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

Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Political Ascension

File No. 47

1915 December ?

Boston, MA

about December, 1915

[Boston, Massachusetts] (GT)
(sp)

FDR Speech File

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Speech - Boston Yacht Club, Boston - March 14, 1914
see Boston Post - Sec. 2 p. 49

Speech (?) Boston Real Estate Exchange (?) Boston - Dec. 22, 1915
see photostat of Globe, Dec. 23

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RLJ
25 Aug 50

22 Aug 50

Speech by FDR

Boston, Mass.

1913 - 1917 (?)

[probably Dec. 1915]

favors construction of a larger
navy yard at Boston.

~~Clark Gable~~

RLJ

It is always a real pleasure for me to speak in any of the cities where one of our great navy yards is established, as I feel that at the outset I have a common bond of interest with my audience, that we are both deeply concerned in the welfare and advancement, are both equally interested in the greatest possible development and are both equally hopeful of the future improvement of the navy yard. I do not know if Boston entirely realizes, even yet, the promise and possibilities for the Boston Navy Yard that rests upon the successful building of the transport now in course of construction. That the experiment will be successful and that the Department will be justified in having undertaken this work when the full figures of cost are in seems almost certain from the data made up on the progress already made.

I believe in using our navy yards; I believe particularly in increasing their capacity for building ships; I believe that if the present war abroad has taught us any one thing it is that it is not possible to have too great facilities for supplying the materials of war be they ships, guns or ammunition. With every dock yard, public and private, in England working night and day for the Navy, I do not think arguments as to the advisability of increasing our own shipbuilding facilities are needed. Preparedness that does not take into consideration the manufacturing and industrial side of war would not be prepared-

ness at all in my judgment. For the same reason that I believe in bringing our navy yards to the highest state of efficiency, I am also an enthusiastic advocate of anything which increases the facilities for handling shipping in our great ports.

I am not sufficiently familiar with the financial condition of the State of Massachusetts to know whether or not it is possible at this time to undertake the construction of the great dry dock which is now under consideration, but my desire to see such a dry dock built eventually is very great and I can assure you that the Navy takes great interest in the project and cannot see it completed too soon.

As a matter of justice to two other ports, and because I feel that you should decide that question with an accurate knowledge of the situation as it really is, I feel that I ought to correct an error in a statement attributed to my distinguished predecessor, Secretary Meyer, by the public press, who is reported as having made the argument that the New York dry dock could accommodate vessels of 21,000 tons only and that there were thirteen battleships constructed, under construction or projected which could not be accommodated at New York. As a matter of fact the NEW YORK and TEXAS, battleships of 27,000 tons during the year and a half they have been in commission have been docked at New York a number of times, and the dock at Norfolk is also

capable of accommodating them. Both of these docks are capable of accommodating any vessel built, building or designed, including the 32,000-ton CALIFORNIA class. However, a dry dock can accommodate but one warship at a time and not only in times of war but in times of peace emergency may easily arise where the need of another dock would be severely felt, and indeed in actual wartime the failure to have such a dock might prove an almost irreparable disaster.

On this subject of the advantage to the Navy of your proposed dock I am glad to find myself in cordial agreement with Mr. Meyer and I cannot help but feel sometimes that were he supplied with better and more accurate information as to conditions and data and the actual state of things in the Navy we would find ourselves far more often in agreement than we do.

I want you gentlemen of Boston to feel that on matters of the development of your navy yard and of your port in general you will find me interested and always sympathetic. All that can possibly be done will be done so far as lies in my power and I feel sure that in return I can count on the warm support of Boston in such effort as I shall make in the coming Congress for the recognition of the imperative necessity of doing all that lies in our power to bring the Navy to the highest state of efficiency and to make it the strong right arm of our national defense.