

ROOSEVELT VISIBLY MOVED IN TOUR OF DROUGHT AREA, PLEDGES GOVERNMENT AID

DRIVES IN DUST CLOUD

President Speaks to the
North Dakota Farmers
While Thunder Rolls.

CHEERS GREET HIS SPEECH

Sweat Streaks His Face as
He Asks for Support for
His Policies.

COUNTS ON PEOPLE'S FAITH

Promises on Return to Wash-
ington to Hear Objectors to
Agricultural Program.

*Text of the President's address
is printed on Page 9.*

From a Staff Correspondent.

DEVILS LAKE, N. D., Aug. 7.—After a long drive through clouds of dust, in which he saw one of the worst drought areas of the country, President Roosevelt, visibly moved, today pledged himself to bend every effort toward solution of the drought problem.

He made this promise in a speech to several thousand farmers who gathered here to greet him.

His auditors, many of them formerly prosperous grain farmers and stock growers who are now reduced to actual poverty and living on relief rolls, hoped to hear the President promise to push forward construction of a dam that would tap the Missouri and again fill Devils Lake.

The project, estimated to cost \$75,000,000, would supply five years' work for most of the idle in the State and refill a great basin which in forty years has changed from lake to prairie. A water supply for millions of acres of farm land would be supplied.

But the President would make no such promise, pending further studies by engineers, and he indicated that the final outlook for the dam is gloomy because of construction difficulties.

Beyond that, President Roosevelt stated frankly that he knew of no immediate method of ameliorating the drought.

"I would not fool you by saying we know the solution of it," he said. "We don't. I believe in being frank, and what I can tell you from the bottom of my heart, truthfully, is this: If it is possible for us to solve the problem we are going to do it."

Cheered by Auditors.

The President's auditors cheered him when he asked for their support of his policies.

Mr. Roosevelt delivered his brief speech on a temporary platform erected in a public square at the railroad station. He walked to the platform leaning on the arm of John Roosevelt, his youngest son, directly from the automobile in which he had been taken to see the dry bed of Devils Lake.

His seersucker suit was splotted with dust and perspiration. Sweat ran down his face and made rivulets in the dirt on his cheeks. He stood alone while he talked, leaning slightly forward with his hands braced on a table holding microphones for amplifiers that carried his speech to the crowd that overflowed into unseen streets. He seldom smiled and his words came slowly.

While he was on the platform, a heavy thundercloud passed overhead but no rain fell.

The President was told that virtually the only crop income received this year by most of the farmers came in the form of checks from the government which were sent in payment on contracts signed by the farmers last Spring in which they agreed to cut their crop acreage.

"I cannot honestly say that my heart is happy today," President Roosevelt said, immediately after he was introduced by Senator Nye, "because I have seen with my own eyes some of the things that I have been hearing and reading about for a year or more."

He remarked that he had seen signs along the road he traversed reading "You gave us beer, now give us water," but he said the water problem was much more difficult since it could not be controlled by a human agency.

He then explained that the dam could not be promised because engineers had not yet found a safe

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PRESIDENT MOVED BY DROUGHT SCENES

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place for it and "there isn't a man or woman in the Devils Lake area that would ask me to build a dam that might go out and drown many thousand people." However, he promised that experts would continue their studies.

On Thursday President Roosevelt will speak at Green Bay, Wis., at exercises celebrating the Tercentenary of the State.

He will then go direct to Washington.

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