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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Dutches lo loc. Dunner Please D as the is positively the tast Della " appearance of my fellow performer Tot Plats and and myself at this Chambangua, are are going trade, That rensational hu sail storing two act chance entitled "lelone in Hashing ton : on The Boy Scouts at the Helm. While we had expected up to the tast moment to send a few members of The Cabriet & Take and places, are the afferdally the great, anothere in This Fant demanded seen awa prevence, lefter I have shown you by indischer -Table figure. That am Navy would sapet sing the capital of Justgerland towarrow the Congressman will prove that a Democratic majority is accession to the rafety of our country, and to the Rabution app happiness & welling up The lancrican people . I also Take This expectionely of auroreneng that in the new future

a Navy Gard will be established at thyde Part and That Mr. Plat has se. aved Two of the eight new require reserve hanks for Voughfeckie. I had interded as a real estate awaren in Duleters County to plak feelings about the crying acad of higher frices for fami lands in that locusty; that in Yew days ago a person high in Authority Came with any office in Asshington and wanted & from why fundoats at 1,000 and apiece wouldn't be just as serviceable as battleships at 15000,000: afler ? had your up in the air , come down again and recovered my temper I made a zaleman I would use The next thating That presented thread to un hurchen me mind afa lat of theigh I went to ray about the Newy - 20 you my fellow farmer have gotto he The wintrans longhot.

First - what sort of a navy have we got today ? The surver is - Ex cellar efficient, - exceeded in aife decoud - Now do we judge abether it is large enough? Revower: by detering whether and navy could command the scan in care of war . 3 - How would it abtain con mand of The seas? Answer: Beg souting on destroying the currents fleet. luck now I am going & degrees a moment to tell what a moder action would be like Just 100 years ago we pought, the Was af 1812. We emerged from that war with most of our heir sull an not because of our own provers not because ther havy wan a few very bis least single ships actions but he cause the belongthy bud seen pit to esgale or feather m called Maps - Bonakerto

Our Nancy at the but heart of The was consisted of a dog en frigates os sea pring ships and of about 100 rever or harlon junkouts - The British Novy consulted of acarly 1000 sea foing ships - Because of Napoleon Sugland nos able Trelease ruly about 50 ships for activic against the U.S. - her a Teralt un 12 ships were able a escape from harbons and to destry much commerce and a number of the encourse projeting ships in sugge thep actions - They dest Brillaant work and we are forough of them - But in 1815 just before peace was declared The majorty of them were either captured or leattled up in and owner harbors. They were not enmerous enough to fight a decisive fleet action and any accomplexies what they shill be came the bulk of the evenings flip was sayaged aquinot areather face Now as to our 100 greatents

I am a great advancer of Jefferson had about as much frowledge on sound theory of neval protection as did the Jecoffe of Port Lund Maine in 1898 when their sears of attack by the Speaning flack were aland by The arrival of a curl was moutor with a 15 mil smooth leave fim Aproteit Portanal Marbor . Sefferrous theory that these Jan hauts, lewilt at shight expense, harled by housest farmers in time of war was riddled when the erisis same - ht the Capture of Woshington, at the Walk on New Orleans these fun boats proved not only of absolutely no use that were veritable death traps with trans afficent new who mansed theme -Time moves on, that the same general Currows Homain the same If you look at the elatistic when If we will fend about 200 venets in

in fleet - Now many would really count in altaning the command of the seas? Bhart forty probably - and The is the reason why The command of the seas will in all probability depend on one freat fleet action - an action Taking place off shore, fought between The first class hattlerhops of each power, accompanies - by a number of torpedo last destroyed Den baats, crunen and submaring curd converter youth well have no felace .

Jan. 5, 1949.

 Partial text (longhand draft) of speech delivered at ²utchess County Society ¹Dinner, Hotel Aster, New ¥ork City, Jan. 17, 1914.

(Excerpts dealing with other portions of this speech may be found in newsclippings of the New York American, Sun, and Times of Jan. 18, 1914 in Scrapbooks 2, page $\frac{1}{20}$ in Group 1)

RLJ

DUTCHESS COUNTY SOCIETY DINNER - Jan. 17, 1914.

As this is positively the last public appearance of my fellow performer Ed. Platt and myself at this Chautaugua, we are going to render that sensational and soul stirring two act drama entitled "Alone in Washington: or The Boy Scouts at the Helm."

While we had expected up to the last moment to send a few members of the Cabinet to take our places, we decided that the britilitant experimently efferded-by- great and brilliant audience in this Tent demanded our own presence. After I have shown you by indisputable figures that our Navy would Eap sink the capitol of Switzerland tomorrow, the Congressman will prove that a Democratic majority is necessary to the safety of our country and to the salvation, xxx happiness and well being of the American people.

I also take this opportunity of announcing that in the near future a Navy Yard will be established at Hyde Park and that Mr. Platt has secured two of the eight new regional reserve banks for Poughkeepsie.

I had intended, as a real estate owner in Duthcess County, to speak feelingly about the crying need of higher prices for farm lands in that County; but a few days ago a person high in authority came into my office in Washington and wanted to know why gunboats at 1,000,000 apiece wouldn't be just as serviceable as battleships at \$15,000,000; After I had gone up in the air, come down again and recovered my temper, I made a solemn vow I would use the next opportunity that presented itself to unburden my mind of a lot of things I want to say about the Navy - so you, my fellow farmers, have got to be the victims tonight. FIRST - What fort of a Navy have we got today? The answer is - Excellent, efficient, - exceeded in size and power only by Great Britain and Germany. SECOND - How do we judge whether it is large enough? Answer: By determining whether our Navy could obtain command of the seas in case of war. 3rd - How would it obtain command of the seas? Answer: By sinking or destroying the enemy's fleet.

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And now I am going to digress a moment to tell what a modern action would be like.

Just 100 years ago we fought the War of 1812. We emerged from that war with most of our hair still on - not because of our own prowess - not because our Navy won a few very brilliant single ship actions, but because the Almighty had seen fit to create a gentleman called Nap. Bonaparte.

Our Navy at the outbreak of the war, consisted of a dozen frigates or sea going ships and of about 100 river or harbor gunboats - The British Navy consisted of nearly 1000 sea going ships - Because of Napoleon - England was able to release only about 50 ships for action against the U. S. As a result our 12 ships were able to escape from harbors and to destroy much commerce and a number of the enemy's fighting ships in single ship actions. - They did brilliant work and we are proud of them - But in 1815, just before peace was declared the majority of them were either captured or bottled up in our own harbors. They were not numerous enough to fight a decisive fleet action and only accomplished what they did because the bulk of the enemy's fleet was engaged against another foe.

Now as to/100 gunboats - I am a great admirer of Jefferson - but that good and great gentleman had about asmuch knowledge or sound theory of naval protection as did the people of Portland, Maine, in 1898 when their fears of attack by the Spanish fleet were alaid [sic] by the arrival of a civil war monitor with a 15 inch smooth bore gun to protect Portland Harbor. Jefferson's theory that these gunboats, built at slight expense, hauled up in corn fields during peace and manned by honest farmers in time of war was riddled when the crisis came.- At the capture of Washington, at the attack on New Orleans, these gunboats proved not only of absolutely no use, but were veritable death traps to the brave and efficient men who manned them. - Time moves on, but the same general lessons remain the same.

If you look at the statistics today you will find about 200 vessels in our fleet. - How many would really count in obtaining the command of the seas? About forty, probably - and this is the reason why -

The command of the seas will in all probability depend on one great fleet action - an action taking place off shore, fought between the first class battleships of each power, accompanied by a number of torpedo boat destroyers, Gunboats, cruisers and submarines and converted yachts will have no place.

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