

August 31, 1940

[ Labor Day Message ]

FDR Speech File

# STATEMENTS FILE

HOUSE FOR AMERICANS

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WILLIAM D. HACKETT

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## A LABOR DAY STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Labor Day, which we observe as a National holiday, has for more than half a century been the day set aside in recognition of the millions of wage earners whose labors have contributed so largely in making this Nation what it is today. This year, embarked as we are on a necessary program of national defense, the day calls for a more than ordinary observance. It demands the dedication of labor, management, farmers and Government to a common purpose so that this great democracy, which is our heritage, shall be protected and its continuation be insured for our children and their children.

As loyal Americans, always placing the welfare of the Nation first, we shall, through this dedication and this cooperation, carry on successfully the task we have set in the common interest. In its accomplishment wage earners, well aware of the great economic and social gains they have made in the last seven years, may be assured that their contribution will not be at the cost of lowered labor standards or impaired social advances.

On this Labor Day of 1940 not only the Nation's wage earners but farmers and business also can look with satisfaction on the improvement in their lot and that of our Nation in the last seven years largely as a result of a far-reaching economic and social program conceived in democratic principles and dedicated to the common good.

More than 9,000,000 men and women have jobs in non-agricultural employment now than had them in March 1933, and this great increase does not include more than 2,000,000 additional persons having work on WPA, CCC and NYA tasks. In this same period payrolls in manufacturing industries alone increased by the enormous weekly total of \$110,000,000.

Cash income of American farmers was more than \$3,000,000,000 greater last year than it was in 1934, exclusive of \$807,000,000 in benefit payments, and this year it promises to show a further increase.

Business, like farmers, also benefitted through the rise in employment and wages as shown by reports which revealed that combined net profit for four hundred leading industrial concerns for the first six months of this year amounted to \$648,928,000 -- a very large gain over last year. In 1932 most corporations were showing little or no profit.

These are material gains of which we may well be proud and they have been accompanied since 1933 by such social advances as are embodied in the Social Security program, for which this and future generations will always be thankful.

They have been accomplished in a democracy, for a democracy and by a democracy and they can only be retained and expanded through a continuation of the principles and practices to which we as a Nation have always been committed and which we are determined shall be unchanged.

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