

---

**Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”**

**The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945**

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

---

**File No. 1275**

**1940 March 8**

**Radio Address to Anniversary Farm Dinners**

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT  
ANNIVERSARY FARM DINNERS  
MARCH 8, 1940

---

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to keep that pledge. Four days after I took office in 1933 --

while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight that call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect.

The old policy of neglect had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business, <sup>industry +</sup> <sup>farming</sup> <sup>itself</sup> all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed *in the light of experience*.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties -- practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect. None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy

through many nations of the world. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales.

In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The

national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know -- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and

Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the  
*and the war*  
confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at  
the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on  
the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as  
year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart  
the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through  
all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since  
1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the  
stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is  
the national farm program, the inception of which you are  
commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid  
example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when  
they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get  
laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain  
economic and social justice, to make it possible for them  
to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and  
our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them go the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated <sup>and now</sup> ~~now~~ <sup>animated</sup> these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Orig. reading copy

Transcribed from the original manuscript

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT  
In connection with the Anniversary Farm Dinners  
Delivered from the White House  
March 8, 1940, 10:00 P. M., E. S. T.

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun and, my, it was a hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action, action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to keep that pledge. Four days after I took office in 1933 -- while the banks of the country were still closed and we were (sternly) still wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight, March 8, 1933, (the) that call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to come here and convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember (the) that historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups

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.

quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect.

That old policy of neglect had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities as well. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and (early) March of 1933 had paralyzed (business) industry and farming itself all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step forward, but, of course, it was not perfect. And as the years went by, weather conditions changed, and market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed to keep the program more up-to-date.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, (and) to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached

our last frontier of new lands -- and that we had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. And that is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties -- practically all of the counties of the nation (which) that are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and, incidentally, they deserve respect. None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other

countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to (prosperity and) friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things (which) that have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy through many nations of the world. I always prefer understatement to overstatement and so I can properly say that. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but also in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and in terms of bushels and in terms of dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and of Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic

trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some (industries) of our business, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of all sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton and tobacco and apples and lard and wheat and many other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export markets disappear(s).

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep sway even from any talk of dictatorship. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know -- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of Government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of John Adams and Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the wars of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks (and) with millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated pretty well the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. (The) That farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that the American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them go the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated and now animates these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

March 8, 1940

1441  
CAUTION: The following address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House, in connection with the Anniversary Farm Dinners, is for release in editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER than 10:00 P. M., E.S.T., March 8, 1940.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

-----

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1933, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to keep that pledge. Four days after I took office in 1933 -- while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight the call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect.

That old policy of neglect had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and over-normal granary progress. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties -- practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect. None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy through many nations of the world. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know -- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are belabored by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them goes the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

- - - - -

SECOND DRAFT

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

ANNIVERSARY FARM DINNERS

MARCH 8, 1940

---

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to  
*in 1933*  
keep that pledge. Four days after I took office -- while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace

has referred. Seven years ago tonight the call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect. *of old neglect* That policy had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step

forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect.

None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousand of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal

trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy through many nations of the world. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know -- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could

never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them goes the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

---

This is the carbon copy  
of the Reading Copy

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT  
ANNIVERSARY FARM DINNERS  
MARCH 8, 1940

---

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to keep that pledge. Four days after I told office in 1933 —

while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight that call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect.

That old policy of neglect had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties -- practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect. None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy

through many nations of the world. That program ~~has~~ brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

~~By~~  
But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales.

In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The

national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know -- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and

Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them goes the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.



*1st Draft*

## THE FARM PROGRAM--BULWARK OF OUR NATIONAL STRENGTH

Radio talk delivered from Washington, D. C., by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, on the occasion of Anniversary Farm Dinners held in several hundred counties of the United States, broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company, Columbia Broadcasting System, and Mutual Broadcasting System, on Friday evening, March 8, 1940, at 10:00 P.M. (E.S.T.).

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the hot sun beating down, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

*I have sought consistently and earnestly to keep*  
*And I am bound to keep*  
And ~~now~~ I ~~want~~ to ~~keep~~ that pledge. Four days after I took office--while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again--I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight the call went out to farm leaders by wire and by phone to convene here in Washington on March 10.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House ~~that~~ followed. In that grave emergency, ~~major~~ disagreements were

✓  
✓  
✓  
✓  
✓

forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect. That policy had brought 10 years of depression on our farms and had ~~brought~~ <sup>led to</sup> ~~at least~~ <sup>to</sup> depression in the cities. It had ~~led to~~ <sup>caused</sup> the bank panic which in March 1933 ~~had~~ <sup>had</sup> paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation--the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933--was a long step forward, but it was not perfect. As the years ~~were~~ gone by, weather conditions ~~were~~ changed, market conditions ~~were~~ changed--yes, and court conditions ~~were~~ changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed. We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We ~~were~~ reached our last frontier, and now we have no choice but to conserve and rebuild our soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. That is the ~~fundamental feature of~~ <sup>1933</sup> ~~1933~~ <sup>existing</sup> policy

localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers, and that goes for farmers now, <sup>now we have the</sup> what party they had.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded.

In 3,000 counties they win respect and they deserve respect. None but

those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws. They have been always on guard for the farmers' interest and the national interest.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that ~~some of its provisions could be retained as depression gone~~ would be accomplished by a more <sup>friendly</sup> ~~friendly~~ <sup>more</sup> recovery in the United States and our trade with other countries, ~~possible~~.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which ~~closed~~ your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this --that we have done ~~our best to bring about~~  
~~such a happy situation as that.~~ Through our reciprocal trade program,  
we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy throughout the  
world. That program has brought results--results not only in better  
markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm  
goods which are ~~most~~ <sup>many</sup> naturally produced in terms of ~~commodities~~  
If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore  
peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace.  
As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of  
Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of  
bomb and ~~shells~~ torpedoes.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce  
we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say,  
What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all  
our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for  
some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10  
per cent of sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton,  
tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture  
is certain to be seriously affected if ~~the~~ <sup>our</sup> export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government  
in Washington that is looking out for their interests. It is more than  
ever important to ~~have~~ <sup>minimize</sup> a national farm program that can be adapted to meet  
whatever emergencies arise--whether they are emergencies of drought or  
of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a

government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient ~~and~~ to preserve our freedom. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. *in your hands* *and take a good care of your money* *Talk of* *dictatorship* *ship* *(A)*

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of George Washington and his men, in early March of 1778, ~~after they had lived through that terrible winter at Valley Forge.~~ Think of ~~James~~ Jefferson and ~~James~~ Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of ~~Abraham~~ Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

~~Our beloved United States has come through all these trials and tribulations of the past. We know that it will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present.~~ Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the splendid stuff of which

they are made. Only a people of strong character and great capacity could calmly withstand the suffering of those depression years of the early 30's without resorting to revolution. Only such a people could tackle their problems with the tremendous vitality and unbounded energy shown by Americans in the last seven years.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage. They will have to continue their efforts if they are to hold what they have gained and make further improvement in their position. To avoid slipping back, they can not become overconfident because of past success; they must not be misled by glittering promises.

*B*  
In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

March 8, 1940

→in connection with the Anniversary Farm Dinners,

CAUTION: The following address of the President, to  
be broadcast from the White House, is for release in  
editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets  
NOT EARLIER than 10:00 P. M., E.S.T., March 8, 1940.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 8, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Wallace has read and approved. He is very enthusiastic and says every change that you made in the material he gave you greatly improved it, that you covered it splendidly and he is sure that it will be well received.

S.T.E.

Miss Shannon automatic  
for preparation of release  
first thing Friday morning.  
W.D.P.

SECOND DRAFT

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT  
ANNIVERSARY FARM DINNERS  
MARCH 8, 1940

---

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1932, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to <sup>in 1933</sup> keep that pledge. Four days after I took office -- while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace

has referred. Seven years ago tonight the call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect. <sup>P red</sup> ~~had~~ <sup>neglect</sup> That policy had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step

forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and ever-normal granary programs. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect.

None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousand of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm communities, but right here in Washington, these organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal

trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy through many nations of the world. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know — that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are beleaguered by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 8,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could

never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them goes the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.

---

Please have  
last part of  
release corrected

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

March 11, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR

S. T. E.

Will you change the sentence:

"To them goes the honor and the glory"  
to "To them go the honor and the glory"?

F. D. R.



HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

HOLD FOR RELEASE

March 8, 1940

CAUTION: The following address of the President, to be broadcast from the White House, in connection with the Anniversary Farm Dinners, is for release in editions of all newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER than 10:00 P. M., E.S.T., March 8, 1940.

CARE MUST BE EXERCISED TO PREVENT PREMATURE PUBLICATION.

STEPHEN EARLY  
Secretary to the President

As I listened to the remarks of Henry Wallace and Jim Farley just now, and in my mind's eye saw the hundreds of groups of farmers and their friends meeting throughout the country, my memory went back to scenes of other years.

I remembered the day in September, 1933, when, at Topeka, Kansas, under the very hot sun that beat down on the steps of the State Capitol, I talked with an audience of farmers about the farm problem. I gave them my pledge that, if I were called to serve in the White House, I would take the lead in action to reverse the process of agricultural decay which had been eating at our national foundations for many years.

And I have sought consistently and constantly to keep that pledge. Four days after I took office in 1933 -- while the banks of the country were still closed and we were sternly wrestling with the question of how to get them open again -- I called the conference of farmers and leaders of farm organizations to which Secretary Wallace has referred. Seven years ago tonight the call went out to farm leaders by wire and by telephone to convene here in Washington on March tenth.

Well do I remember the historic conference at the White House that followed. In that grave emergency, past disagreements were forgotten and all the farm groups quickly united on a new farm plan.

The adoption of that plan in its essential outlines by the Congress marked a far-reaching decision in our national life. We stopped asking agriculture to pay the bill for industry's high tariff. We decided that as a nation we would no longer promote commerce and industry at the expense of agriculture. We decided that as a nation we would abandon the policy of rural neglect.

That old policy of neglect had brought ten years of depression on our farms and had contributed greatly to depression in the cities. It had hastened the bank panic which in February and early March, 1933, paralyzed business all over the United States.

In the seven years that have elapsed since that time, the national farm program has properly undergone a continual evolution. That first piece of legislation -- the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 -- was a long step forward, but it was not perfect. As the years went by, weather conditions changed, market conditions changed -- yes, and even court conditions changed. So the provisions of the farm program have been correspondingly changed.

We have learned from experience, and have gradually adapted the program more and more closely to the needs of the individual farmer, to the needs of the nation, and to the needs of the land itself. We realized that we had reached our last frontier of new lands -- and had no choice but to conserve and rebuild our existing soil.

All through these seven years, one fundamental feature has run like a thread through the successive adjustment and conservation and over-normal granary programs. That is the essential policy of localized control, with the program run by committees of farmers elected by farmers -- and that goes for farmers regardless of what party they happen to be enrolled in.

Experience has amply borne out the wisdom of the safeguards with which those county associations and committees were surrounded. In three thousand counties -- practically all the counties of the nation which are not occupied wholly by cities -- they win respect and they deserve respect. None but those farmer committeemen themselves will ever know how they have sweated over details of the program, how they have sacrificed their own personal interests and their leisure as they spent thousands of hours and drove thousands of miles to make the program succeed.

Back of these committeemen, helping them in their work, giving support to the program, have been some of the great general farm organizations. Not only in the farm committees, but right here in Washington, those organizations have helped to shape and perfect the successive farm laws.

When we launched the national farm program seven years ago, we hoped that recovery in the United States would be accompanied by a great revival of our trade with other countries.

I wish I could tell you tonight that the whole world had been restored to prosperity and friendly commerce. I wish I could tell you that the markets which your fathers and grandfathers once enjoyed were again open to receive more of your wheat, your pork, your lard, your cotton, your tobacco, your fruit.

I can tell you this -- that we have done many things which have helped the situation. Through our reciprocal trade program, we have tried to spread our good-neighbor philosophy through many nations of the world. That program has brought results -- results not only in better markets for our industrial goods but in better markets for our farm goods -- results which are mathematically proved in terms of pounds and bushels and dollars and cents. If Congress consents, we shall continue that useful work.

But in spite of all we have done to help preserve and restore peace in the world, the bitter truth is that the world is not at peace. As I speak to you tonight, guns are thundering on the battlefields of Europe and Asia. Ships that ply the seas are exposed to the hazards of bomb and torpedo.

In the midst of a world at war, we find that the foreign commerce we had managed to achieve is rudely disturbed. Some people may say, What of that? Does not our domestic trade comprise 90 per cent of all our business? Yes, that is true for the nation as a whole. But, for some industries, export trade accounts for considerably more than 10 per cent of sales. In agriculture, for example, that is true of cotton, tobacco, apples, lard, wheat, and other products. And all agriculture is certain to be seriously affected if our export market disappears.

So it is more than ever important for farmers to have a government in Washington that is looking out for their interests -- not just by uttering glittering generalities but by specific policies and concrete action. It is more than ever important to maintain a national farm program that can be adapted to meet whatever emergencies arise -- whether they are emergencies of drought or of lost markets overseas. It is more than ever important to have a government in Washington that can act to protect the interests of our farmers as well as our business men when foreign trade conditions are upset.

In Europe economic failure has led in some lands to dictatorship. In America we are using the tools of democracy to make our economic system efficient, to preserve our freedom, and to keep away even from any talk of dictatorship. The national farm program is American democracy's response to agricultural distress. And any unprejudiced person who knows anything about the subject not only admits but proclaims the fact that our national farm program was democratically conceived and is being democratically conducted with the active help of our farmers themselves.

Furthermore, they proclaim what they know --- that their Federal Government counts on farm aid and farm advice to improve that program through the process of actual experience as the need arises. That I call a truly democratic process of government.

These are troubled times we of this generation are living through. Some of us, I know, are tempted to give way to doubt and fear, even to despair.

But when we are belabored by thoughts like these, let us remember how the nation has come through its dark hours of the past, and take courage. Think of Adams and Jefferson and Madison, as they guided the nation through the confusion of the Napoleonic period, with ships rotting at the docks and millions of dollars of farm products stored on the wharves of the Atlantic seaboard. Think of Lincoln as year after war-torn year he sheltered in his great heart the truest aspirations of a country rent in twain.

We believe our beloved United States will come through all its trials and tribulations of the present. Ever since 1929, the people of the United States have demonstrated the stuff of which they are made.

One of the reasons we know we shall win through is the national farm program, the inception of which you are commemorating tonight. The farm program is a splendid example of what 6,000,000 American families can do, when they have the will and the leadership to do it.

The farmers have had a long hard struggle to get laws and programs which give them an opportunity to obtain economic and social justice, to make it possible for them to conserve the good earth which, next to our people and our tradition of freedom, is our greatest heritage.

I am happy in the thought that American farmers have gone part way along that road to economic and social justice, even though they have not reached the goal. I am happy in the thought that American farmers understand full well that other great groups, such as industrial and retail groups in the cities, great and small, such as the small business men of the nation, have not yet attained the goal of social and economic justice even though in these seven years they have made undisputed progress toward it.

Many years ago I was told by men of experience in state and national affairs that American farmers could never agree on a program. I did not share that pessimistic belief. My friends and I went out to disprove it and the farmers of America showed clearly that we were right. To them goes the honor and the glory.

In the spirit of progressive action that has animated these American farm families, all of us tonight can face with confidence whatever difficulties the future may hold.