of families faced with hunger in our great cities.

Nevertheless, while the Government can help through its resources, we in Washington have recognized that cooperation and cooperatives must come from the people themselves. Government can see to it that the rules of the game are fair as between cooperative enterprise and other enterprises.

But the initiative, the management itself must spring from, and carry on from, the bottom up rather than from the top down.

This Administration is determined to continue in active support of the ever-growing farm cooperative movement.

I am happy in the strengthening of this movement at home. But let us remember that the same spirit of cooperation is an essential part of our relations with the other nations of the world. It is this realistic appreciation of the benefits of cooperation that lies behind our efforts to reestablish foreign markets for our farm products.

In the spring of 1933 our foreign trade had fallen off to about a third of its former value. That was what I inherited.

The very word "trade" means articles of commerce flowing in two directions. It is not a one-way street. At last we understand this in our domestic trade. No single state can produce either crops or merchandise and continue indefinitely to sell them to other states for money alone. Eventually, they have to be paid for in other products.

Foreign trade is just like that. There cannot be a revival of foreign exports without a revival of foreign imports -- unless, of course, we do as we did between 1920 and 1930 -- lend our money to foreign nations to enable them to buy our own farm and industrial products.

But America has learned her lesson once and for all about that kind of frenzied finance.

The Secretary of State of the United States has spoken in Minnesota clearly and unequivocally in regard to the trade agreements that have been made with fourteen foreign countries for mutual trade advantage. He pointed out to you the chapter and verse of the statistical record which shows what these agreements have accomplished to increase our trade and income not only of the industrial workers but of the farmers of the Nation. It was not a question of winning or losing any treaty. Mutual advantage has been the successful objective; and our exports during the first half of this year, as compared with last year, have increased by one hundred and thirty-two million dollars.
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Every American - city dweller and farmer alike -
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nations of the world, including America, had jacked
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Today, under the leadership of the United States,
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wheat of forty-two cents a bushel, you all know that the
wheat which you produced up here in the Northwest was
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farm imports then to worry about; but low prices were
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made in giving a greater stability to foreign exchange.
Within that same time there have been lifted many quotas
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But, my friends, the increasing restoration of trade,
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Much water has run over the dam since Floyd Olson presided at the great gathering to which I spoke in the spring of 1932. During these more than four years, one of our most important national achievements has been the strides we have made everywhere in thinking in national terms. Never before has America been so great. We understand that the agricultural prosperity of the Northwest is directly affected by the agricultural prosperity of the South. Georgia will buy Minnesota flour if Georgia gets a decent price for its cotton. Minnesota will buy overalls made of Georgia cotton if Minnesota gets a decent price for its wheat.
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Every American — city dweller and farmer alike — ought to this home truth in the home — remember that when the nations of the world, including America, had jacked their tariffs to the highest point and enacted embargoes and imposed quotas — in those days farm prices throughout the world were at their lowest, and world trade had almost ceased to exist.

Today, under the leadership of the United States, other nations of the world are coming to recognize that home truth. Within the past two weeks splendid progress has been made in giving a greater stability to foreign exchange. Within that same time there have been lifted many quotas and embargoes including those on important American agricultural products.

But, my friends, the increasing restoration of trade, of industry and of employment, serve more than a mere economic end.

For three years we have had faith that it would turn us and other nations away from war and toward international peace.

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[Handwritten notes and scribbles]

Insert F
Now farmers are being told by the Republican party that their co-operative programs with the AAA should be scrapped. These programs have been condemned as a "subterfuge." Well, if the farmers can't have their co-operative programs, what would the Republican party let them have?

Not this far West, where the party plays up to the farmer, but down East where the party is bidding for votes with promises to break farm prices, the leaders are most frank in revealing what they would substitute for co-operation. We all heard about it on the radio from Portland, Maine. We learned that the idea is to back to the good old days of "free competition." "Rugged individualism," it was called in 1932.

Now everybody knows how easy it is for the big fellows - the big fellows back of the Liberty League and the Republican party - we all know how easy it is for them to get together to protect their prices. Everybody knows that close harmony for the few big fellows and cutthroat competition for all the rest of us helped to bring on the disaster of 1932.

I do not think the farmers will want their co-operative programs to be scrapped. I do not believe they will support a political party which proposes to abandon these programs. The co-operative idea holds out great hope for all of us. Farmers, laborers, small businessmen, white collar workers all should be helped to make more and more use of the co-operative idea. In this way will come recognition of the fundamental unity of all society, of the interdependence of its different parts, and a great contribution to the general welfare.

Also insert at end of list of co-op accomplishments.

The AAA has worked directly with the co-operatives in their marketing agreement program.
This Administration is determined that it will continue to provide active support to the ever-growing farm cooperative movement.
But America has learned her lesson once and for all about that kind of frenzied finance.
He pointed out to you the chapter and verse of the statistical record which shows what these agreements have accomplished to increase the trade and income not only of the farmers but of the industrial workers of the Nation.
Back in 1932, although there was a tariff on wheat of forty-two cents a bushel, you all know that the wheat which you produced up here in the Northwest was selling as low as thirty cents per bushel. There were no farm imports then to worry about; but low prices were plenty to worry about.
Confident in the practical wisdom of the ends we seek, with full faith that it will serve in a practical way for peace on earth and good will between men and nations, we shall continue on our way.