Indianapolis, Indiana
Oct. 15, 1948
I am happy to be in Indianapolis again.

Republican friends who stopped at the
Lincoln Hotel. We arrived late in St. Louis at 4 A.M.
The people of Indiana, all during the day,
traveled to see me arrive at 6:30 A.M. The Hotel had given me a wonderful reception,
can brought up on the diagonal street east of the hotel.
He asked where No. 20 was, close to Washington Street and
head back the way he'd come. Meet all the way to Richmond
'From the bottom of my heart,
out the door on the wrong track and going back read...
I thank you for your real Hoosier hospitality,
Most Republicans are like that, I'm sorry to say.

I want to talk to you this evening
about the people in our country——

The every day citizens who have made this country great.
But first, I have a confession to make.

Apparently, I have offended the Republican gentleman

who wants to be President.

I'm afraid I have startled him by talking about issues,

and about depressions.

Republicans don't like people to talk about depressions.

You can hardly blame them for that.

You remember the old saying:

Don't talk about rope in the house of somebody who has been hanged.
Now, certain Republicans say
we shouldn't talk about the possibility of a depression
because that will give aid and comfort to the Communists.

The Communists, as we all know, have been
predicting that our capitalistic system would break down.

I have repeatedly told the Congress and the
American people that the Communists were hoping
for a depression in the United States -
and I have said time and again, that something ought to be done
to prevent it.

But now the lesson seems to have become mixed up
a bit, and we had better straighten it out.

The thing that helps the Communists
is not talking about a depression.
The thing that would help the Communists is having a depression.

That is what I have been trying to prevent.

That is why I have been urging that we do something to halt inflation.

That is why I have been saying that we must protect the purchasing power of the wage earner, the farmer, the small business man, and the people with fixed incomes.

That is why I have been saying that we must NEVER return to the policies of Harding and Coolidge and Hoover.

And isn't it a peculiar circumstance that the Republican candidate for President can point with pride to any Republican administration? He only wants to say the things we have achieved under a successful Democratic Administration.
The Communists don't think I'm helping them. They don't want me to be the President of the United States. They are doing all they can in this election to bring about a Republican victory.

I have often said, if you elect a Republican President to go along with a Republican Congress, you can expect them to take you headlong back down the road that led to the Great Depression of the early Thirties.

You don't have to travel that road.

I want to be sure that we don't go that way.

That is one of the reasons I have been speaking to our people all over the country.
The basic difference between the two parties in economic matters is simply this:

The Republican Party, as it operates in Washington, favors the interests of a few small powerful business groups at the expense of the rest of the people.

This is the course that leads to depression.

The Democratic Party, on the other hand, consistently works for measures which increase and protect the purchasing power of the great majority of the people.

This is the course that leads to prosperity.
That's the way the Government ought to work.

What use is a government if it doesn't work

for the good of the people?

I used to think that the dangers of depression
would not be as great in the future as they have been in the past.

I had been counting on laws enacted under Democratic
leadership since Nineteen Thirty-three to help maintain
purchasing power during any down-turn in the business cycle.

I had been counting on these laws to afford
enough protection to millions of our people so that
never again would they face such days of black despair
as they did in Nineteen Thirty-two.
Social security benefits,
unemployment compensation, bank deposit insurance,
farm price supports, a legal floor under wages,
healthy collective bargaining.

All these things I was counting on.

I thought they had so clearly proved their worth
that they would never be subject to serious attack.

I was too optimistic.

I gave the elephant too much credit, No matter
what they Republicans say the Elephant
doesn't look a "new look."

The Republicans in the 80th Congress

certainly disillusioned me on that score.
Don't be misled by Republican promises in this campaign — actions speak louder than words.

The record of the Republican Party that really counts is the record of the 80th Congress.

And the Republican candidate, who has embraced that record so warmly, gives you no reason to hope for anything better from him.

He says that he is proud of the record of the 80th Congress.

The American people can no longer assume that these laws which safeguard them from disaster are secure from attack.
The thing that couldn't happen here, has happened here.

The Republican Party has actually started us backward.

Now it promises more of the same. — to take us all back.

That's why I have talked about the danger of depression.

That's why I have talked about it in plain terms so that the people will know just what I mean and just where I stand.

I regard it as a proper function of the Government to fight depressions.
The prosperity of this Nation depends upon justice, We boast about our initiative, our inventiveness, our enterprise.

All these things are important, but unless each group of our people gets a fair share of our national income, our prosperity will crash.

This is a lesson we learned the hard way. We learned it under the Republican Administrations of the Twenties.

In those years, wages were held down.

In those years, farmers were left alone to contend with the rise and fall of farm prices.
In those years the aged and infirm were left

to take care of themselves. As a result,

the purchasing power of the Nation declined.

There was no place to sell the products of our farms

or our industries — and the result was unemployment

and collapse.

We know now that we cannot have prosperity

automatically. The only thing we can get automatically

is boom and bust.

To secure continuing prosperity

takes foresight and intelligent planning. This is the purpose

of a law which I regard as one of the most important laws

passed during my Administration. I believe

This is the Employment Act of Nineteen Forty-six.
This Act was passed by a Democratic Congress and embodies the Democratic principles of which I am speaking.

It sets up a kind of economic signal room — the Council of Economic Advisers — in which the danger signals flash when things start to go wrong.

For two long years, the red lights have been blinking in the signal room.

They have been telling us that if we didn't do something about inflation, we would be asking for collapse and depression.

For two long years, we have been turning in fire alarms. 

The fire of inflation.
And for two long years, the Republican firemen have been too busy playing a game of political checkers to go put out the blaze.

They figured that maybe the fire of inflation would burn itself out, or that it was un-American to put water on the flames.

Now, that is a terrible way to run a fire department.

But that's the way the Republican 80th Congress met the problem of inflation.

Now another alarm bell rang on social security. More than forty million Americans are protected by our Social Security laws — old people, widows, unemployed, blind people, dependent children.
I am proud of our record on social security.

But it is not enough. Millions of workers are not yet covered by its benefits, and those benefits are not nearly high enough to meet today's excessive prices.

I recommended - in plain and simple terms - to the 86th Congress that we extend social security to the workers not now covered.

Did the Republican leaders extend it?

They did not.

Instead, they took social security protection away from nearly a million workers who already had it.
I recommended — in plain and simple terms — that the 80th Congress increase old-age insurance benefits by at least fifty per cent.

Did the Republican leaders do that?

They did not.

The Republican firemen not only failed to turn out the hook-and-ladder. They actually set fire to a couple of houses.

They struck nearly a million Americans off the social security rolls; and their fire chief now says he is proud of them.
Now, let's look at health and medical care.

We need more doctors, more nurses, more hospitals.

And we need a system which will enable the average American family to pay for proper medical care.

Each year, because of lack of proper medical care, we lose more of our people than we lost in all the fighting of World War Two.

Each year, we lose over four million man-years of work because of bad health. More working time than we have ever lost in the worst strike-year on record.

The Republican Congress passed the Taft-Hartley bill because it claimed it was worried about strikes.

The Congress would have done better to spend its time worrying about loss of production due to sickness.
Each year, we lose twenty-seven billion dollars in national wealth through sickness and disability. These are dreadful figures. You can stop that loss. We can pay off the national debt in 9 years with the saving. We can do something about it, and we must do something about it.

Here is what we need. For every four doctors in practice today, we need at least one more - and we need to have them located more evenly throughout the country.

We need twice as many hospitals as we have, and we need to distribute them better. There ought to be a good hospital within easy reach of every person in the country.
Most of all, we need to make it possible
for every American to afford medical care.
At present, only one out of five Americans can afford
all the medical care he needs.

This is the crux of the problem and
I am not going to mince words about it.
The best health facilities and the finest doctors
in the world are not much help to the people who cannot
afford to use them.

I proposed a national system of health insurance
in Nineteen Forty-six and I have urged it repeatedly
since that time. There is no other way to assure
that the average American family has a decent chance
for adequate medical care.
There is no other way to assure a strong and healthy Nation.

Prepaid health insurance will be one more keystone in the great structure of social insurance which has been enacted by the Democratic Party.

There has been a lot of nonsense about health insurance.

There has been a well-organized campaign to discredit it and to confuse the issues involved.

The plan I have proposed does not disturb the traditional relationship between doctor and patient - except that the doctor will be paid more regularly for his services.

Nor is this any more revolutionary than any other form of insurance.
It is one hundred per cent American.

It is just a way to collect the cost of medical care on a pay-as-you-go basis.

What did the Republicans do with my proposal for health insurance?

You can guess.

They did nothing.

All they said was - "Sorry. We can't do that. The medical lobby says it's un-American."

I put it up to you. Is it un-American to visit the sick, aid the afflicted, or comfort the dying?

I thought it was simple Christianity.
Does cancer care about political parties?
Does infantile paralysis concern itself with income?

Of course not.

We Democrats hold that the people are entitled to the best available medical care.

We hold that they have a right to ask their Government to help them get it.

Now, let's take a look at education.

It's the same disgraceful story with education that it is with health.

There is no reason on earth why a great Nation like ours should not educate all its children.
But every American mother and father knows that
the schools in the United States face a crisis today.

Elementary schools, high schools,
and colleges are bursting at the seams.

We don't have nearly enough school teachers
and we don't pay them nearly enough.

And if the school teachers want to organize
for better pay - I am all for them.

The school situation is getting worse - not better.

At least six million more children than are now enrolled
in elementary schools and high schools will be seeking
admittance by Nineteen Fifty-five.
Think how that will crowd our schools.

We shall need at least two hundred thousand more classrooms by that time. And we shall need tens of thousands of new teachers.

Without a strong educational system —
free of governmental control — democracy is crippled.

Knowledge is not only the key to power,

It is the citadel of human freedom.

We must maintain and expand our schools or we shall surrender our liberties without even fighting for them.
I asked the Republican 80th Congress again
and again, to pass legislation which would help us meet
the educational crisis.

It flatly refused.

Here again the issue is plain and clear.

This Nation is no wiser than the education
of its citizens.

This Nation is no stronger than the health
of its citizens.

This Nation's security begins with the welfare
of its citizens.

The Democratic Party believes in the people.
We believe that the people are entitled to prosperity, to health, to education, to social security.

We believe that it is the function of Government to see to it that the people have these advantages.

This great Nation must not stand still - must not go backward - it must go forward - forward to even greater heights of leadership in the world.

To accomplish this, our people must grow in strength, in wisdom and in security.
It is my daily prayer — that with a strong, healthy, and well-educated united people, and with the aid of Divine Providence, Almighty God, we will lead the world to lasting peace.