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

**Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Political Ascension**

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FDR Speech File

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Good Will, Washington, D. C.,  
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RLJ

U. S.  
Presidential  
NAVY DEPARTMENT,  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON.

I hope that you little people who are old enough to read the story of of the United States have had a chance to learn about the wonderful things Americans have done on the seas. And I ~~hope~~ <sup>trust</sup> that your fathers and mothers and Teachers will tell you about some of the great men who made the American flag respected all over the world and did the brave things that you and I like to think about today. Every American boy and girl ought to know <sup>how</sup> Captain Nicholas Biddle sacrificed himself and his ship in order to save ~~the~~ a great many merchant ships

2

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WASHINGTON.

from being captured by the enemy; and how Captain Sterrett fought and captured a great ship full of pirates who were injuring peaceful American traders; and how Captain Lawrence after he was fatally wounded did not think about himself but about his ship and his flag and spoke his last words "Don't give up the ship"; and of those other men in the Navy who did great things in time of peace, like Commodore Perry who opened up Japan to trade and commerce and like the many officers who time & time again have prevented fighting and bloodshed all over the world.

I always think it is better and  
pleasanter to read about people  
who have really lived and done  
great things than about imaginary  
heroes. And <sup>many</sup> ~~some~~ of the things  
our Navy has done are just as  
interesting and wonderful as if some-  
body had invented them. For if  
we know that the heroes really  
lived and that not so very long  
ago, and that the things they did  
~~were~~ actually happened, it is going  
to make it easier for us to try  
to do splendid acts too.

Do not forget that you children  
have even a better chance today  
to accomplish great things than

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Children did a hundred year ago. They had their heroes, and you should have your heroes too. Keep learning and thinking about the ~~men~~ men ~~and~~ and the women <sup>of</sup> whom their country is proud. Remember that the same flag waved over them as waved over you; try to follow their example of unselfish devotion to that flag; for in so doing you will help to keep that flag unspotted; you will be better American and your country will some day think of you also as heroes.