SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
1938 MOBILIZATION FOR HUMAN NEEDS
THE WHITE HOUSE
OCTOBER 14, 1938

In troubled days when the nerves of men and women have been strained almost to the breaking point we have been in danger of losing sight of one very important fact -- the all-pervading human kindness of men and women. This human kindness cannot be created artificially out of speeches and appeals -- it is part of life itself.

In accordance with this thought, I am not this year making a speech or an appeal in behalf of the 1938 Mobilization for Human Needs, but I am calling your attention to the past and present generosity of the people of America. That generosity never has failed and please God it never will fail. In full faith and confidence, therefore, I present to you the news that local Community Chest drives will shortly be undertaken in all parts of the country.
There are some persons who say that the need for voluntary private agencies has decreased. They say that the government -- Federal, state and local -- has moved in and taken over part of the jurisdiction of the private agencies. Such persons talk as if the scope of voluntary action and of mutual aid had been limited, or even eliminated.

Private community effort is not contradictory in principle to government effort, whether local, state or national. All of these are needed to make up the partnership upon which our Nation is founded. The scope of voluntary action cannot be limited, because the very desire to help the less fortunate is a basic and spontaneous human urge that knows no boundary lines. It is an urge that advances civilization. I like to think it is a national characteristic.

Let me give you an example of successful working-together. One section of our country, New England, has recently been devastated by hurricane and tidal wave.
Hundreds of lives were lost and millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed. This was indeed a tragedy. But there was one consolation in this New England tragedy. Hardly had the hurricane subsided when all the forces of government, assisting and cooperating with private agencies, were rushed to the aid of the injured, the sick and the homeless. How many lives were saved because of these efforts no one can say. The extent to which human suffering was alleviated is beyond all estimate. And we can say that no effort was spared to aid the victims of this disaster.

The rehabilitation work is still going on. The Red Cross, the WPA, the CCC, the NYA, the Army Engineers and other Federal agencies are working with the local agencies, both private and public, to rehabilitate those stricken areas and to assist those who are in need. Certainly, there has been no conflict between government and private agencies -- there has been more than enough work for both. And there is more than enough work for both in our national effort to lift up the lower one-third of our Nation to a standard of living which will conform with decency and comfort and self-respect.
It is true that our Government has assumed increased responsibilities for social welfare. We are giving work to more than three million men and women, unemployed through no fault of their own, on our WPA program. Through our Social Security program we are aiding the states in caring for the aged, for widows and children and for the blind. We are providing new opportunities for more than a half million boys and girls through our CCC and NYA programs; and in many other ways the Federal Government, in cooperation with the state and local governments, is aiding our under-privileged citizens.

But you may well ask if the need for community action is as great as before, now that your Government has provided a national program of social security. I would answer that the need is just as great as before, because Government help was intended and is intended to improve the old conditions and if local help and private help decrease today, we will nullify the improvement and return to just where we were before. Very definitely we need the effort
of the pioneer agencies, the local voluntary agencies,
because it is expended on concrete problems which must be
met if our whole program is to go forward with the coordination
that is its basic aim.

Community leaders have met the challenge of changing
conditions. They are not looking backward with resentment
against the Government. They have welcomed the acts of their
Government as a liberation of their efforts, as an opportunity
to move forward on the front of social progress.

It is these men and women whom I salute. They are
the shock troops of the social conscience. I call upon the
American people to fall in behind such leadership and to
widen the social horizon. I am thoroughly convinced that
no matter how much the Government does, the private agencies
of America still have much to do before any of us can rest
on our oars or on our laurels. I am thoroughly convinced
that the American people want to participate on a voluntary
and individual basis in the endeavor to make this country
the best possible place in which to live. I feel confident
that this year's Community Chest drive will be successful,
as it has been successful in the past and as it will continue
to be successful for long years to come.

[Signature]

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By radio - original reading copy
I want to say a few words tonight to you, my fellow Americans, who believe in social welfare and social justice:

In troubled days when the nerves of men and women have been strained almost to the breaking point we have been in danger of losing sight of one very important fact -- the all-pervading human kindness of men and women. This human kindness cannot be created artificially out of speeches and appeals -- it is part of life itself.

And so in accordance with this thought, I am not this year making a speech or an appeal in behalf of the 1938 Mobilization for Human Needs, but I am calling your attention to the past and present generosity of the people of America. That generosity never has failed and please God it never will fail. In full faith and confidence, therefore, I present to you the news that local Community Chest drives will shortly be undertaken in all parts of the country.

There are some persons who say that the need for voluntary private agencies has decreased. They say that the government -- Federal and state and local -- has moved in and taken over part of the jurisdiction of the private agencies. Such persons talk as if the scope of voluntary action and (of) mutual aid had been limited, or even eliminated.

Private community effort is not contradictory in principle to government effort, whether local, state or national. All of these are needed to make up the partnership (upon) on which (our) the Nation
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.
is founded. The scope of voluntary action cannot be limited, because the very desire to help the less fortunate is a basic and spontaneous human urge that knows no boundary lines. It is an urge that advances civilization. And I like to think that it is a national characteristic.

Let me give you an example of successful working-together. One section of our country, New England, has recently been devastated by hurricane and tidal wave. Hundreds of lives were lost and millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed. This was indeed a tragedy. But there was one consolation in this New England tragedy. Hardly had the hurricane subsided when all the forces of government, assisting and cooperating with private agencies, were rushed to the aid of the injured, the sick and the homeless. How many lives were saved because of these efforts no one can say. The extent to which human suffering was alleviated is beyond all estimate. And we can say that no effort was spared to aid the victims of this disaster.

The rehabilitation work is still going on and will for many months to come. The Red Cross, the WPA, the CCC, the (NYA) National Youth Administration, the Army Engineers and other Federal agencies are working with the local agencies, both private and public, to rehabilitate those stricken areas and to assist those who are in need. Certainly, there has been no conflict between government and private agencies -- there has been more than enough work for both. And there is more than enough work for both in our national effort to lift up the lower one-third of our Nation to a standard of living (which) that will conform with decency and comfort and self-respect.

It is true that our Government has assumed increased responsibilities for social welfare. We are giving work to more than three
million men and women, unemployed through no fault of their own, work on our WPA program. Through our Social Security program we are aiding the states in caring for the aged, for widows and children and (for) the blind. We are providing new opportunities for more than a half million boys and girls through our CCC and (NYA) Youth Administration programs; and in many other ways the Federal Government, always in cooperation with the state and local governments, is aiding our underprivileged citizens.

But you may well ask if the need for community action is as great as it was before, now that your Government has provided a national program of (social) security, how far must you go? I would answer that the need is just as great as before, the need of your help, because Government help was intended and is intended to improve the old conditions and if local help and private help decrease (today), we willnullify the improvement (and) we have sought, we will return to just where we were before, and no gain will have been made. Very definitely we need the effort of the pioneer agencies, the local voluntary agencies, because it is expended on concrete problems (which) that must be met if our whole program is to go forward with the coordination that is its basic aim.

Community leaders have met the challenge of changing conditions. They are not looking backward with resentment against the Government. They have welcomed the acts of their Government as a liberation of their own efforts, as an opportunity to move forward on (the) a wider front of social progress.

It is these men and women whom I salute. They are the shock troops of the social conscience. I call upon the American people to
fall in behind (such) this leadership and to widen the social horizon. I am thoroughly convinced that no matter how much the Government does, the private agencies of America still have much to do before any of us can rest on our oars or on our laurels. I am thoroughly convinced that the American people want to participate (on) in a voluntary, (and) on an individual basis in the endeavor to make this country the best possible place in which to live. And so I feel confident that this year's Community Chest drive will be successful in every part of the Nation, as it has been successful in the past and as it will continue to be successful for long years to come.
October 14, 1938

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House in behalf of the 1938 Mobilization for Human Needs MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE until released.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 10:05 o'clock P.M.,

E. S. T., October 14, 1938.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

In troubled days when the nerves of men and women have been strained almost to the breaking point we have been in danger of losing sight of one very important fact -- the all-pervading human kindness of man and woman. This human kindness cannot be erected artificially out of speeches and appeals -- it is a part of life itself.

In accordance with this thought, I am not this year making a speech or an appeal in behalf of the 1938 Mobilization for Human Needs, but I am calling your attention to the past and present generosity of the people of America. That generosity never has faltered and please God it never will fail. In full faith and confidence, therefore, I present to you the news that local Community Chest drives will shortly be undertaken in all parts of the country.

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and public, to rehabilitate those stricken areas and to assist those who are in need. Certainly, there has been no conflict between government and private agencies -- there has been more than enough work for both. And there is more than enough work for both in our national effort to lift up the lower one-third of our Nation to a standard of living which will conform with decency and comfort and self-respect.

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Community leaders have not the challenge of changing conditions. They are not looking backward with resentment against the Government. They have welcomed the acts of their Government as a liberation of their efforts, as an opportunity to move forward on the front of social progress.

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In these troubled days when the nerves of men and women have been strained almost to the breaking point, we have been in danger of losing sight of one very important fact — the all-pervading human kindness of men and women. This human kindness forms a natural condition of life and cannot be created artificially out of speeches and appeals — it is part of life itself.

As an American, in making this appeal tonight in behalf of the 1938 Mobilization for Human Needs, I am proud that there is testimony all over the world to the generosity of the people of our country. That generosity never has failed and please God it never will fail. In full faith and confidence, therefore, I beseech you to give that help for the local Community Chest drive shortly to be undertaken in all parts of the country.

There are some persons who say that the need for voluntary private agencies has decreased. They say that the government — Federal, state and local — has moved in and taken over part of the jurisdiction of the private agencies. Such persons talk as if the scope of voluntary action and of mutual aid had been limited, and therefore the scope of voluntary action and of mutual aid cannot be limited, because the desire to help the less fortunate is a basic and spontaneous human urge and knows no boundary lines. That urge is strong in the great heart of the American people. It is an
urge that advances civilization. I like to think it is a national character-
out to be an example of successful working together.
One section of our country, New England, has recently been
devastated by hurricane and tidal wave. Hundreds of lives were lost
and millions of dollars worth of property were destroyed. This was indeed
a tragedy. But there was one consolation in this New England tragedy.
Hardly had the hurricane subsided when all the forces of government,
assisting and cooperating with private agencies, were rushed to the aid
of the injured, the sick and the homeless. How many lives were saved
because of these efforts no one can say. The extent to which human suf-
f ering was alleviated is beyond all estimate. We can say that no
effort was spared to aid the victims of this disaster.

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WPA, the CCC, the NYA, the Army Engineers and other Federal agencies are
working with the local agencies, both private and public, to rehabilitate
those stricken areas and to assist those who are in need. Certainly, there
has been no conflict between government and private agencies -- there
more than enough work for both. And there is more than enough work for
both in our national effort to lift up the lower one-third of our Nation
to a standard of living which will conform with decency and comfort and
self-respect.

It is true that our Government has assumed increased responsibil-
ities for social welfare. We are giving work to more than three million
men and women, unemployed through no fault of their own, on our WPA program.
Through our Social Security program we are aiding the states in caring for
the aged, for widows and children and for the blind. We are providing new
opportunities for more than a half million boys and girls through our CCC
and NYA programs; and in many other ways the Federal Government, in co-
operation with the state and local governments, is aiding our under-
privileged citizens.

We community in this country remains passive in acceptance of
conditions which can be improved; if it simply sees the way to improve
But you may well ask if the need for community action is as great
now that your government has provided a national program of social security.
I would venture that the need is exactly as great as the need for partnership
among agencies within the nation, public as well as private, which
work for the betterment of human welfare. In organization, whether national,
state or local, our function efficiently, and it is based upon harmony of
purpose and the effort of the pioneer agencies, the local voluntary
agencies, because it is expended upon concrete, sensible problems which
must be met if our whole program is to go forward with the coordination
that is its basic aim.

It is true that some agencies have not yet to orient their ac-
tivity, but when led by men and women of vision that was not difficult.
I have often heard community leaders say, "if only we had more energy and
more money, and some services we could render". And leaders have met the
challenge of changing conditions. They are not looking backward with
resentment against the Government. They have welcomed the acts of their
Government as a liberation of their efforts, as an opportunity to move
forward on the front of social progress.

It is these men and women whom I salute. They are the shock
troops of the social conscience. I call upon the American people to fall
behind such leadership and to widen the social horizon. I am thoroughly
convinced that no matter how much the Government does, the private agencies
of America still have much to do before any of us can rest on our ears or
on our laurels. I am thoroughly convinced that the American people
must cease the unending urge to participate on a voluntary and
individual basis in the endeavor to make this country the best possible place
in which to live. I feel confident that this year's Community Chest drive
will be successful, as it has been successful in the past and as it will
continue to be successful for long years to come.
Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt,
White House,
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mr. President:

Arrangements have now been completed for the
broadcast on the night of October 14th, from 10:00 to
10:30. While the exact timing of the program will be
furnished to Mr. McIntyre, I might say it will begin
with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra playing from
Cincinnati the Prelude to the Third Act from Lohengrin;
then I introduce you, and your time is five to seven minutes
as before; I reply briefly and the program closes with
Finlandia by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

I hardly need to make any suggestion to you as to
the subjects you might cover. I would like to remind you
of the special emergency pressing upon all of the private
agencies in the Chest in New England, as a result of the
hurricane.

So far as I am concerned, I am expecting to point
out that the private agencies are in the position of making
grants-in-aid by way of special service, hospital, health,
etc., to those with low wages and working on part time;
while the Government helps those who are without basic
necessities. The part which each plays is therefore essen-
tial.

I expect also to point out that people want the ser-
vice from the private agencies, hospitals, for instance, in
many cases, not because the public agencies have low standards
but because many local communities have been unwilling to
finance them adequately. My third point is that the private
agencies united with the Federal Government in building
up the proper standards of service for the local public
agencies.

Sincerely yours,

Charles P. Taft
Chairman

CPT/J
American Country Life Association
American Hospital Association
The American Public Health Association
American Public Welfare Association
The American Social Hygiene Association
Boys' Clubs of America, Inc.
Boy Scouts of America
Camp Fire Girls, Inc.
Catholic Hospital Association
Child Welfare League of America, Inc.
Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds
Family Welfare Association of America
The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America
Girl Scouts, Inc.
Jewish Welfare Board
National Association of Legal Aid Organizations
National Association for Travelers Aid and Transient Service
National Board, Young Women's Christian Associations
National Catholic Welfare Council
National Child Labor Committee
The National Committee for Mental Hygiene
National Conference of Catholic Charities
The National Council, Young Men's Christian Associations
The National Federation of Day Nurseries, Inc.
National Federation of Settlements, Inc.
National Health Council
National Organization for Public Health Nursing, Inc.
National Probation Association
National Recreation Association
National Social Work Council
National Society for the Prevention of Blindness
National Tuberculosis Association
National Urban League
The Salvation Army
Social Work Publicity Council
Welfare Department of the Association of Junior Leagues of America, Inc.