

Hoover Presidential Library Dedication

West Branch, August 10, 1962

All Iowa was agog with excitement on August 9, 1962. Herbert Hoover was flying from New York to Cedar Rapids with his children and grandchildren to celebrate his 88th birthday and to be present at the dedication of the Hoover Presidential Library at West Branch. Distinguished guests were assembling from all over the country to be present for this significant occasion.

The Hoovers were overnight guests of the Howard Halls at their Brucemore estate in Cedar Rapids. The following morning — on August 10, 1962 — eight chartered buses carried over three hundred dignitaries and special guests from the Roosevelt Hotel at Cedar Rapids to West Branch. President Hoover, accompanied by President Truman, followed in private cars shortly thereafter, and were greeted by Mayor L. C. Rummells of West Branch at 10:40 a.m. An estimated 25,000 were on hand to cheer Hoover.

Governor Norman A. Erbe welcomed Hoover on behalf of the State of Iowa. Dr. M. Willard Lampe gave the invocation after which Governor Erbe presented Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the board of the Herbert Hoover Birthplace Foundation. Senator B. B. Hickenlooper was called upon to greet Herbert Hoover on be-

half of the Iowa Congressional Delegation, four of whom had flown from Washington. Dr. Wayne C. Grover, Chief Archivist of the United States, addressed the audience on the history and significance of Presidential Libraries.

Dr. Grover was followed by President Harry S. Truman, who had named Herbert Hoover as the principal speaker at the dedication of the Truman Presidential Library at Independence, Missouri. Mr. Truman spoke glowingly of the many public services Herbert Hoover had performed over his long and distinguished career. Faced with the responsibility of choosing a man capable of coordinating the food supplies of the starving nations of the world in 1946, he approached Herbert Hoover, as he felt "he was the only man who could have done this job." Mr. Hoover agreed, twice circled the globe to inspect the situation, and set up the machinery responsible for saving millions of lives. Mr. Truman also stressed Hoover's work as chairman of the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, a service which was saving the American taxpayer hundreds of millions of dollars.

Chairman Strauss next introduced Herbert Clark Hoover with warm laudatory remarks. Having listened placidly to all the praise that had been heaped upon him, Mr. Hoover prefaced his address with the comment: "Much overstatement has been made here today and it would take too

much time for me to refer to all of it. But I'll simplify it for you by saying it's all true." He then launched into his main address which called for the foundation of a "Council of Free Nations" to act "when the United Nations is prevented from taking action" to preserve peace.

Mr. Hoover was presented with the Distinguished Service Award from the Iowa Engineering Society by Charles H. Young. President Virgil M. Hancher read the citation of an honorary Doctor of Laws degree conferred on Mr. Hoover by the State University of Iowa in 1954. President Elmer Ellis of the University of Missouri and Chancellor Thomas Eliot of Washington University in St. Louis conferred honorary degrees on Herbert Hoover. The dedication was made by William B. Anderson.

The inspection of the Hoover Presidential Library was a thrilling experience for all those present. The magnitude of the work of this great humanitarian, his unfaltering and invaluable public service through half a century of time, was in evidence on every hand, from the beautifully embroidered Belgian flour sacks to the eighty-seven honorary degrees and hundreds of citations of appreciation lining two walls. The library is destined to become one of the most important centers for historical research in the United States, and a proud addition to the cultural resources of Iowa.

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