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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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**1914 December 10**

**Brooklyn, NY**

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FDR Speech File

May 1, 1950.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech before the  
Women's Auxiliary of the International  
Committee of the Y.M.C.A., at the  
Commandant's home, New York Naval Shipyard,  
Brooklyn, N.Y., December 10, 1914.

[from the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Dec. 11, 1914]

## ROOSEVELT PLEADS FOR NAVAL Y. M. C. A.

Assistant Secretary of Navy  
Says It Makes for Efficiency  
Among Men.

Much of the efficiency of the United States Navy today is due to the work of the Naval Young Men's Christian Association, asserted Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, in an address yesterday afternoon before the members of the Women's Auxiliary of the International Committee of the Y. M. C. A., held in the drawing room of the commandant's home in the Navy Yard. Prominent among the large audience of women and officers were Rear Admiral Nathaniel B. Usher, the commandant; W. L. Tisdale, secretary of the Navy Y. M. C. A., in Sands street, and Mrs. Finley J. Shevard, formerly Miss Helen Gould, who donated that branch.

"Our Sailors and Marines and the Navy Young Men's Christian Association" was the speaker's topic of the occasion. Throughout his discourse Assistant Secretary Roosevelt spoke in high terms of the work of the association.

"From what I have seen, as a private individual and official, I do not think it is overrated to say that the men of the Navy, the enlisted men are the cleanest living, clearest thinking body of men in this country. Do you know there are about 50,000 in the Navy at the present time, and about 10,000 in the Marine Corps. They are doing duty probably all over the globe. The Y. M. C. A. work is two-fold in its nature. Its first phase is the work you have seen—many of you, I think—conducted in its highest form, in the magnificent plant we have here in Brooklyn, unsurpassed anywhere in the world. That is the shore end of it—the Navy Yard end of it. Then there is the other phase, that of the work on board ship. At the present moment, we have ships in Turkish waters, we have ships in the Mediterranean, we have ships practically all through the West Indies, at Panama, in Hawaii and in China. The work here must be supported by the people of New York and at the other Navy Yards, by the people of the local communities. If this is not done, and help must come from the supervisory agency, the International Committee, the work on shipboard where secretaries must be maintained and at points all over the world, such as at Shanghai in the Philippines and at Guantanamo in the Philippines and there is no local support, cannot be carried on.

"I think it fair that we should support this work. After all, the Navy has been and is at the present time and will continue to be the one thing that absolutely insures our safety. We all feel that we can go to bed with perfect assurance every night and that our land will still remain American territory the next day. I think it is not too much to say that the Navy could not succeed in its present high state of efficiency without the work of the Young Men's Christian Association."

Rear Admiral Usher in his remarks also commended the work of the Y. M. C. A. Secretary Tisdale also gave an interesting address on the work of the local branch.