Franklin D. Roosevelt — "The Great Communicator" The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

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It is with more than pleasure that I welcome you to Washington: it is with a full sense of the importance to the Nation of this gathering of thoughtful men representing every section of the country and every walk in life. For the Navy League is, I take it, an organization which seeks to take up the broadest kind of questions in the broadest kind of way. If any man has an idea that you gentlemen are gathered here with the sole purpose of giving us a Navy which will be bigger than all the other navies of the Earth put together, he has but to look at the topics on the program for discussion to find out that you are interested in the great matters of peaceful commerce and international comity which engage the attention of every thinking American.

Of course you will realize that the Secretary of the Navy and I have had our hand at the helm of the Department for a very brief time, but let me assure you that we have always known at least that a ship is hollow, and that we are striving not only to learn our task, but to help do our utmost to secure for our ships and for our officers and men the highest degree of efficiency.

And to obtain this, we need help. No organization, either private or public, can ever reach a high degree of perfection alone. There must be cooperation from the outside. A railroad cannot succeed if every passenger is dissatisfied. A manufacturing plant cannot go on unless it has the moral

support of the neighboring townspeople. And so the Navy cannot be truly successful unless the men who run it, from the Secretary down to the newest enlisted man, feel that the people of the country are thinking about them and giving them support.

This is not a question of war or peace. I take it that there are as many advocates of arbitration and international peace in the Navy as in any other profession. But we are confronted with a condition - the fact that our Mation has decided in the past to have a fleet, and that war still is a possibility.

That the Mavy is to-day an important factor in the life of the country is shown by the cold figures of 51,500 enlisted men, 3076 officers, and many thousands of civil employees in the yards and bureaus. In other words, this force is an important factor in our industrial and social life. *** % for soing to be made a factor for the national good. That is what the Department is trying to do and that is what the Mavy League can help us do. We want the country to feel that in maintaining a fighting force of the highest efficiency, we are, at the same time, educating thousands of young men to be better citizens and to be in a position to help themselves when they leave the service. We want to give them industrial educations under ideal conditions. Most of all, we will help to create a mercantile marine owned by us and run by us.

The country as a whole is, I believe, interested in the Navy. You gentlemen can cooperate by telling the truth about the Navy to every man, woman and child who is willing to listen, and I am a firm believer that when this is done, the people will express themselves through their representatives in the Government in terms which will not be misunderstood.

I know that this meeting will be of real service, and I trust it will be the forerunner of greater knowledge, straighter thinking and better citizenship throughout the nation.

ASSIGNMENT

"Not One of the One Hundred and Twenty-Seven Warships Mobilized in the Hudson was Ready for War," Says Captain John Hood.

MR. ROOSEVELT ASKS CO-OPERATION OF PEOPLE

No. 1,502 H STREET, N. W., HINGTON, D. C., Thursday.

Demands for a definite naval building polloy to run for a specific number of years and severe criticism of the condi-States, which to-day stated its three days session here.

"Wanted-A Naval Policy."

This is the slogan which has been adopted by every one of the three hundred delegates. All have pledged themselves to gates. All have preuged themserves to has not the readiness and strength work and fight for the fulfillment of their the enemy and say thou shalt not.

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ducating thousands of young men to use better citizens and to be in a position to help thousands when they leave the serious we want to give them industrial opened by Mr. Louis A. Osborne, a directivent on under fixed conditions. Most jury of the league. Commander J. S. Mccullen and the conditions of the league. Commander J. S. Mccullen are we will help to create a mercan- [Kean will illustrate his address on "Their Commander J. S. Mccullen are we will help to create a mercan- [Kean will illustrate his address on "Their Commander J. S. Mccullen are well as the serious control of the league."

anite of the nation's peace," said Captain Hold. "To-day we have a fleet too small hold heterogeneous to meet the ends with a justify its maintenance, and playthins. "Cut of ruther as a burden deall for scrap," of the carried as a burden and sail for scrap, white and all superfines, where and all superfines, where and all superfines, wards and all superfines, wards and all.

than of the Atlantic fleet marked the opention of the Atlantic fleet marked the opention of the Atlantic fleet marked the opention seems of the eighth annual conventions seems of the object annual conventions of the Navy League of the United the fleet, which undersay

all the fleet of the three days is a convention of the property of the object of the ob arge sums or public money in their care and upkeep. Provide and train enough of-ficers and men on the active list and in the

reserve to fully man this fleet for war. "Provide necessary bases and arsenals, and educate the people that no fleet is adequate for the preservation of peace which has not the readiness and strength to meet

Members of the league were intensely inthe Navy League, called the session to terested in Mr. Belmont's discussion of the

the Navy League, called the session to consider the control of the Navy League, called the session to control of the Navy League, and introduced the first appearance in Washinton as a position of the nation as Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

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for one year.
Invitations to hold the next annual con-

e Consolidation of Newy Yards and Jones In Hallet of Strategy and Eco-ty's will be the subject of an address by Will be the subject of an address by Harry H. Ward, when president of the Theory H. Ward, when the Impson will speak on "A Reformed ion for the Fromedion of Newal Off.

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The other greaters were Cappin At the by S. S. The other greaters were Cappin John Hood. The Hood. A member of the Greatel Board of or the Navy. and Perry Belmont, fournerly is an emether of Congress. Capbin Hool not caused exchanging of surprise when he Agr. opened has defress with the assertion that Nan not one of the JT warnings meditined in Pine Hood ward.