

October 14, 1936

[Bloomington, Illinois - Train Platform]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
FROM THE REAR PLATFORM OF HIS SPECIAL TRAIN
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS
October 14, 1936, 2:30 P.M.

(There were about thirty thousand people in the audience.)

My friends, I am glad to come to Bloomington and I am glad to be on this platform with my old friends, Senator Lewis and Governor Horner.

I think I am right in saying that you people live in a country which is the second in all the United States in the value of its agricultural production.

On this trip I have been finding some ghosts. When I was further out West, I found that people were going around telling about the ghosts of taxes and they were telling people that if I am reelected, in some perfectly weird, ghost-like manner, I was going to impose a tax, a Federal tax on every farm and home in the United States.

But, luckily, my friends, there are not many actual believers in ghosts these days and, today, when I came into Illinois I found that a new ghost has been raised up before your faces. I am not worried. It is a new one, though. And they say, in this State, that I propose that no loans shall be made

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 added when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

(There were about thirty thousand people in the
)

My friends, I am glad to come to Washington and
I am glad to be on this platform with my old friends, Senator
Lewis and Governor Horner.

I think I am right in saying that you people live
in a country which is the second in all the United States
in the value of its agricultural production.

On this trip I have been finding some ghosts. When
I was further out West, I found that people were going around
telling about the ghosts of taxes and they were telling people

that if I am reelected, in some perfectly wild, ghost-like
manner, I am going to impose a tax, a Federal tax on every
farm and home in the United States.

But, incidentally, my friends, there are not many actual
believers in ghosts these days and, today, when I came into
Illinois I found that a new ghost has been raised up before

your faces. I am not worried. It is a new one, though. And they
say, in this State, that I propose that no laws shall be made

on any farm land for more than twenty-five dollars an acre.

Well, let us look at that picture for a minute. If I were lending money on farm land, the first question I would ask is, "How much can that land produce?" I own some farm land myself. Down in the State of Georgia I have got a lot of land that I would not lend five dollars an acre on. But, up on the Hudson River, I have got some pretty good land that I would lend a hundred dollars an acre on.

And so you see, that kind of a ghost in a political campaign always comes back on the fellow that raised it for the very simple reason that the people in this country have a lot more sense than some people give them credit for. (Applause)

During the last three years and a half I believe that one of the greatest gains made by the United States has been the fact that more men and women of voting age -- and I include in that statement some of them below voting age -- are taking a more intelligent interest in their Government than ever before in our history.

There are some people in the United States who would like to turn the conduct of Government over to a selected, self chosen few. I would rather leave it in the hands of what we call the democracy of the United States.

In the past three and a half years we have gone a long way and in the next four years we are going even further. That is why, my friends, on the night of November 3rd next I haven't got the least bit of worry about what the telephone and telegraph are going to carry to me as the message of the people of the State of Illinois. (Applause)

Mrs. Roosevelt wants me to thank you very much for these perfectly grand flowers and also for the box of candy.

Good-bye and good luck.