
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

May 1, 1950.

Speech by Franklin D. Roosevelt before 2,000
New York Navy Yard Employees, in celebration
of the launching of the battleship Tennessee,
at the 47th Regt. Armory, Marcy Ave. and
Heyward St., Brooklyn, N.Y., April 30, 1919.

possible, and pumped out the water in some manner or other. However, we are making wonderfully fine progress and we will be prepared for such eventualities in the future. To the men who built this wonderful fighting ship are due every praise that men who know anything about shipbuilding can give them.

Governor A. H. Roberts of Tennessee took his position on the platform.

"It is indeed, a pleasure for me to be in New York on April 30, 1919, for such a momentous occasion," said the Governor. "I feel certain that this monster piece of fighting machinery will do honor to the name of the State for which she was baptized. I want to say right here that I hope this Government will never again be caught napping and in a state of unpreparedness. I know this ship will fight against wrong and for everything that is right, which has always been the slogan for true Americans.

"There is but one way that we can be prepared for the unexpected and that is by giving universal military training to our boys. Of course, there will be protest against this, but when we show to those who protest that such a thing is essential they will see the error of their ways.

"At this moment the world owes most to one man, the man in Paris who is endeavoring to accomplish something of value to the world—the League of Nations—and that is President Wilson. I would like to impress this fact strongly on you citizens of the foremost city of the world."

Others who spoke were: James O'Connell, whose subject was "Our Metal Trade Department"; Congressman James P. Maher on "Our Workmen"; United States Senator William M. Calder on "Our Senate." James Wilson of the American Federation of Labor, and there was also a short address by William B. Wilson of the Department of Labor. The benediction was given by the Rev. Dr. S. Parke Cladman.