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**Series 2: “ You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal**

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1939 April 17

Radio Address to the National Parole Conference

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL PAROLE CONFERENCE
APRIL 17, 1939

MY FRIENDS:

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem.

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. Later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my first important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily in the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries. The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages across the continent. For instance, I think of the operations of a criminal gang which had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of this gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states. This illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

Crime cannot be held in check by a good police system alone. Occasional brilliant prosecutions may arouse our admiration, but they do not solve the crime problem. Long prison sentences for notorious criminals have not rid us of thousands who escape undetected or unpunished because our defenses break down at one point or another.

Public protection against law-breakers demands efficient police work, able and fearless prosecutions, prompt, fair trials, and the intelligent and constructive treatment of the guilty --- not just here and there, not only when well-known characters are involved, but in all cases in all jurisdictions throughout the land.

With this in mind, this administration initiated early in 1933 a definite program of crime control which had three major objectives.

First, we sought to broaden and strengthen Federal law enforcement. Secondly, we took steps to promote more effective cooperation among the states, and between the states and the Federal Government. Finally, through a broad program of social welfare, we struck at the very roots of crime.

As a first step, the Attorney General outlined a twelve-point legislative program which resulted in the enactment of twenty-one new Federal crime statutes. Two of

those laws gave the Federal Government drastic powers in kidnaping cases, with the result that the back of the kidnaping racket has been broken. Every home in the country has shared in the sense of relief that has come from the vigorous enforcement of the anti-kidnaping laws.

Other new laws empowered the national government to bring its resources into action against robbers of banks. There have been 245 convictions since this National Bank Robbery Law was enacted.

Here are some figures on daylight hold-ups of banks, compiled by the American Bankers' Association. In 1933, there were 516 daylight hold-ups. In 1934, the year the new Law became effective, the number fell to 364. In 1935 it was down to 258; in 1936, it was down still further to 148; and in 1937 it dropped to 120. Last year there were only 110 bank hold-ups -- only about one-fifth as many as there were in 1933. A good record!

Another new law made it a Federal crime to transport stolen goods, in excess of \$5,000 in value, across state lines. Still another made it unlawful for any person to flee from one state to another to avoid prosecution or appearance as a material witness in a criminal case.

These and the other new Federal anti-crime laws do not supplant state laws but plug the gaps between the authority of one state and that of its neighbors. They permit the forces of law and order to occupy what was formerly a no-man's land in which roamed some of our most desperate criminals.

But, of course, laws do not enforce themselves. And so we set about systematically to enlarge and improve the equipment and personnel of the Federal agencies of detection and prosecution. The agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department -- the G-man -- have justly become world famous. Likewise, the agents of the several investigating units in the Treasury Department,

the Postal Inspectors, and their co-workers in other branches of the government have made enviable records in the apprehension of offenders against Federal laws. The efforts of these investigators have been ably supported by a fine corps of United States Attorneys and special prosecutors. Many of these United States Attorneys are here today, and I am glad to welcome them as they assemble to canvass with Attorney General Murphy the ways in which their campaign against crime may be waged even more effectively.

A new spirit and a new energy have been breathed into our Federal court system also. Thirty-eight new district judgeships have been authorized, which will accelerate the splendid progress made in bringing the business of the courts more nearly up-to-date. Archaic forms of civil procedure have been cast aside for a uniform and simple set of rules which will help to speed the wheels of justice. A way of avoiding long delays in determining the constitutionality of Federal laws has been opened by permitting appeal directly from the lower courts to the Supreme Court.

With the authorization of Congress we have also instituted an important change of method in the handling of juvenile offenders against Federal laws. The courts and the Attorney General are now given wide latitude in determining how best to protect the safety of society by trying to prevent a young delinquent from becoming an habitual criminal. Charges against an offender under the age of eighteen may now be heard informally, and if probation is not desirable, the Attorney General is authorized to place him in any suitable public or private educational or correctional institution.

Another important part of our program has been the improvement of the Federal penal and correctional system in all of its branches. We have built different kinds of institutions for different kinds of prisoners, ranging from the now famous penitentiary for the most hardened offenders, on Alcatraz Island, to unwalled reformatories and camps for the offenders who are less dangerous and who seem to offer real hope of becoming law-abiding citizens.

In the administration of our Federal penal institutions we use every known aid to rehabilitation according to the needs of the prisoner. After all, the primary purpose of the prison is to protect the public by releasing men at the end of their sentences better and not worse than when they were received. For that reason, we have enlarged and improved the opportunities for education and vocational training in the Federal prison system. Moreover, we have provided useful work for those who need to learn how to earn an honest living -- and we have done it without selling a dollar's worth of goods on the open market in competition with private industry or free labor. We can, I think, look for still further improvement in the administration of the Federal prisons as the years go by because we have put the personnel of the prison service on a merit basis with training courses for employees of all grades.

Each year for several years we have increased the number of Federal probation and parole officers and last year we raised the standards governing their appointment. Today the field staff of the Bureau of Prisons is supervising nearly thirty thousand men and women on probation or on parole. No finer tribute could be paid to the work of these officials and to the United States Board of Parole than to mention the fact that about ninety-five per cent of those under their control complete their sentences without further violations of the law.

But our efforts to suppress wrongdoing have not been confined to the field of violent crimes. Through the securities and exchange legislation we have sought to protect the average investor from the depredations of unprincipled financial manipulators. In the administration of this legislation we have struck hard at those gangsters in high places who differ from the ordinary robbers only in the fact that they use the tricky weapons of high finance instead of sawed-off shotguns.

And let us not forget the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. You know, and I know, what a toll that took from this country through the flouting of law by thousands of otherwise respectable people as well as through the activities of bootleggers and racketeers who flourished during the prohibition years. It was undoubtedly the greatest source of revenue for organized crime that this nation has ever known.

While we have been tightening up on Federal law enforcement we have also been making headway toward the second of our broad objectives -- the development of closer cooperation between the agencies of the several states and those of the Federal Government. The Federal Bureau of Investigation in the Department of Justice has organized the National Police Academy where carefully chosen local peace officers are given training in modern police work. Expert and technical services have been made available to state prison and parole authorities by the Bureau of Prisons. The Works Progress Administration,

in addition to cooperating with the Justice Department in making the first nation-wide survey of the methods by which prisoners are released into society, has furnished much-needed personnel for educational and other programs in the institutions of thirty-two states. It has installed police signal systems and fingerprint files in cities which could not otherwise afford them. It has also furnished the labor for the construction or repair of jails and police stations throughout the country. Through the Public Works Administration over twenty-six million dollars has been made available for the construction, improvement, and repair of prisons and jails, with the result that many old, unhealthy, and overcrowded centers of crime infection have been replaced by modern facilities. Of this amount, over eleven million dollars has been for state and local projects.

All of these direct attacks on crime which we have made through extending and strengthening Federal activities and in helping to improve state and local agencies of law enforcement are important. But I like to think that the most

far-reaching results have come from our broad program of social welfare -- from our work relief projects, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the related measures for providing useful work for those of our citizens who are unemployed by private industry. Our citizens who have been out of work in the last six years have not needed to steal in order to keep from starving. Of course, when we instituted these activities we did not have in mind merely the narrow purpose of preventing crime. However, nobody who knows how demoralizing the effects of enforced idleness may be will be inclined to doubt that crime prevention has been an important by-product of our effort to provide our needy unemployed citizens with the opportunity to earn by honest work at least the bare necessities of life. And a considerable part of that honest work has been devoted to the construction and supervision of such social assets as playgrounds, athletic fields, municipal swimming pools,

gymnasiums, workshops, traveling libraries, schools and other educational and recreational facilities which are of particular benefit to youth.

Throughout the depression approximately one-third of all our unemployed have been youth under the age of twenty-five. Not long ago I read a report from a small city which had a reputation for juvenile delinquency. In collaboration with local agencies, the National Youth Administration started a work project which provided part-time jobs for the idle youth of this community. When the project was first started there was considerable "soldiering" on the job but gradually the interest and pride of these boys was aroused. For the five months since this NYA project had been started there had not been a single complaint of delinquency to the local peace officers. That is a concrete contribution to our common security -- not only now but for the years to come.

As I review our achievements in this coordinated drive against crime, it seems to me that we have made the least progress in the very important matter of getting people from prison back into society. This conclusion I am told is confirmed by the findings of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures now being published by the Department of Justice. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. Let us not forget for one moment that ninety-seven out of every one hundred of the men and women we send to prison must some day come out again. Between 60,000 and 70,000 persons are released from Federal and state prisons and reformatories every year. What they do when they come out is a matter of great importance to all of us. It is a nation-wide problem and at the same time a local problem. We make little permanent gain by the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of prisoners if they go back to criminal activities. More than one-half of the persons in prison today have had to be locked up at least once before for a violation of the law. We have bungled in the manner and the method of their release.

After the necessarily strict routine of prison life it is difficult for a discharged prisoner to stand on his own feet in the swift-running currents of a free man's world. Often, if he has been in prison very long, he will have lost the habit of making his own decisions. He usually faces tremendous difficulties in finding a job. In many cases his prison record cuts him off from the friendship of law-abiding people. These circumstances tend to push a man back to a life of crime unless we make it our business to help him overcome them. That is the reason why I have long been of the opinion that parole is the most promising method of terminating a prison sentence.

Parole is the conditional release of an offender under expert supervision while the state still has control over him. It is an integral part of the treatment begun the moment the man enters a correctional institution.

Parole is not pardon. When a man is pardoned, his crime is forgiven.

Parole is not a shortening of the sentence because of good behavior in prison. This is called "good time allowance" or commutation for good behavior, and it is given by law as an aid to prison discipline.

Parole is not probation. A person on probation has never been sent to prison for his offense.

And, of course, parole differs from outright discharge on the final day of the offender's sentence. When a man is paroled, he is still subject to the control of the authorities and he can be put back in prison without a formal trial if he does not live up to the conditions of his release.

The true purpose of parole is to protect society -- all of us -- by supervising and assisting released prisoners until they have a chance to get on their feet and show that they intend to live law-abiding, self-supporting lives.

Now, naturally, I am speaking of real, honest, well-administered parole: parole granted only after a prisoner has shown improvement during a period of constructive treatment and training in prison and only after a thorough and searching study of his case; parole under the supervision of qualified

parole officers.

Much of the criticism which we have heard directed at parole is due to the fact that while forty-six of our states have parole laws, less than a dozen have provided the money and the personnel which are necessary to operate a real parole system. Some of the criticism is due, too, to the fact that the parole power sometimes has been used to grant political or personal favors. This combination of neglect and abuse in the administration of the parole power is a matter of serious national concern. How well or how poorly a parole system operates in one section of the country may affect the lives of citizens throughout the nation.

On the other hand, we know from experience that parole, when it is honestly and expertly managed, provides better protection for society than does any other method of release from prison. That has been shown by the operation of the Federal parole system and in those states which have applied modern parole methods.

These are the reasons why I asked Attorney General Murphy to call this National Parole Conference. As I wrote to him on January 25, 1939, I hope that this conference will serve to acquaint our people with the facts concerning parole and clear up widespread misconceptions about it. Parole will never succeed if it is merely a government function and does not have the understanding and help of the individual citizens in every community.

It is especially important that people should not be deceived by violent attacks on properly run parole administrations if one parolee goes wrong and commits another crime. The fact is that while a properly run parole system gives no guarantee of perfection, the percentages of parolees who go straight for the rest of their lives are infinitely higher than where there is no parole system at all.

I hope you will let us know the ways in which the Federal Government can best cooperate with the governments of the several states in strengthening this important sector of our nation-wide attack on crime. I felt that these objectives could not be reached unless this conference included representatives of all branches of law enforcement, public welfare administration, and the general public. A technical job necessarily, it is one which must be geared into the work of other branches of law enforcement.

That is why Attorney General Murphy invited governors, judges, legislators, state attorneys general, prosecutors, police and prison officials, public welfare administrators, social workers, educators, and representative citizens as well as those directly engaged in parole work to take part in this conference.

Democracy succeeds through the thoughtful public service of its citizens. A conference of this kind is in accord with the American democratic way.

Well-administered parole is an instrument of tested value in the control of crime. Its proper use in all jurisdictions will promote our national security. If your deliberations serve that end, as I am sure they will, you will have rendered a very important public service.

Fred. J. Harlan

*Big reading copy used in
Last Room of White House*

[Handwritten signature]

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
Delivered to the National Parole Conference
East Room of the White House
April 17, 1939, 6:00 P. M., E. S. T.

(MY FRIENDS:)

MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

There are a few occasions when I wish the White
House were bigger. (Applause) But most of the time I
wish it were a great deal smaller.

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and also about some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem.

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. And later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my (first) most important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily (in) on the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries.

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.

(:SUNNINT YH)

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The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages and farms all across the continent. For instance, I think of the operations of a criminal gang (which) that had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of (this) that gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states. (This) That illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

Crime cannot be held in check by a good police system alone. Occasional brilliant prosecutions may arouse our admiration, but they do not solve the crime problem. Long prison sentences for notorious criminals have not rid us of thousands who escape undetected or unpunished because our defenses break down at one point or (another) other.

Public protection against law-breakers demands efficient police work, able and fearless prosecutions, prompt, fair trials, and the intelligent and constructive treatment of the guilty -- not just here and there, not only when well-known characters are involved, but in all the cases in all jurisdictions (throughout) in every part of the land.

With this in mind, this Administration initiated early in 1933 a definite program of crime control (which)

that had three major objectives.

First of all, we sought to broaden and strengthen Federal law enforcement. Secondly, we took steps to promote more effective cooperation among the states themselves, and between the states and the Federal Government. And finally, through a broad program of social welfare, we struck at the very roots of crime itself.

As a first step (the) Attorney General Cummings outlined a twelve-point legislative program (which) that resulted in the enactment of twenty-one new Federal crime statutes. Two of those laws gave to the Federal Government -- we all know about it -- drastic powers in kidnaping cases, with the result that the back of the kidnaping racket has been broken. Every home in the country has shared in the sense of relief that has come from the vigorous enforcement of the anti-kidnaping laws.

Other new laws empowered the national government to bring its resources into action against robbers of banks. There have been 245 convictions since this National Bank Robbery Law was enacted.

Here are some figures, just by way of illustration, on the daylight hold-ups of banks, compiled by the American Bankers' Association. In 1933, in that year, there were 516 daylight hold-ups. In 1934, the year the new Law became effective, the number fell to 364. In 1935 it was down to 258; in 1936, it was down still further to 148; and in

1937 it dropped to 120. Last year, 1938, there were only 110 bank hold-ups -- only about one-fifth as many as there were in 1933, five years before, and I think that is a pretty good record. (A good record!)

Another (new) law made it a Federal crime to transport stolen goods, in excess of \$5,000 in value, transport them across state lines. Still another made it unlawful for any person to flee from one state to another to avoid prosecution or appearance as a material witness in a criminal case.

These and the other new Federal anti-trust (laughter) anti-crime laws (interrupted by laughter and applause) -- I wonder what the connection is. (Laughter) I can assure you it was a pure slip of the tongue; there were no mental reservations. These, the other new Federal anti-crime laws do not supplant state laws but they plug the gaps between the authority of one state and that of its neighbors. They permit the forces of law and order to occupy what was formerly a no-man's land in which as we know roamed some of (our) the most desperate criminals of modern times.

But, of course, laws do not enforce themselves. And so we set about systematically to enlarge and improve the equipment and personnel of the Federal agencies of detection and prosecution. The agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department -- what

they call the G-man -- have justly become world famous. Likewise, the agents of the several investigating units in the Treasury Department, the Postal Inspectors, and their co-workers in other branches of the Government have made enviable records in the apprehension of offenders against Federal laws. The efforts of these investigators have been ably supported by a fine corps of United States Attorneys and special prosecutors. Many of these United States Attorneys are here today, and I am glad to welcome them as they assemble to canvass with Attorney General Murphy the ways in which their campaign against crime (may) can be waged even more effectively.

A new spirit and a new energy have been breathed into our Federal court system also. Thirty-eight new district judgeships have been authorized, (which will) to accelerate the splendid progress made in bringing the business of the courts more nearly up-to-date. Archaic forms of civil procedure have been cast aside for a uniform and simple set of rules which will help to speed the wheels of justice. A way of avoiding long delays in determining the constitutionality of Federal laws has been opened up by permitting appeal directly from the lower courts to the Supreme Court itself.

With the authorization of Congress we have also instituted an important change of method in the handling of juvenile offenders against Federal laws. The courts and

and the Attorney General are now given wide latitude very properly, latitude in determining how best to protect the safety of society by trying to prevent a young delinquent from becoming an habitual criminal. Charges against an offender under the age of eighteen may now be heard informally, and if probation is not desirable, the Attorney General is authorized to place him in any suitable public or private educational or correctional institution.

Another important part of our program has been the improvement of the Federal penal and correctional system itself in all of its branches. We (have) built different kinds of institutions for different kinds of prisoners, ranging from the now famous penitentiary for the most hardened offenders, on Alcatraz Island, to unwalled reformatories and camps for the offenders who are less dangerous and who seem to offer real hope of becoming law-abiding citizens.

In the administration of our Federal penal institutions we use every known aid to rehabilitation according to the needs of the prisoner. After all, the primary purpose of the prison is to protect the public by releasing men at the end of their sentences better and not worse than when they were received. For that reason, we have enlarged and improved the opportunities for education and vocational training in the Federal prison system. Moreover, we (have) provided useful work for those who need to learn how to earn

an honest living -- and we have done it without selling a dollar's worth of goods on the open market in competition with private industry or free labor. We can, I think, look for still further improvement, yes, great improvement, as we learn more, in the administration of the Federal prisons as the years go by because we have put the personnel of the prison service on a merit basis with training courses for employees of all grades.

(Each) Every year for (several) a number of years we have increased the number of Federal probation and parole officers and last year we raised the standards governing their appointment. Today the field staff of the Bureau of Prisons is supervising nearly thirty thousand men and women on probation or on parole. No finer tribute could be paid to the work of these officials and to the United States Board of Parole than to mention the fact that about ninety-five per cent of those under their control complete their sentences without further violations of the law.

But our efforts to suppress wrongdoing have not been confined to the field of violent crimes. Through the securities and exchange legislation we have sought to protect the average investor from the depredations of unprincipled financial manipulators. In the administration of this legislation we have struck hard at those gangsters in high places who differ from the ordinary robbers only in the fact that they use the tricky weapons of high finance

instead of sawed-off shotguns. (Applause)

And let us not wholly forget the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. (Laughter and applause) You know, and I know, what a toll that took from this country through the flouting of law by thousands of otherwise respectable people as well as through the activities of bootleggers and racketeers who flourished (during) in the prohibition years. It was undoubtedly the greatest source of revenue for organized crime that this nation has ever known.

While we have been tightening up on Federal law enforcement we have also been making headway toward the second of our broad objectives -- the development of closer cooperation between the agencies of the several states and those of the Federal Government. The Federal Bureau of Investigation in the Department of Justice has organized the National Police Academy where carefully chosen local peace officers are given training in modern police work. Expert (and) technical services have been made available to state prison and parole authorities by the Bureau of Prisons. The W. P. A., the Works Progress Administration, in addition to cooperating with the Justice Department in making the first nation-wide survey of the methods by which prisoners are released into society, has furnished much-needed personnel for educational and other programs in the institutions of thirty-two states of the Union. It has installed police signal systems (and), fingerprint files in cities (which)

that could not otherwise afford them. It has (also) furnished the labor for the construction or the repair of jails and police stations throughout the country. And through another agency, the Public Works Administration, over twenty-six million dollars has been made available for the construction, improvement, and repair of prisons and jails, with the result that many old, unhealthy, and over-crowded centers of crime infection have been replaced by modern facilities. Of (this) that amount, over eleven million dollars has been for state and local projects.

So you will see that all of these direct attacks on crime which we have made through the extending and strengthening of Federal activities and in helping to improve state and local agencies of law enforcement are very, very important. But I like to think that the most far-reaching results have come from our broad program of social welfare -- from our work relief projects, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the related measures for providing useful work for those of our citizens who are unemployed by private industry. Our citizens who have been out of work in the last six years have not needed to steal in order to keep from starving. (Applause) Of course, when we instituted (these) those activities we did not have in mind merely the narrow purpose of preventing crime. However, nobody who knows how demoralizing the effects of enforced idleness may be will be inclined to doubt

that crime prevention has been an important by-product of our effort to provide our needy unemployed citizens with the opportunity to earn by honest work at least the bare necessities of life. And a considerable part of that honest work has been devoted to the construction and supervision of such social assets as playgrounds, athletic fields, municipal swimming pools, gymnasiums, workshops, traveling libraries, schools and other educational and recreational facilities (which) that are of particular benefit to youth and that has an effect on crime.

Throughout the depression approximately (one) a third of all our unemployed have been youth, young people, under the age of twenty-five. Not long ago I read a report from a small city which had a reputation for juvenile delinquency. In collaboration with local agencies, the (National Youth Administration) N. Y. A. started a work project (which) that provided part-time jobs for the idle youth of (this) the community. When the project was first started there was considerable "soldiering" on the job but gradually the interest and the pride of those boys in the job itself was aroused. For the five months since this N. Y. A. project had been started there had not been a single complaint of delinquency to the local (peace) police officers. That is a concrete contribution to our common security -- not only now but for (the) years to come.

So, as I review our achievements in this coordinated

drive against crime, it seems to me that we have made the least progress in the very important matter of getting people from prison back (into) to society. (This) That conclusion I am told is confirmed by the findings of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures now being published by the Department of Justice. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. Let us not forget for one moment that ninety-seven out of every (one) hundred of the men and women we send to prison must some day come out of prison again. Between 60,000 and 70,000 persons are released from Federal and state prisons and reformatories back into the communities of the country every single year. What they do when they come out is a matter of great importance to all of (us) them, to every citizen and every man, woman and child, to every father and mother. It is a nation-wide problem and at the same time it is a local problem. We make little permanent gain by the arrest, the prosecution, and the punishment of prisoners if they go back, when they come out, to criminal activities. More than one-half of the persons in prison today have had to be locked up at least once before for a violation of the law. Yes, we might as well admit it. Taking it by and large, we have bungled in the manner and the method of their release.

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man's world. Often, if he has been in prison very long, he will have lost the habit of making his own decisions. He usually faces tremendous difficulties in finding a job. In many cases his prison record cuts him off from the friendship of law-abiding people. These circumstances tend to push a man back to a life of crime unless we make it our business to help him overcome them. And when I say "we", I do not mean just those of us from the point of view of government or because we have a great social interest in the problem. I mean all of the average citizens in every community in the whole of the United States. That is the reason (why) I have long been of the opinion that this problem of parole is the most promising method of terminating a prison sentence. But that it has got to have the interest of the citizens of the country if we are to carry through on that improvement.

Parole is the conditional release of an offender under expert supervision while the state still has control over him. It is an integral part of the treatment begun the moment the man enters a correctional institution.

And parole must not be confused with other things. Parole is not pardon. When a man is pardoned, his crime is forgiven.

Parole is not a shortening of the sentence because of good behavior in prison. This is called "good time allowance" or commutation for good behavior, and it is given by

law as an aid to prison discipline.

Parole is not probation. A person on probation has never been sent to prison for his offense.

And, of course, parole differs from outright discharge on the final day of the offender's sentence. When a man is paroled, he is still subject to the control of the authorities and he can be put back into prison without a formal trial if he does not live up to the conditions of his release.

The true purpose of parole is to protect society -- all of us -- by supervising and assisting released prisoners until they have a chance to get on their feet and show that they intend to live law-abiding, self-supporting lives.

Now, naturally, I am speaking of real, honest, well-administered parole: parole granted only after a prisoner has shown improvement during a long period of constructive treatment and training in prison and only after a thorough and searching study of his case; parole under the supervision of qualified parole officers.

Much of the criticism (which) we have heard directed at parole is due to the fact that while forty-six (of our) states of our Union have parole laws, less than a dozen out of those forty-six have provided the money and the personnel which are necessary to operate a real parole system. Some of the criticism is due, too, to the fact that the parole power sometimes -- yes I would say often -- has been used to

grant political or personal favors. (This) That combination of neglect and abuse in the administration of the parole power is a matter of serious national concern. How well or how poorly a parole system operates in one section of the country may affect the lives of citizens (throughout the nation) in every other part of the country.

On the other hand, we know from experience that parole, when it is honestly and expertly managed, provides better protection for society than does any other method of release from prison. That has been shown by the operation of the Federal parole system and in those states which have applied modern parole methods.

These are the reasons why I asked the Attorney General (Murphy) to call this National Parole Conference. As I wrote (to) him on January 25th, (1939) of this year, I hope that this conference will serve to acquaint our people with the facts concerning parole and clear up widespread misconceptions about it. Parole will never succeed if it is merely a government function and does not have the understanding and help of the individual citizens in every community.

And it is especially important that people in the United States, the whole of our citizenship, should not be deceived by violent attacks on properly run parole administrations if, as has happened, one parolee goes wrong and commits another crime. The fact is that while a properly run parole system (gives no) cannot give the guarantee of

perfection, the percentages of parolees who go straight for the rest of their lives, those percentages are infinitely higher than where there is no parole system at all.

I hope that you will let us know the ways in which the Federal Government can best cooperate with the governments of the several states in strengthening this important sector of our nation-wide attack on crime. I felt that these objectives could not be reached unless this conference included representatives of all branches of law enforcement, public welfare administration, and the general public as well. A technical job necessarily, it is one (which) that must be geared into the work of other branches of law enforcement.

That is why Attorney General Murphy has invited governors and judges and legislators, state attorneys general, prosecutors, police and prison officials, public welfare administrators, social workers and educators, and representative citizens as well as those directly engaged in parole work to take part in this conference.

Democracy succeeds through the thoughtful public service of its citizens. And a conference of this kind (is) seems to me to be in accord with the American democratic way.

Well-administered parole is an instrument of tested value in the control of crime. Its proper use in all jurisdictions in every state will promote our national security.

If your deliberations serve that end, as I am sure they will, you will have rendered a very important public service, for which you will deserve and get the thanks of the American people. (Prolonged applause)

of the White House.

April 17, 1939.

My Friends:

Mr. Attorney General, Ladies and Gentlemen,
delivered to the

STATEMENTS FILE

- 24 Address of the President
43 Delivered to the National Parole Conference
24 East Room of the White House
35 April 17, 1939, 6.00 EST, R. N.

(My Friends:)

Mr. Attorney General, Ladies and Gentlemen

A. There are a few occasions when I wish the White House were bigger. (Applause) But most of the time I wish it were a great deal smaller.

B. Just by way of illustration

C. Five years before, and I think that is a pretty good record

D. (interrupted by laughter and applause)-- I wonder what the connection is. (laughter) I can assure ~~it~~ you it was a pure slip of the tongue; There were no mental reservations. These, the other new federal anti-crime laws

E Yes, great improvement, as we learn more

F Back into the communities of the country

G Them, to every citizen and every man woman and child to

every father and mother.

H Yes, we might as well admit it. Taking it by and large,

I. And, when I say "we", I ~~do not mean~~ that I do know what I

~~mean~~

do not mean just those of us from the point of view of
government or because we have a great social interest

in these problems. I mean all of the average citizens
in every community in the whole of the United States.
That is the reason (why) I have long been of the opinion
that this problem of parole is the most promising method
of terminating a prison sentence
But that it has got to have the interest of the citizens
of the country if we are to carry through on that improvement.

J And parole must not be confused with other things.
and get the

K , for which you will deserve ~~the~~ the thanks of the American
people. (Prolonged applause)

HOLD FOR RELEASE

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April 17, 1939

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House in connection with the National Parole Conference, MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 6:00 P. M., E.S.T., April 17, 1939.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

MY FRIENDS:

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem. Also about

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. Later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my ~~first~~ ^{most} important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily on the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries. The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages across the continent. For instance, I think of the operations of a criminal gang which had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of this gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states. This illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

Crime cannot be held in check by a good police system alone. Occasional brilliant prosecutions may arouse our admiration, but they do not solve the crime problem. Long prison sentences for notorious criminals have not rid us of thousands who escape undetected or unpunished because our defenses break down at one point or another.

Public protection against law-breakers demands efficient police work, able and fearless prosecutions, prompt, fair trials, and the intelligent and constructive treatment of the guilty -- not just here and there, not only when well-known characters are involved, but in all cases in all jurisdictions throughout the land.

With this in mind, this administration initiated early in 1933 a definite program of crime control which had three major objectives.

First, we sought to broaden and strengthen Federal law enforcement. Secondly, we took steps to promote more effective cooperation among the states and between the states and the Federal Government. Finally, through a broad program of social welfare, we struck at the very roots of crime.

As a first step, (the) Attorney General outlined a twelve-point legislative program which resulted in the enactment of twenty-one new Federal crime statutes. Two of these laws gave the Federal Government drastic powers in kidnapping cases, with the result that the book of the kidnapping racket has been broken. Every home in the country has shared in the sense of relief that has come from the vigorous enforcement of the anti-kidnapping laws.

Other new laws empowered the national government to bring its resources into action against robbers of banks. There have been 245 convictions since this National Bank Robbery Law was enacted.

Here are some figures on daylight hold-ups of banks, compiled by the American Bankers' Association. In 1933, there were 516 daylight hold-ups. In 1934, the year the new Law became effective, the number fell to 364. In 1935 it was down to 258; in 1936, it was down still further to 149; and in 1937 it dropped to 120. Last year--there were only 110 bank hold-ups -- only about one-fifth as many as there were in 1933. (A good record!) *1938* *1/18* *253* *7-1*

Another law made it a Federal crime to transport stolen goods, in excess of \$5,000 in value, across state lines. Still another made it unlawful for any person to flee from one state to another to avoid prosecution or appearance as a material witness in a criminal case.

These and the other new Federal anti-crime laws do not supplant state laws but plug the gaps between the authority of one state and that of its neighbors. They permit the forces of law and order to occupy what was formerly a no-man's land in which roamed some of our most desperate criminals. *outlawed the no man's land* *1/18* *7-1*

But, of course, laws do not enforce themselves. And so we set about systematically to enlarge and improve the equipment and personnel of the Federal agencies of detection and prosecution. The agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department -- the G-men -- have justly become world famous. Likewise, the agents of the several investigating units in the Treasury Department, the Postal Inspectors, and their co-workers in other branches of the government have made enviable records in the apprehension of offenders against Federal laws. The efforts of those investigators have been ably supported by a fine corps of United States Attorneys and special prosecutors. Many of these United States Attorneys are here today, and I am glad to welcome them as they assemble to canvass with Attorney General Murphy the ways in which their campaign against crime may be waged even more effectively.

A new spirit and a new energy have been breathed into our Federal court system also. Thirty-eight new district judgeships have been authorized, which will accelerate the splendid progress made in bringing the business of the courts more nearly up-to-date. Archaic forms of civil procedure have been cast aside for a uniform and simple set of rules which will help to speed the wheels of justice. A way of avoiding long delays in determining the constitutionality of Federal laws has been opened by permitting appeal directly from the lower courts to the Supreme Court. *1/18* *7-1*

With the authorization of Congress we have also instituted an important change of method in the handling of juvenile offenders against Federal laws. The courts and the Attorney General are now given wide latitude in determining how best to protect the safety of society by trying to prevent a young delinquent from becoming an habitual criminal. Charges against an offender under the age of eighteen may now be heard informally, and if probation is not desirable, the Attorney General is authorized to place him in any suitable public or private educational or correctional institution. *1/18* *7-1*

Another important part of our program has been the improvement of the Federal penal and correctional system in all of its branches. We have built different kinds of institutions for different kinds of prisoners, ranging from the now famous penitentiary for the most hardened offenders, on Alcatraz Island, to unmailed reformatories and camps for the offenders who are less dangerous and who seem to offer real hope of becoming law-abiding citizens.

In the administration of our Federal penal institutions we use every known aid to rehabilitation according to the needs of the prisoner. After all, the primary purpose of the prison is to protect the public by releasing men at the end of their sentences better and not worse than when they were received. For that reason, we have enlarged and improved the opportunities for education and vocational training in the Federal prison system. Moreover, we (have) provided useful work for those who need to learn how to earn an honest living -- and we have done it without selling a dollar's worth of goods on the open market in competition with private industry or free labor. We can, I think, look for still further improvement in the administration of the Federal prisons as the years go by because we have put the personnel of the prison service on a merit basis with training courses for employees of all grades.

Each year for several years we have increased the number of Federal probation and parole officers and last year we raised the standards governing their appointment. Today the field staff of the Bureau of Prisons is supervising nearly thirty thousand men and women on probation or on parole. No finer tribute could be paid to the work of these officials and to the United States Board of Parole than to mention the fact that about ninety-five per cent of those under their control complete their sentences without further violations of the law.

But our efforts to suppress wrongdoing have not been confined to the field of violent crimes. Through the securities and exchange legislation we have sought to protect the average investor from the depredations of unprincipled financial manipulators. In the administration of this legislation we have struck hard at those gangsters in high places who differ from the ordinary robbers only in the fact that they use the tricky weapons of high finance instead of sawed-off shotguns.

And let us not forget the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. You know, and I know, what a toll that took from this country through the flouting of law by thousands of otherwise respectable people as well as through the activities of bootleggers and racketeers who flourished during the prohibition years. It was undoubtedly the greatest scourge of revenue for organized crime that this nation has ever known.

While we have been tightening up on Federal law enforcement we have also been making headway toward the second of our broad objectives -- the development of closer cooperation between the agencies of the several states and those of the Federal Government. The Federal Bureau of Investigation in the Department of Justice has organized the National Police Academy where carefully chosen local police officers are given training in modern police work. Exported technical services have been made available to state prison and parole authorities by the Bureau of Prisons. The Works Progress Administration, in addition to cooperating with the Justice Department in making the first nation-wide survey of the methods by which prisoners are released into society, has furnished much-needed personnel for educational and other programs in the institutions of thirty-two states. It has installed police signal systems and fingerprint files in cities which could not otherwise afford them. It has furnished the labor for the construction or repair of jails and police stations throughout the country. Through the Public Works Administration, over twenty-six million dollars has been made available for the construction, improvement, and repair of prisons and jails, with the result that many old, unhealthy, and overcrowded centers of crime infestation have been replaced by modern facilities. Of this amount, over eleven million dollars has been for state and local projects.

All of these direct attacks on crime which we have made through extending and strengthening Federal activities and in helping to improve state and local agencies of law enforcement are important. But I like to

arrest bad agency,

very, very

think that the most far-reaching results have come from our broad program of social welfare -- from our work relief projects, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the related measures for providing useful work for those of our citizens who are unemployed by private industry. Our citizens who have been out of work in the last six years have not needed to steal in order to keep from starving. Of course, when we instituted these activities we did not have in mind merely the narrow purpose of preventing crime. However, nobody who knows how demoralizing the effects of enforced idleness may be will be inclined to doubt that crime prevention has been an important by-product of our effort to provide our needy unemployed citizens with the opportunity to earn by honest work at least the bare necessities of life. And a considerable part of that honest work has been devoted to the construction and supervision of such social assets as playgrounds, athletic fields, municipal swimming pools, gymnasiums, workshops, traveling libraries, schools and other educational and recreational facilities which are of particular benefit to youth. *(that is the effect)*

Throughout the depression approximately one-third of all our unemployed have been youths under the age of twenty-five. Not long ago I read a report from a small city which had a reputation for juvenile delinquency. In collaboration with local agencies, the National Youth Administration started a work project which provided part-time jobs for the idle youth of this community. When the project was first started there was considerable "soldiering" on the job but gradually the interest and pride of those boys was aroused. For the five months since this NYA project had been started there had not been a single complaint of delinquency to the local police officers. That is a concrete contribution to our common security -- not only now but for many years to come. *NYA*

Sec 7 As I review our achievements in this coordinated drive against crime, it seems to me that we have made the least progress in the very important matter of getting people from prison back into society. (This) Conclusion I am told is confirmed by the findings of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures now being published by the Department of Justice. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. Let us not forget for one moment that ninety-seven out of every one hundred of the men and women we send to prison must someday come out again. Between 60,000 and 70,000 persons are released from Federal and state prisons and reformatories every year. What they do when they come out is a matter of great importance to all of us. It is a nation-wide problem and at the same time a local problem. We make little permanent gain by the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of prisoners if they go back to criminal activities. More than one-half of the persons in prison today have had to be looked up at least once before for a violation of the law. We have bungled in the manner and the method of their release.

After the necessarily strict routine of prison life it is difficult for a discharged prisoner to stand on his own feet in the swift-running currents of a free man's world. Often, if he has been in prison very long, he will have lost the habit of making his own decisions. He usually faces tremendous difficulties in finding a job. In many cases his prison record cuts him off from the friendship of law-abiding people. These circumstances tend to push a man back to a life of crime unless we make it our business to help him overcome them. That is the reason why I have long been of the opinion that parole is the most promising method of terminating a prison sentence.

Parole is the conditional release of an offender under expert supervision while the state still has control over him. It is an integral part of the treatment begun the moment the man enters a correctional institution.

Parole is not pardon. When a man is pardoned, his crime is forgotten.

Parole is not a shortening of the sentence because of good behavior in prison. This is called "good time allowance" or commutation for good behavior, and it is given by law as an aid to prison discipline.

Parole is not probation. A person on probation has never been sent to prison for his offense.

And, of course, parole differs from outright discharge on the final day of the offender's sentence. When a man is paroled, he is still subject to the control of the authorities and he can be put back in prison without a formal trial if he does not live up to the conditions of his parole.

The true purpose of parole is to protect society -- all of us -- by supervising and assisting released prisoners until they have a chance to get on their feet and show that they intend to live law-abiding, supporting lives.

Now, naturally, I am speaking of real, honest, well-administered parole, granted only after a prisoner has shown improvement during a period of constructive treatment and training in prison and only after a thorough and searching study of his case; parole under the supervision of qualified parole officers.

Most of the criticism (which) we have heard directed at parole is due to the fact that while forty-six states have parole laws, less than a dozen have provided the money and the personnel which are necessary to operate a real parole system. Some of this criticism is due, too, to the fact that the parole power sometimes has been used to grant political or personal favors. (This) combination of neglect and abuse in the administration of the parole power is a matter of serious national concern. How well or how poorly a parole system operates is one section of the country may affect the lives of citizens throughout the nation.

On the other hand, we know from experience that parole, when it is honestly and expertly managed, provides better protection for society than does any other method of release from prison. That has been shown by the operation of the Federal parole system and in those states which have applied modern parole methods.

These are the reasons why I asked Attorney General Murphy to call this National Parole Conference. As I wrote him on January 25, 1937, I hope that this conference will serve to acquaint our people with the facts concerning parole and clear up widespread misconceptions about it. Parole will never succeed if it is merely a government function and does not have the understanding and help of the individual citizens in every community.

It is especially important that people should not be deceived by violent attacks on properly run parole administrations if and parole does wrong and excites another one. The fact is that while a properly run parole system (has) no guarantee of perfection, the percentages of parolees who go straight for the rest of their lives are infinitely higher than where there is no parole system at all.

I hope you will let us know the ways in which the Federal Government can best cooperate with the governments of the several states in strengthening this important aspect of our nation-wide attack on crime. I felt that those objectives could not be realized unless this conference included representatives of all branches of law enforcement, public welfare administration, and the general public. A卓completely卓 job necessarily, it is one which must be shared into the work of other branches of law enforcement.

That is why Attorney General Murphy invited governors, judges, legislators, state attorneys general, prosecutors, police and prison officials, public welfare administrators, social workers, officers, and representatives of citizens as well as those directly engaged in parole work to take part in this conference.

Democracy succeeds through the thoughtful public service of its citizens. A conference of this kind (is) in accord with this American democratic way.

Well-administered parole is an instrument of tested value in the control of crime. Its proper use in all jurisdictions will promote our national security. If your deliberations serve that end, as I am sure they will, you will have rendered a very important public service.

Very truly yours,
Frank Murphy
Attorney General

only

DRAFT OF REMARKS OF
THE PRESIDENT

NATIONAL PAROLE CONFERENCE

My Friends:

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem.

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying ~~—~~ many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. ~~A little~~ later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my first important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily ~~upon~~ the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries. The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages across the continent. ~~Not so long ago my attention was called to the operations of a criminal gang which had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of this gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states.~~ This ~~Although this may be a striking case, it is not unique and~~ illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

We have come to realize, too, that efficiency in one branch of law enforcement cannot compensate for inefficiency in other branches.

Crime cannot be held in check by a good police system alone. Occasional brilliant prosecutions may arouse our admiration, but they do not solve the crime problem. Long prison sentences for notorious criminals have not rid us of ~~the land~~ or ~~those~~ thousands who escape undetected or unpunished because our defenses break down at one point or another.

Public protection against law-breakers demands efficient police work, able and fearless prosecutions, prompt, fair trials, and the intelligent and constructive treatment of the guilty - not just here and there, not only when well-known characters are involved, but in all cases in all jurisdictions throughout the land.

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As a first step, the Attorney General outlined a twelve-point legislative program which resulted in the enactment of twenty-one new Federal crime statutes. Two of those laws gave the Federal Government drastic powers in kidnaping cases, ^{with the result that} ~~now~~ the back of the kidnaping racket has been broken. Every home in the country has shared in the ~~great~~ sense of relief that has come from the vigorous enforcement of the anti-kidnaping laws.

Other new laws empowered the national government to bring its resources into action against robbers of ~~national~~ banks ~~and~~
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Here are some figures on daylight hold-ups of banks,
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not only now but for the years to come.

As I review our achievements in this coordinated drive against crime, it seems to me that we have made the least progress in the very important matter of getting people from prison back into society. This conclusion I am told is confirmed by the findings of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures now being published by the Department of Justice. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. Let us not forget for one moment that ninety-seven out of every one hundred of the men and women we send to prison must some day come out again. Between 60,000 and 70,000 persons are released from Federal and state prisons and reformatories every year. What they do when they come out is a matter of great importance to all of us. It is a nation-wide problem.

And it's the whole thing a ideal
Brookings,

permanent gain by the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of prisoners if they go back to criminal activities. ~~How little we have gained in the past is shown by the fact that more than one-~~
~~half of the persons in prison today have had to be locked up at least once before for a violation of the law. I am convinced that~~
~~one of the reasons for so large a number of repeaters is the same~~
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and the method
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After the necessarily strict routine of prison life it is difficult for a discharged prisoner to stand on his own feet in the swift-running currents of a free man's world. Often, if he has been in prison very long, he will have lost the habit of making his own decisions. He usually faces tremendous difficulties in finding a job. In many cases his prison record cuts him off from the friendship of law-abiding people. These circumstances tend to push a man back to a life of crime unless we make it our business to help him overcome them. That is the reason why I have long been of the opinion that parole is the most promising method of terminating a prison sentence.

Parole is the conditional release of an offender under expert supervision while the state still has control over him. It is an integral part of the treatment begun the moment the man enters a correctional institution.

Parole is not pardon. When a man is pardoned, his crime is forgiven. ~~He may be paroled outright or on condition that he does not commit another offense, but in either case pardon is an act of clemency.~~

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Parole is not probation. A person on probation has never been sent to prison for his offense.

And, of course, parole differs from outright discharge on the final day of the offender's sentence. When a man is paroled, he is still subject to the control of the authorities and he can be put

back in prison without a formal trial if he does not live up to the conditions of his release.

~~It is wrong, I think, to speak of freeing a prisoner.~~
~~It would be more accurate to speak of subscribing a prisoner.~~
~~than~~
to parole, for the true purpose of parole is to protect society - all of us - by supervising and assisting released prisoners until they have a chance to get on their feet and show that they intend to live law-abiding, self-supporting lives.

Now, naturally, I am speaking of real, honest, well-administered parole: parole granted only after a prisoner has shown improvement during a period of constructive treatment and training in prison and only after a thorough and searching study of his case; parole under the supervision of qualified parole officers.

Much of the criticism which we have heard directed at parole is due to the fact that while forty-six of our states have parole laws, less than a dozen have provided the money and the personnel which are necessary to operate a real parole system. Some of the criticism is due, too, to the fact that the parole power sometimes has been used to grant political or personal favors. This combination of neglect and abuse in the administration of the parole power is a matter of serious national concern. How well or how poorly a parole system operates in one section of the country may affect the lives of citizens throughout the nation.

On the other hand, we know from experience that parole, when it is honestly and expertly managed, provides better protection for society than does any other method of release from prison. That has been shown by the operation of the Federal parole system and in those states which have applied modern parole methods.

These are the reasons why I asked Attorney General Murphy to call this National Parole Conference. As I wrote to him on January 25, 1939, I hope that this conference will serve to acquaint our people with the facts concerning parole and clear up widespread misconceptions about it. ~~A~~ ~~Secondly, I hope that it will be able to reach an agreement upon what is necessary to improve the administration of parole in those areas where it is now weak.~~ ~~I hope~~ ~~it~~ ~~will let us know the ways in which the Federal Government can best cooperate with the governments of the several states in strengthening this important sector of our nation-wide attack on crime.~~ I felt that these objectives could not be reached unless this conference included representatives of all branches of law enforcement, public welfare administration, and the general public. While ~~the administration~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~technical job,~~ ^{It is a} ~~it is one which must be geared~~ into the work of other branches of law enforcement ~~in such a way~~ ~~that it serves the best interests of all of the people.~~

INSERT A

Parole will never succeed if it is merely a government function and does not have the understanding and help of the individual citizens in every community.

It is especially important that people should not be deceived by violent attacks on properly run parole administrations if one parolee goes wrong and commits another crime. The fact is that while a properly run parol system gives no guarantee of perfection, the percentages of parolees who go straight for the rest of their lives are infinitely higher than where there is no parole system at all.

That is why Attorney General Murphy invited governors, judges, legislators, state attorneys general, prosecutors, police and prison officials, public welfare administrators, social workers, educators, and representative citizens as well as those directly engaged in parole work to take part in this conference.

Democracy succeeds through the thoughtful public service of its citizens. A conference of this kind, ~~bring together~~
~~Federal, state, and local officials, representatives of private~~
~~organizations, and the lay public, to discuss a problem facing~~
~~disorderly, is in accord with the American democratic way.~~

Well-administered parole is an instrument of tested value in the control of crime. Its proper use in all jurisdictions will promote our national security. If your deliberations serve that end, as I am sure they will, you will have rendered a very important public service.

Mr. Sieglung
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SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL PAROLE CONFERENCE

APRIL 17, 1939

MY FRIENDS:

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem.

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. Later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my first important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily in the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries. The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages across the continent. For instance, I think of the operations of a criminal gang which had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of this gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states. This illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

Crime cannot be held in check by a good police system alone. Occasional brilliant prosecutions may arouse our admiration, but they do not solve the crime problem. Long prison sentences for notorious criminals have not rid us of thousands who escape undetected or unpunished because our defenses break down at one point or another.

Public protection against law-breakers demands efficient police work, able and fearless prosecutions, prompt, fair trials, and the intelligent and constructive treatment of the guilty -- not just here and there, not only when well-known characters are involved, but in all cases in all jurisdictions throughout the land.

With this in mind, this administration initiated early in 1933 a definite program of crime control which had three major objectives.

First, we sought to broaden and strengthen Federal law enforcement. Secondly, we took steps to promote more effective cooperation among the states, and between the states and the Federal Government. Finally, through a broad program of social welfare, we struck at the very roots of crime.

As a first step, the Attorney General outlined a twelve-point legislative program which resulted in the enactment of twenty-one new Federal crime statutes. Two of

those laws gave the Federal Government drastic powers in kidnaping cases, with the result that the back of the kidnaping racket has been broken. Every home in the country has shared in the sense of relief that has come from the vigorous enforcement of the anti-kidnaping laws.

Other new laws empowered the national government to bring its resources into action against robbers of banks. There have been 245 convictions since this National Bank Robbery Law was enacted.

Here are some figures on daylight hold-ups of banks, compiled by the American Bankers' Association. In 1933, there were 516 daylight hold-ups. In 1934, the year the new Law became effective, the number fell to 364. In 1935 it was down to 258; in 1936, it was down still further to 148; and in 1937 it dropped to 120. Last year there were only 110 bank hold-ups -- only about one-fifth as many as there were in 1933. A good record!

Another new law made it a Federal crime to transport stolen goods, in excess of \$5,000 in value, across state lines. Still another made it unlawful for any person to flee from one state to another to avoid prosecution or appearance as a material witness in a criminal case.

These and the other new Federal anti-crime laws do not supplant state laws but plug the gaps between the authority of one state and that of its neighbors. They permit the forces of law and order to occupy what was formerly a no-man's land in which roamed some of our most desperate criminals.

But, of course, laws do not enforce themselves. And so we set about systematically to enlarge and improve the equipment and personnel of the Federal agencies of detection and prosecution. The agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Justice Department -- the G-man -- have justly become world famous. Likewise, the agents of the several investigating units in the Treasury Department,

the Postal Inspectors, and their co-workers in other branches of the government have made enviable records in the apprehension of offenders against Federal laws. The efforts of these investigators have been ably supported by a fine corps of United States Attorneys and special prosecutors. Many of these United States Attorneys are here today, and I am glad to welcome them as they assemble to canvass with Attorney General Murphy the ways in which their campaign against crime may be waged even more effectively.

A new spirit and a new energy have been breathed into our Federal court system also. Thirty-eight new district judgeships have been authorized, which will accelerate the splendid progress made in bringing the business of the courts more nearly up-to-date. Archaic forms of civil procedure have been cast aside for a uniform and simple set of rules which will help to speed the wheels of justice. A way of avoiding long delays in determining the constitutionality of Federal laws has been opened by permitting appeal directly from the lower courts to the Supreme Court.

With the authorization of Congress we have also instituted an important change of method in the handling of juvenile offenders against Federal laws. The courts and the Attorney General are now given wide latitude in determining how best to protect the safety of society by trying to prevent a young delinquent from becoming an habitual criminal. Charges against an offender under the age of eighteen may now be heard informally, and if probation is not desirable, the Attorney General is authorized to place him in any suitable public or private educational or correctional institution.

Another important part of our program has been the improvement of the Federal penal and correctional system in all of its branches. We have built different kinds of institutions for different kinds of prisoners, ranging from the now famous penitentiary for the most hardened offenders, on Alcatraz Island, to unwalled reformatories and camps for the offenders who are less dangerous and who seem to offer real hope of becoming law-abiding citizens.

In the administration of our Federal penal institutions we use every known aid to rehabilitation according to the needs of the prisoner. After all, the primary purpose of the prison is to protect the public by releasing men at the end of their sentences better and not worse than when they were received. For that reason, we have enlarged and improved the opportunities for education and vocational training in the Federal prison system. Moreover, we have provided useful work for those who need to learn how to earn an honest living — and we have done it without selling a dollar's worth of goods on the open market in competition with private industry or free labor. We can, I think, look for still further improvement in the administration of the Federal prisons as the years go by because we have put the personnel of the prison service on a merit basis with training courses for employees of all grades.

Each year for several years we have increased the number of Federal probation and parole officers and last year we raised the standards governing their appointment. Today the field staff of the Bureau of Prisons is supervising nearly thirty thousand men and women on probation or on parole. No finer tribute could be paid to the work of these officials and to the United States Board of Parole than to mention the fact that about ninety-five per cent of those under their control complete their sentences without further violations of the law.

But our efforts to suppress wrongdoing have not been confined to the field of violent crimes. Through the securities and exchange legislation we have sought to protect the average investor from the depredations of unprincipled financial manipulators. In the administration of this legislation we have struck hard at those gangsters in high places who differ from the ordinary robbers only in the fact that they use the tricky weapons of high finance instead of sawed-off shotguns.

And let us not forget the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. You know, and I know, what a toll that took from this country through the flouting of law by thousands of otherwise respectable people as well as through the activities of bootleggers and racketeers who flourished during the prohibition years. It was undoubtedly the greatest source of revenue for organized crime that this nation has ever known.

While we have been tightening up on Federal law enforcement we have also been making headway toward the second of our broad objectives -- the development of closer cooperation between the agencies of the several states and those of the Federal Government. The Federal Bureau of Investigation in the Department of Justice has organized the National Police Academy where carefully chosen local police officers are given training in modern police work. Expert and technical services have been made available to state prison and parole authorities by the Bureau of Prisons. The Works Progress Administration,

in addition to cooperating with the Justice Department in making the first nation-wide survey of the methods by which prisoners are released into society, has furnished much-needed personnel for educational and other programs in the institutions of thirty-two states. It has installed police signal systems and fingerprint files in cities which could not otherwise afford them. It has also furnished the labor for the construction or repair of jails and police stations throughout the country. Through the Public Works Administration over twenty-six million dollars has been made available for the construction, improvement, and repair of prisons and jails, with the result that many old, unhealthy, and overcrowded centers of crime infection have been replaced by modern facilities. Of this amount, over eleven million dollars has been for state and local projects.

All of these direct attacks on crime which we have made through extending and strengthening Federal activities and in helping to improve state and local agencies of law enforcement are important. But I like to think that the most

far-reaching results have come from our broad program of social welfare --- from our work relief projects, the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the related measures for providing useful work for those of our citizens who are unemployed by private industry. Our citizens who have been out of work in the last six years have not needed to steal in order to keep from starving. Of course, when we instituted these activities we did not have in mind merely the narrow purpose of preventing crime. However, nobody who knows how demoralizing the effects of enforced idleness may be will be inclined to doubt that crime prevention has been an important by-product of our effort to provide our needy unemployed citizens with the opportunity to earn by honest work at least the bare necessities of life. And a considerable part of that honest work has been devoted to the construction and supervision of such social assets as playgrounds, athletic fields, municipal swimming pools,

gymnasiums, workshops, traveling libraries, schools and other educational and recreational facilities which are of particular benefit to youth.

Throughout the depression approximately one-third of all our unemployed have been youth under the age of twenty-five. Not long ago I read a report from a small city which had a reputation for juvenile delinquency. In collaboration with local agencies, the National Youth Administration started a work project which provided part-time jobs for the idle youth of this community. When the project was first started there was considerable "soldiering" on the job but gradually the interest and pride of these boys was aroused. For the five months since this NYA project had been started there had not been a single complaint of delinquency to the local peace officers. That is a concrete contribution to our common security -- not only now but for the years to come.

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April 17, 1959

CAUTION: This address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House in connection with the National Parole Conference, MUST BE HELD IN CONFIDENCE UNTIL RELEASED.

NOTE: Release to editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER THAN 6:00 P. M., E.S.T., April 17, 1959.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL PAROLE CONFERENCE
APRIL 17, 1939

MY FRIENDS;

I am happy to welcome you to the National Parole Conference and to have an opportunity to talk with you and our radio neighbors throughout the country about parole and some of the broad questions of law enforcement as a national problem.

As many of you know, the control of crime is a problem which I began studying many years ago as a member of the executive committee of the National Crime Commission. Later, during my administration as Governor of New York, the improvement of the state penal and correctional system became one of my first important responsibilities. Many of you, and especially my old friend, Sam Lewisohn, were of invaluable assistance in that task, which included the establishment of a modern parole system.

All of us have come to realize that while the responsibility for the control of crime falls primarily in the states and their subdivisions, the activities of criminals are not limited by local and state boundaries. The consequences of lax law enforcement and crime-breeding conditions in one part of the country may be felt in cities and villages across the continent. For instance, I think of the operations of a criminal gang which had its origins in the slum section of a small southwestern city. Before the members of this gang were rounded up, successfully prosecuted, and put in prison by the Federal Government, they had left a trail of robbery and violence in seven midwestern states. This illustrates the essentially nationwide character of the crime problem.

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gymnasiums, workshops, traveling libraries, schools and other educational and recreational facilities which are of particular benefit to youth.

Throughout the depression approximately one-third of all our unemployed have been youth under the age of twenty-five. Not long ago I read a report from a small city which had a reputation for juvenile delinquency. In collaboration with local agencies, the National Youth Administration started a work project which provided part-time jobs for the idle youth of this community. When the project was first started there was considerable "soldiering" on the job but gradually the interest and pride of these boys was aroused. For the five months since this NYA project had been started there had not been a single complaint of delinquency to the local peace officers. That is a concrete contribution to our common security -- not only now but for the years to come.

As I review our achievements in this coordinated drive against crime, it seems to me that we have made the least progress in the very important matter of getting people from prison back into society. This conclusion I am told is confirmed by the findings of the Attorney General's Survey of Release Procedures now being published by the Department of Justice. This is an unfortunate state of affairs. Let us not forget for one moment that ninety-seven out of every one hundred of the men and women we send to prison must some day come out again. Between 60,000 and 70,000 persons are released from Federal and state prisons and reformatories every year. What they do when they come out is a matter of great importance to all of us. It is a nation-wide problem and at the same time a local problem. We make little permanent gain by the arrest, prosecution, and punishment of prisoners if they go back to criminal activities. More than one-half of the persons in prison today have had to be locked up at least once before for a violation of the law. We have bungled in the manner and the method of their release.

After the necessarily strict routine of prison life it is difficult for a discharged prisoner to stand on his own feet in the swift-running currents of a free man's world. Often, if he has been in prison very long, he will have lost the habit of making his own decisions. He usually faces tremendous difficulties in finding a job. In many cases his prison record cuts him off from the friendship of law-abiding people. These circumstances tend to push a man back to a life of crime unless we make it our business to help him overcome them. That is the reason why I have long been of the opinion that parole is the most promising method of terminating a prison sentence.

Parole is the conditional release of an offender under expert supervision while the state still has control over him. It is an integral part of the treatment begun the moment the man enters a correctional institution.

Parole is not pardon. When a man is pardoned, his crime is forgiven.

Parole is not a shortening of the sentence because of good behavior in prison. This is called "good time allowance" or commutation for good behavior, and it is given by law as an aid to prison discipline.

Parole is not probation. A person on probation has never been sent to prison for his offense.

And, of course, parole differs from outright discharge on the final day of the offender's sentence. When a man is paroled, he is still subject to the control of the authorities and he can be put back in prison without a formal trial if he does not live up to the conditions of his release.

The true purpose of parole is to protect society -- all of us -- by supervising and assisting released prisoners until they have a chance to get on their feet and show that they intend to live law-abiding, self-supporting lives.

Now, naturally, I am speaking of real, honest, well-administered parole: parole granted only after a prisoner has shown improvement during a period of constructive treatment and training in prison and only after a thorough and searching study of his case; parole^c under the supervision of qualified

parole officers.

Much of the criticism which we have heard directed at parole is due to the fact that while forty-six of our states have parole laws, less than a dozen have provided the money and the personnel which are necessary to operate a real parole system. Some of the criticism is due, too, to the fact that the parole power sometimes has been used to grant political or personal favors. This combination of neglect and abuse in the administration of the parole power is a matter of serious national concern. How well or how poorly a parole system operates in one section of the country may affect the lives of citizens throughout the nation.

On the other hand, we know from experience that parole, when it is honestly and expertly managed, provides better protection for society than does any other method of release from prison. That has been shown by the operation of the Federal parole system and in those states which have applied modern parole methods.

These are the reasons why I asked Attorney General Murphy to call this National Parole Conference. As I wrote to him on January 25, 1939, I hope that this conference will serve to acquaint our people with the facts concerning parole and clear up widespread misconceptions about it. Parole will never succeed if it is merely a government function and does not have the understanding and help of the individual citizens in every community.

It is especially important that people should not be deceived by violent attacks on properly run parole administrations if one parolee goes wrong and commits another crime. The fact is that while a properly run parole system gives no guarantee of perfection, the percentages of parolees who go straight for the rest of their lives are infinitely higher than where there is no parole system at all.

I hope you will let us know the ways in which the Federal Government can best cooperate with the governments of the several states in strengthening this important sector of our nation-wide attack on crime. I felt that these objectives could not be reached unless this conference included representatives of all branches of law enforcement, public welfare administration, and the general public. ~~A technical~~
~~technical~~ job necessarily, it is one which must be geared into the work of other branches of law enforcement.

That is why Attorney General Murphy invited governors, judges, legislators, state attorneys general, prosecutors, police and prison officials, public welfare administrators, social workers, educators, and representative citizens as well as those directly engaged in parole work to take part in this conference.

Democracy succeeds through the thoughtful public service of its citizens. A conference of this kind is in accord with the American democratic way.

Well-administered parole is an instrument of tested value in the control of crime. Its proper use in all jurisdictions will promote our national security. If your deliberations serve that end, as I am sure they will, you will have rendered a very important public service.
