

October 15, 1936

[Grand Rapids, Michigan]

FDR Speech File

INFORMAL EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN  
October 15, 1936, 10 A.M.

(Governor Murphy introduced the President.)

Mr. Mayor, Governor Murphy, my friends:

I am very glad to come to Grand Rapids. I have always had a soft spot in my heart for Grand Rapids and this part of the State of Michigan because so many of the good people here are descended from the same old Holland stock that I am. (Applause)

Down in Washington, as you can well imagine, when we are making up the Budget, every department of the Government wants to have a little bit more money. When the President of the United States starts in to pare the Budget and cut it down, the favorite expression is that it is in my old Dutch blood to cut it down.

Last night, in Chicago, I was talking about the conditions as they were four years ago and the comparison between then and today. Grand Rapids is a very good example of what has happened in four years. One of the points I might make is that the return of prosperity didn't just happen. Something had to be done -- action had to be taken to bring prosperity back.

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This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the... was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the... 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.

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Down in Washington, as you can well imagine, when we are making up the budget, every department of the Government wants to have a little bit more money. When the President of the United States starts in to give the budget and out it goes, the favorite expression is that it is in my old Dutch book to cut it down. Last night in Chicago, I was talking about the conditions as they were four years ago and the comparison between then and today. Grant said in a very good example of what has happened in four years. I might make it that the nature of property didn't just happen. Something had to be done -- action had to be taken to bring property back.

In Grand Rapids, you have an example of how we thought things through. The first thing in '33 was to stop the people from starving, to give relief, to give work, to lend money to municipalities to make needed repairs -- in other words, to stop the deflation from going on.

After we had done that, then came the next step, the taking of measures to enable people to improve their living conditions. As a result of many agencies, after we had saved the homes, we encouraged people to build homes and to repair homes. The Federal Housing Administration, in the last two years, has been responsible for the building or improvement of over five hundred million dollars worth of homes. Let it be made perfectly clear that this money was not Government money. It was all private money from private lending agencies and all the Government did was to insure a portion of the loan. And, incidentally, it was pretty good business, because the loans are being paid, for the simple reason that people have got work.

Then came a third step, and this is where Grand Rapids comes in. After the homes were built and modernized, they had to have something to put into them, and

Grand Rapids is furnishing the various elements that go into those new and modernized homes.

It is, of course, a matter of record that the furniture industry, just to take one example of many industries today, is working at a much higher peak than at any time since 1929.

I believe that the people of this country appreciate the fact that with intelligent interest on the part of their Federal Government, we have made very great strides in the last three and a half years to bring the country back to normal prosperity.

And so, my friends, I hope in the next four years I shall be able to come to Grand Rapids as President of the United States and see you again. (Prolonged applause)

## STATEMENTS FILE

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