
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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1915 November 19

New York - Society of Naval Architects

November 19, 1915

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FDR Speech File

Speech of
Franklin D. Roosevelt
at the Annual Dinner of the
Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers,
New York, N.Y.,
November 19, 1915

Assistant Secretary Roosevelt was the next speaker.

"Two years ago," he said, "preparedness was not a very popular subject. Look at the situation today, and I think you will note one of the most remarkable changes in public opinion on a great question that has taken place in years. What is being done now is only a beginning, and I have a deep-seated conviction that the country is aroused as it never was before, and, furthermore, that it is going through with this proposition to the end."

"The vital question in all this talk of [is] preparedness of public opinion. But right here I want to say there is much to be said for that Congressman who is honestly convinced that this country is in no danger and who believes if trouble did come a million men would spring to arms over night. The whole question in my opinion has resolved itself into one of public education. From a spirit of apathy, lack of interest, which was evident even at this time a year ago, there has taken place in this country a great change in that the people are now willing to listen. The average man realizes that we are not safe from the possibility of war or attack, and he now knows fairly well the naval and military situation in his country. The people of the country today, it is quite apparent, want a better preparedness."

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