

October 15, 1936

[Detroit, Michigan]

FDR Speech File

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READING COPY

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

DETROIT, MICHIGAN,

OCTOBER 15, 1936.

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1929 to 1933, thousands of unemployed men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to a great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

I am glad that he is standing beside me today. His splendid record, first as Governor General of the Philippines and later as High Commissioner of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Philippines, stands out as one of the most successful administrations in our history. The whole country is proud of Frank Murphy and proud of what he has done.

I knew something of the problems of Detroit in the depression years, not only from Frank Murphy, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all knew that during those years the Government of this city pared its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of men and women who were literally on the verge of starvation.

When money had to be raised, the Mayor and Controller would go to private bankers in New York where they were compelled to pay very high interest rates for further loans.

By the spring of 1933 the city could borrow no more from private sources and the government of the State of Michigan was unable to render any substantial help.

I recite these facts because while the problem of human relief in Detroit was one of the most difficult in the Nation, yet there were thousands of other municipalities faced with the same kind of crisis.

Action — immediate action — by the new Federal Government in Washington, it is now admitted by all but the most blind partisans, was what saved the day. It was the only thing left which could save the day.

Relief and work relief through the use of Federal funds saved American humanity, and as the months went by it saved also the solvency of cities and states in every part of the Nation.

Following the arresting of the immediate crisis, our next step was to restore the purchasing power of the people themselves. I need not recite to you the many steps we took. You are as familiar with them as I am. In great part you are glad today, I am sure, that we took these steps.

In the restoration of purchasing power there is one element often overlooked by those who dwell in great industrial cities -- the building up of the prices which farmers obtain for their farm products.

A South compelled to sell its cotton for five cents a pound, a Middle West compelled to sell its corn for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, its hogs for two or three cents a pound, its wheat for thirty cents a bushel, could buy no automobiles made in Detroit. But a South with ten or twelve cent cotton, a Middle West with seventy-five cent corn, seven cent hogs and dollar wheat, can start and has started buying passenger cars, trucks and tractors.

In all other fields of production prices and values also rose -- miners went back to work -- eastern factories opened their closed doors.

The dollars that we spent in relief, in work relief, in CCC camps, in drought relief, in cattle and hog buying and processing, each of them went to work. They were spent in the shops of the city and in the stores of the small towns and villages. They were spent again by the retailers who bought from wholesalers. They were spent again by wholesalers who bought from manufacturers and processors. They were spent again in wages to those who worked and in purchases from those who produced the raw materials on the farms. And once again they were spent in the stores of the cities and the shops of the small towns and villages. You know how many of these dollars have finally come to the City of Detroit in the purchase of automobiles.

Literally the music went round and round and round and a lot of it came out right here in Detroit.

All I need to repeat is the statement known to most of you here -- that 1936 promises to be the second largest year of automobile production in our history -- ~~maximin~~ three and a half times as big as it was in 1932.

Detroit today is a very different city from what it was three years ago, and while the wheels of industry turn fast and unemployment is very greatly decreased, yet there are many problems not yet solved. I do not accept the conclusion of many Republican leaders that major depressions are inevitable in modern life. It is not enough that we have ended the days in 1932 when workers in this city received for their labor as low as five or six dollars for two weeks work. It is not enough that we have saved many homes and put thousands of people to work. I believe that it is the duty of government to bend every effort to prevent another major catastrophe such as that which hit this country as a result of the Republican leadership which ran Government from 1921 to 1933.

~~If you believe that the automobile industry came back of~~
its own accord from 1933 to 1936, and that the many steps taken by the present Administration have nothing to do with the revival, then, my friends, I strongly recommend you vote on November third to return the same old Republican leadership to power in Washington.

There are a thousand and one things still to be done. It has been suggested that the Government's agricultural program is a "hit or miss" affair not worthy of support because, like an automobile, a new model is brought out every year. I have been glad to accept that simile. I have told the farmers of this country that farming and farm policies, like automobile making, ought to improve each year - that Model T farming may have been all right ten years ago but that we don't want Model T farming or Model T anything else in the year 1936.

I have suggested that the automobile industry and every other industry still need great improvements in their relationship to their employees. And I will illustrate the point by a story: In the spring of 1934 there came to Washington representatives of the automobile workers -- most of them young men without much experience in organized labor. One of them, a former Marine who had served through battle after battle in France, told me he was a machinist and that his pay was \$1.25 an hour or \$10.00 a day. I told him I thought that was a pretty good wage scale and his reply was this -- "Yes, Mr. President, it is a good hourly rate and a good daily rate but last year I worked only sixty-eight days." In other

words, the total income of himself, his wife and his children was \$680 for a year. On this yearly pay total he had lost the home on which he had paid down hundreds of dollars. He and his family were seeking to exist on \$680 a year.

As a result of that meeting and of subsequent meetings with company officials, I stressed the need of spreading the work more evenly through the year and of working toward raising the yearly pay envelope of Detroit and other automobile cities from six or seven hundred a year to over a thousand a year. Certain steps looking toward that end have been taken but they are not sufficient. It is my belief that the manufacturers of automobiles and the manufacturers of many other necessary commodities must, by planning, do far more than they have done to date to increase the yearly earnings of those who work for them.

Your Administration has that kind of objective in mind. It is my belief that the people of Detroit, like the people of the rest of the country, are going to ask on November third that the present type of Government continue rather than the type of Government which in its heart still believes in the policy of "laissez faire" and the kind of individualism which up to only

three and a half years ago, frankly, put dollars above human rights.

When the smoke and dust of this political campaign clears away on the night of November third, history will record that the outstanding issue of the campaign ~~this year~~ was this -- Shall the social and economic security and betterment of the masses of the American people be maintained and strengthened or not? I am not afraid of the verdict. *It will be yes.*

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

October 15, 1936, 8.30 P.M.

Governor Murphy, Senator Couzens, my friends:

I am glad to come back to Detroit after four years.

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1929 to 1933, thousands of unemployed men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to (a) your great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

I am glad that he is standing beside me today. His splendid record, first as Governor General of the (Philippines) Philippine Islands and later as High Commissioner of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Philippines, stands out as one of the most successful administrations in all our history. The whole country is proud of Frank Murphy and proud of (what he has done) our next Governor.

And, because he is a very old friend of mine, I knew something of the problems of Detroit in (the) those depression years, not only from (Frank Murphy) him, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all knew that during those years the Government of this city pared its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of starving men and women, people who were literally

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.

Governor Murphy, Governor Roosevelt, my friends:

I am glad to come back to Detroit after four years.

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1933 to 1937, thousands of unemployed men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to (a) your great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

I am glad that he is standing beside me today. His splendid record, first as Governor General of the (Philippines) Philippine Islands and later as High Commissioner of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Philippines, stands out as one of the most successful administrations in our history. The whole country is proud of Frank Murphy and proud of what he has done. my next Governor.

And, because he is a very old friend of mine, I know something of the problems of Detroit in (the) those depression years, not only from (Frank Murphy) him, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all know that during those years the Government of this city paid its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of starving men and women, people who were literally

on the verge of starvation. When money had to be raised, the Mayor and Controller (would go to private bankers in New York where) used to go down to New York to see the private bankers and they were compelled to pay very high interest rates for further loans.

By the spring of 1933 the city of Detroit could borrow no more from private sources and the government of the State of Michigan was unable to render any substantial help.

I am telling you this story and reciting (I recite) these facts because while the problem of human relief in Detroit was one of the most difficult in the Nation, yet there were thousands of other municipalities that were faced with the same kind of crisis.

There they were on the fourth of March, 1933. And what was called for?

Action -- immediate action -- action by the new Federal Government in Washington, and it is now admitted by all but the most blind partisans, that that was what saved the day. (Applause) And, my friends, it was the only thing left which could save (the) that day.

Relief and work relief through the use of Federal funds saved American humanity, and as the months went by it saved also the solvency of cities and states in every part of the Nation.

(Following the arresting of) After we had stopped the immediate crisis, our next step was to restore the purchasing

power of the people themselves. I need not (recite to) tell you of the many steps we took. (You are as familiar with them as I am) You know them as well as I do. And in great part you are glad today, I am sure, that we took these steps. (Applause)

(In the restoration of) The problem involved building up the purchasing power of every kind. In restoring it there is one element often overlooked by those who dwell in great industrial cities and that is the building up of the prices which farmers obtain for their farm products.

Let me give you a simple example: A South compelled to sell its cotton for five cents a pound, a Middle West compelled to sell its corn for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, or its hogs for two or three cents a pound, or its wheat for thirty cents a bushel, they could buy no automobiles (made) in Detroit. But a South with ten or twelve-cent cotton, a Middle West with seventy-five cent corn, seven-cent hogs, (and) dollar wheat, that South and that West can start and (has) have started buying passenger cars and trucks and tractors. (Applause)

In all other fields of production prices and values also rose -- miners went back to work -- eastern seaboard factories opened their closed doors.

The dollars that we have spent in relief, in work relief, in CCC camps, in drought relief, in cattle and hog buying and processing, each one of (them) those dollars went to work.

They were spent in the shops of the city (and) they were spent in the stores of the small towns and villages. They were spent again by the retailers who bought from wholesalers. They were spent again by wholesalers who bought from manufacturers and processors. They were spent again in wages to those who worked and in purchases from those who produced the raw materials back at the mines and on the farms. And once again they were spent in the stores of the cities and the shops of the small towns and villages. And, my friends, you know how many of these dollars have finally come to the City of Detroit in the purchase of automobiles alone. (Applause)

I am reminded of a song. Literally the music went round and round and round (applause) and a lot of it came out right here in Detroit. (Applause)

All I need to repeat is the statement known to most of you here -- that the year 1936 promises to be the second largest year of automobile production in our history -- (more than) three and a half times (as big as) the value it was in 1932.

Yes, Detroit (today) is a very different city from what it was three years ago, and while the wheels of industry turn fast and while unemployment is very greatly decreased, yet there are many problems not yet solved. I do not accept the conclusion of many Republican leaders that major depressions are inevitable in modern life. It is not enough

that we have ended the days in 1932 when workers in this city received for their labor as low as five or six dollars for two weeks' work. (Applause) It is not enough that we have saved many homes and put thousands (of people) to work. I believe that it is the duty of government to bend every effort to prevent another major catastrophe such as that which hit this country as a result of the Republican leadership which ran the Government from 1921 to 1933. (Applause)

Yes, there are a thousand and one things still to be done. It has been suggested that the Government's agricultural program is a "hit or miss" affair not worthy of support because, like an automobile, a new model of it is brought out every year. I have been glad to accept that (simile) comparison. I have told the farmers of this country that farming and farm policies, like automobile making, ought to improve each and every year -- that Model-T farming may have been all right ten years ago but that we don't want Model-T farming or Model-T anything else in the year 1936. (Applause)

I have suggested that the automobile industry and every other industry still need great improvements in their relationship to their employees. (Applause) And I (will illustrate the point by a story) want to tell you a little story from my own personal experience: In the spring of 1934 there came to Washington representatives of the

automobile workers -- most of them young men without much experience in organized labor. One of them who came to the Executive Office was a former marine who had served through battle after battle in France. He told me he was a machinist, (and) that his pay was \$1.25 an hour or \$10.00 a day. And I told (him) my marine friend that I thought that was a pretty good wage (scale and). His reply was this, "Yes, Mr. President, it is a good hourly rate and a good daily rate but, Mr. President, last year I worked only sixty-eight days." In other words, the total income of himself, his wife and his children was \$680 for (a) one year. And on (this) that yearly (pay) total he had lost the home on which he had paid down hundreds of dollars. (He and his family were seeking to exist on \$680 a year.)

As a result of that meeting and of subsequent meetings with company officials, I stressed the need of spreading the work more evenly through the year and of working toward raising the yearly pay envelope of Detroit and other automobile cities from six or seven hundred a year to (over) a thousand or twelve hundred. (a year) Certain steps looking toward that end have been taken but they are not sufficient. It is my belief that the manufacturers of automobiles and the manufacturers of many other necessary commodities must, by planning, do far more than they have done to date to increase the yearly earnings of those who work for them.

Your Administration has that kind of objective in mind. It is my belief that the people of Detroit, like the people of the rest of the country, are going to ask on November third that the present type of Government continue (applause) rather than the type of Government which in its heart still believes in the policy of "laissez faire" and the kind of individualism which up to (only) three and a half years ago, frankly, put dollars (above) ahead of human rights.

So, my friends, when the smoke and when the dust of this political campaign clear (clears) away on the night of November third, history (will) is going to record that the outstanding issue of the campaign was this -- Shall the social, (and) shall the economic security and betterment of the masses of the American people be maintained and strengthened or not? (Applause, "Yes")

My friends, we are -- you and I are not afraid of that verdict. It is going to be yes. (I am not afraid of the verdict. It will be yes.) (Prolonged applause)

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
DETROIT, MICHIGAN
OCTOBER 15, 1936

Draft

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1929 to 1933, thousands of ^{unemployed} men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to a great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

A I knew something of the problems of Detroit in ^{the depression} ~~those days~~ not only from ~~my old friend~~, Frank Murphy, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all knew that during those years the Government of this city pared its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of men and women who were literally on the verge of starvation. [✓] ~~That~~ When money had to be raised, the Mayor and Controller would go to private bankers in New York where they were compelled to pay very high interest rates for ~~their~~ further loans.

By the spring of 1933 the city could borrow no more from private sources and the government of the State of Michigan was unable to render any substantial help.

I recite these facts because while the problem of human relief in Detroit was one of the most difficult in the Nation, yet there were thousands of other municipalities faced with the same kind of crisis.

Action -- immediate action -- by the new Federal Government in Washington it is now admitted by all but the most blind partisans, was what saved the day. *It was the only thing left which could save the day.*

Relief and work relief through the use of Federal funds saved American humanity, and as the months went by it saved also the solvency of cities and states in every part of the Nation.

Following the ~~elimination~~ ^{meeting} of the immediate crisis, our next step was to restore the purchasing power of the people themselves. I need not recite to you the many steps ~~that were taken~~ ^{that were taken}. You are as familiar with them as I am. In great part you are glad today, I am sure, that we took these steps.

In the restoration of purchasing power there is one element often overlooked by those who dwell in great industrial cities -- the building up of the prices which farmers obtain for their farm products.

^A
~~The~~ South compelled to sell its cotton for five cents a pound, a Middle West compelled to sell its corn for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, its hogs for two or three cents a pound, its wheat for thirty cents a bushel, could buy no automobiles made in Detroit. But a South with ten or twelve

cent cotton, a Middle West with seventy-five cent corn, seven cent hogs and dollar wheat, ^{can} ~~could~~ start ^{and has started} buying passenger cars, trucks and tractors.

In all other fields of production prices and values also rose — miners went back to work — eastern factories opened their closed doors. ^(B) Literally the music went round and round ^{and round} and a lot of it came out ~~xxx~~ right here in Detroit.

Detroit today is a ^(C) very different city from what it was three years ago, and while the wheels of industry turn fast and unemployment is very greatly decreased, yet there are many problems not yet solved. I do not accept the conclusion of many Republican leaders that major depressions are inevitable in modern life. It is not enough that we have ended the days in 1932 when workers in this city received for their labor as low as five or six dollars for two weeks work. It is not enough that we have saved many homes and put thousands of people to work. I believe that it is the duty of government to bend every effort to prevent another major catastrophe such as that which hit this country ^{as a result of the} ~~xxxxx~~ under the leadership which ran Government from 1931 to 1933.

The dollars that we spent in relief, in work relief, in CCC camps, in drought relief, in cattle ^{and hog} ~~buying~~ ~~in the~~ ~~city~~ ~~and~~ ~~villages~~ ~~and~~ ~~each~~ ~~of~~ ~~them~~ ~~went~~ ~~to~~ ~~work~~. They were spent ^{and necessarily} in the shops of the city and in the stores of the small towns and villages; ^{and} they were spent again by the retailers who bought from wholesalers. They were spent again by wholesalers who bought from manufacturers and processors. They were spent again in wages to those who worked and in purchases from those who produced the raw materials on the farms, ^{and} and once again they were spent in the stores of the cities and the shops of the small towns and villages. You know how many of ^{these dollars have finally come} ~~them~~ ~~finally~~ ~~came~~ to the city of Detroit in the purchase of automobiles.

If you believe that the automobile industry came back of its own accord from 1933 to 1936, and that the many steps taken by ~~the present Administration~~ ^{your Government} have nothing to do with the revival, then, my friends, I strongly recommend you vote on November third to return the same ~~old~~ Republican leadership to power in Washington.

There are a thousand and one things still to be done. It has been suggested, ~~for example~~, that the Government's agricultural program is a "hit or miss" affair *not worthy of support* ^{because} like an automobile, a new model is brought out every year. I have been glad to accept that simile, and I have told the farmers of this country that farming and farm policies, like automobile making, ought to improve each year -- that Model T farming may have been all right ten years ago but that we don't want Model T farming or Model T anything else in the year 1936.

I have suggested that the automobile industry and every other industry still need great improvements in their relationship to their employees. And I will illustrate the point by a story: In the spring of 1934 there came to Washington representatives of the automobile workers -- most of them young men without much experience in organized labor. One of them, a former Marine who had served through battle after battle in France, told me he was a machinist and that his pay was \$1.25 an hour or \$10.00 a day.

I told him I thought that was a pretty good wage scale and his reply was this -- "Yes, Mr. President, it is a good hourly rate and a good daily rate but last year I ~~worked~~ ^{worked} only sixty-eight days." In other words, the total income of himself, his wife and his children was \$680 for a year. On this yearly pay ~~envelope~~ ^{total} he had lost the home on which he had paid down hundreds of dollars. He and his family ^{were working to exist on \$680 a year.} ~~had been driven into one room.~~

As a result of that meeting and of subsequent meetings with ~~the~~ company officials, I stressed the need of spreading the work more evenly through the year and of working toward raising the yearly pay envelope of Detroit and other automobile cities from six or seven hundred a ~~year~~ year to over a thousand a year. Certain steps looking toward that end have been taken but they are not sufficient. It is my belief that the manufacturers of automobiles and the manufacturers of many other necessary commodities must, by planning, do far more than they have done to date to increase the yearly earnings of those who work for them.

Your Administration has that kind of objective in mind, and it is my belief that the people of Detroit, like the people of the rest of the country, are going to ask on November third that ^{the present} ~~this~~ type of Government continue rather than the type of Government which in its heart still believes in the policy of "laissez faire" and the kind of individualism which up to only three and a half years

ago, frankly, put dollars above human rights.

CD This firm belief on my part extends not only to industrial cities but also to the great agricultural areas which surround them. The farmers, the villagers, the dwellers in the small cities of Michigan, the hotels the restaurant keepers, the small storekeepers, the very banks in these small communities cannot prosper unless the great centers prosper. They, too, have come to understand what I mean by a round economy and a more permanent economy. Their voice is going to be raised on November third, with yours, in favor of the continuance in office of a Government which put humanity first.

.....

The small business men in the small cities and villages about all have seen what new purchasing power among farmers can mean in increased sales and more profits.

STATEMENTS FILE

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FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be delivered at Detroit, Michigan, October 15, 1936, is not to be released until delivery, expected about 8.30 P.M., Eastern Standard time.

PLEASE SAFEGUARD AGAINST PREMATURE RELEASE

M. H. McINTYRE

Assistant Secretary to the President.

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1929 to 1933, thousands of unemployed men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to a great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

I am glad that he is standing beside me today. His splendid record, first as Governor General of the Philippines and later as High Commissioner of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Philippines, stands out as one of the most successful administrations in our history. The whole country is proud of Frank Murphy and proud of what he has done. *our first Governor*

I knew something of the problems of Detroit in the depression years, not only from Frank Murphy, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all knew that during those years the Government of this city pared its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of men and women who were literally on the verge of starvation. When money had to be raised, the Mayor and ~~Controller would go to private bankers in New York where~~ they were compelled to pay very high interest rates for further loans.

By the spring of 1933 the city could borrow no more from private sources and the government of the State of Michigan was unable to render any substantial help.

I recite these facts because while the problem of human relief in Detroit was one of the most difficult in the Nation, yet there were thousands of other municipalities faced with the same kind of crisis.

Action -- immediate action -- by the new Federal Government in Washington, ~~it~~ is now admitted by all but the most blind partisans, was what saved the day. It was the only thing left which could save the day.

Relief and work relief through the use of Federal funds saved American humanity, and as the ~~no~~ ~~aths~~ went by it saved also the solvency of cities and states in every part of the Nation.

Following the arresting of the immediate crisis, our next step was to restore the purchasing power of the people themselves. I need not ~~recite to you~~ the many steps we took. ~~You are as familiar with them as I am.~~ In great part you are glad today, I am sure, that we took these steps.

In the restoration of purchasing power there is one element often overlooked by those who dwell in great industrial cities -- the building up of the prices which farmers obtain for their farm products.

A South compelled to sell its cotton for five cents a pound, a Middle West compelled to sell its corn for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, its hogs for two or three cents a pound, its wheat for thirty cents a bushel, could buy no

automobiles ~~made~~ in Detroit. But a South with ten or twelve cent cotton, a Middle West with seventy-five cent corn, seven cent hogs ~~and~~ dollar wheat, ~~can start~~ ^{can start} and have started buying passenger cars, trucks and tractors. ^{CP-2}

In all other fields of production prices and values also rose -- miners went back to work -- eastern factories opened their closed doors. ^{CP-2}

The dollars that we spent in relief, in work relief, in CCC camps, in drought relief, in cattle and hog buying and processing, each of them went to work. They were spent in the shops of the city and in the stores of the small towns and villages. They were spent again by the retailers who bought from wholesalers. They were spent again by wholesalers who bought from manufacturers and processors. They were spent again in wages to those who worked and in purchases from those who produced the raw materials on the farms. And once again they were spent in the stores of the cities and the shops of the small towns and villages. You know how many of these dollars have finally come to the City of Detroit in the purchase of automobiles. ^{CP-2}

Literally the music went round and round and round and a lot of it came out right here in Detroit. ^{CP-2}

All I need to repeat is the statement known to most of you here -- that 1936 promises to be the second largest year of automobile production in our history -- more than three and a half times ~~as big as~~ it was in 1932. ^{CP-2}

Detroit ~~today~~ is a very different city from what it was three years ago, and while the wheels of industry turn fast and unemployment is very greatly decreased, yet there are many problems not yet solved. I do not accept the conclusion of many Republican leaders that major depressions are inevitable in modern life. It is not enough that we have ended the days in 1932 when workers in this city received for their labor as low as five or six dollars for two weeks work. It is not enough that we have saved many homes and put thousands of people to work. I believe that it is the duty of government to bend every effort to prevent another major catastrophe such as that which hit this country as a result of the Republican leadership which ran Government from 1921 to 1933. ^{CP-2}

There are a thousand and one things still to be done. It has been suggested that the Government's agricultural program is a "hit or miss" affair not worthy of support because, like an automobile, a new model is brought out every year. I have been glad to accept that ~~criticism~~. I have told the farmers of this country that farming and farm policies, like automobile making, ought to improve each year -- that Model T farming may have been all right ten years ago but that we don't want Model T farming or Model T anything else in the year 1936. ^{CP-2}

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was \$1.25 an hour or \$10.00 a day. I told him I thought that was a pretty good wage ~~scale~~ and his reply was this, "Yes, Mr. President, it is a good hourly rate and a good daily rate but last year I worked only sixty-eight days." In other words, the total income of himself, his wife and his children was \$680 ~~for a~~ year. On this yearly ~~pay~~ total he had lost the home on which he had paid down hundreds of dollars. ~~He and his family were seeking to exist on \$680 a year.~~

As a result of that meeting and of subsequent meetings with company officials, I stressed the need of spreading the work more evenly through the year and of working toward raising the yearly pay envelope of Detroit and other automobile cities from six or seven hundred a year to over a thousand. ~~Some~~ Certain steps looking toward that ~~and~~ have been taken but they are not sufficient. It is my belief that the manufacturers of automobiles and the manufacturers of many other necessary commodities must, by planning, do far more than they have done to date to increase the yearly earnings of those who work for them.

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When the smoke and dust of this political campaign clears away on the night of November third, history will record that the outstanding issue of the campaign was this -- Shall the social and economic security and betterment of the masses of the American people be maintained and strengthened or not? I am not afraid of the word "et." It will be yes.

11/9/20/104

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

DETROIT, MICHIGAN,

OCTOBER 15, 1938.

I am standing at the spot in front of the City Hall to which during the four terrible years, from 1929 to 1933, thousands of unemployed men and women of Detroit came to present problems of human existence to a great Mayor, Frank Murphy.

I am glad that he is standing beside me today. His splendid record, first as Governor General of the Philippines and later as High Commissioner of the United States to the Commonwealth of the Philippines, stands out as one of the most successful administrations in our history. The whole country is proud of Frank Murphy and proud of what he has done.

I knew something of the problems of Detroit in the depression years, not only from Frank Murphy, but also from my brother-in-law who was his City Controller.

We all knew that during those years the Government of this city pared its operating expenses to the bone, using every penny it could scrape together for the relief of thousands of men and women who were literally on the verge of starvation.

When money had to be raised, the Mayor and Controller would go to private bankers in New York where they were compelled to pay very high interest rates for further loans.

By the spring of 1933 the city could borrow no more from private sources and the government of the State of Michigan was unable to render any substantial help.

I recite these facts because while the problem of human relief in Detroit was one of the most difficult in the Nation, yet there were thousands of other municipalities faced with the same kind of crisis.

Action — immediate action — by the new Federal Government in Washington, it is now admitted by all but the most blind partisans, was what saved the day. It was the only thing left which could save the day.

Relief and work relief through the use of Federal funds saved American humanity, and as the months went by it saved also the solvency of cities and states in every part of the Nation.

Following the arresting of the immediate crisis, our next step was to restore the purchasing power of the people themselves. I need not recite to you the many steps we took. You are as familiar with them as I am. In great part you are glad today, I am sure, that we took these steps.

In the restoration of purchasing power there is one element often overlooked by those who dwell in great industrial cities -- the building up of the prices which farmers obtain for their farm products.

A South compelled to sell its cotton for five cents a pound, a Middle West compelled to sell its corn for ten or fifteen cents a bushel, its hogs for two or three cents a pound, its wheat for thirty cents a bushel, could buy no automobiles made in Detroit. But a South with ten or twelve cent cotton, a Middle West with seventy-five cent corn, seven cent hogs and dollar wheat, can start and has started buying passenger cars, trucks and tractors.

In all other fields of production prices and values also rose -- miners went back to work -- eastern factories opened their closed doors.

The dollars that we spent in relief, in work relief, in CCC camps, in drought relief, in cattle and hog buying and processing, each of them went to work. They were spent in the shops of the city and in the stores of the small towns and villages. They were spent again by the retailers who bought from wholesalers. They were spent again by wholesalers who bought from manufacturers and processors. They were spent again in wages to those who worked and in purchases from those who produced the raw materials on the farms. And once again they were spent in the stores of the cities and the shops of the small towns and villages. You know how many of these dollars have finally come to the City of Detroit in the purchase of automobiles

Literally the music went round and round and round and a lot of it came out right here in Detroit.

All I need to repeat is the statement known to most of you here -- that 1936 promises to be the second largest year of automobile production in our history -- more than three and a half times as big as the last year of President Hoover's Administration.

it was in 1932

Detroit today is a very different city from what it was three years ago, and while the wheels of industry turn fast and unemployment is very greatly decreased, yet there are many problems not yet solved. I do not accept the conclusion of many Republican leaders that major depressions are inevitable in modern life. It is not enough that we have ended the days in 1932 when workers in this city received for their labor as low as five or six dollars ^{for two} ~~three~~ weeks work. It is not enough that we have saved many homes and put thousands of people to work. I believe that it is the duty of government to bend every effort to prevent another major catastrophe such as that which hit this country as a result of the Republican leadership which ran Government from 1921 to 1933.

~~If you believe that the automobile industry came back of its own accord from 1933 to 1936, and that the many steps taken by the present Administration have nothing to do with the revival, then, my friends, I strongly recommend you vote on November third to return the same old Republican leadership to power in Washington.~~

There are a thousand and one things still to be done. It has been suggested that the Government's agricultural program is a "hit or miss" affair not worthy of support because, like an automobile, a new model is brought out every year. I have been glad to accept that simile. I have told the farmers of this country that farming and farm policies, like automobile making, ought to improve each year - that Model T farming may have been all right ten years ago but that we don't want Model T farming or Model T anything else in the year 1936.

I have suggested that the automobile industry and every other industry still need great improvements in their relationships to their employees. And I will illustrate the point by a story: In the spring of 1934 there came to Washington representatives of the automobile workers -- most of them young men without much experience in organized labor. One of them, a former Marine who had served through battle after battle in France, told me he was a machinist and that his pay was \$1.25 an hour or \$10.00 a day. I told him I thought that was a pretty good wage scale and his reply was this -- "Yes, Mr. President, it is a good hourly rate and a good daily rate but last year I worked only sixty-eight days." In other

words, the total income of himself, his wife and his children was \$680 for a year. On this yearly pay total he had lost the home on which he had paid down hundreds of dollars. He and his family were seeking to exist on \$680 a year.

As a result of that meeting and of subsequent meetings with company officials, I stressed the need of spreading the work more evenly through the year and of working toward raising the yearly pay envelope of Detroit and other automobile cities from six or seven hundred a year to over a thousand a year. Certain steps looking toward that end have been taken but they are not sufficient. It is my belief that the manufacturers of automobiles and the manufacturers of many other necessary commodities must, by planning, do far more than they have done to date to increase the yearly earnings of those who work for them.

Your Administration has that kind of objective in mind. It is my belief that the people of Detroit, like the people of the rest of the country, are going to ask on November third that the present type of Government continue rather than the type of Government which in its heart still believes in the policy of "laissez faire" and the kind of individualism which up to only

three and a half years ago, frankly, put dollars above human rights.

When the ~~spoke~~^{cloud} and dust of ~~these~~ political campaign clears away on the night of November third, history will record that the outstanding issue of the campaign ~~interview~~ was this — Shall the social and economic security and betterment of the masses of the American people be maintained and strengthened or not? I am not afraid of the verdict. *It will be yes.*

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