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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Washington, D.C.
80,000 ASK RISE IN 43 NAVY YARDS

More Than 150 Crafts Begin Pleas Before Wage Board for 25 to 40 Per Cent. Increase.

SOME SEEK $1.25 AN HOUR

Franklin Roosevelt Makes Informal Speech, Being Warmly Greeted.


WASHINGTON, Aug. 5—Representatives of skilled workers at forty-three navy yards of the country, appeared to-day before the Navy Wage Board and asked for substantial wage increases. The militiamen asked that the present average wages of from $450 to $600 be raised per hour to be increased to $1.25. Craftsmen asked advances which ranged from 25 to 40 per cent.

The hearings probably will last several days as witnesses for 144 crafts will testify.

J. F. Anderson, Vice-President of the International Shipbuilders, made the opening plea for the union. Every union involved in the controversy will present its own case, it was anticipated that each shall be represented by a skilled mechanic.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Democratic candidate for Vice-President, who retired as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, is Monday, made an impromptu address.

"I have just dropped in," said Mr. Roosevelt, "to say goodbye and also to say hello. This is entirely outside of formal lines, but I wanted, nevertheless, to put before you some of the points in the present position of the Navy Department.

"What we are considering is not a mere question of wages for a moment that affects the activity of the department as a whole. The United States is not a follower but a leader in bringing about new working conditions for those in the shipyard. It is a tremendous problem which, I believe, is solved by the method we are following. As a preliminary move in the direction of the union plan of wages, we are established at the present time. That is the position in which our workmen are in order to make things smoother for them, and it is my pleasure to be able to tell you that we have made arrangements to have the wages increased to the extent of 25 per cent.

"I am very glad that the crafts represented at the hearing were the shipwrights, skilled mechanics, the carpenters, the electricians, and the painters. This is a most unusual and creditable movement on the part of the American workman. I have been gratified to hear that Mr. Roosevelt has been able to take part in this movement.

"There is no better or more important piece of work than the building of our ships. As the nation's defense is in the hands of the navy, it is our duty to see that the workmen who build the ships are well treated. The American people expect no less. The workmen who build the ships are our friends and we must do all in our power to see that they are treated fairly.

"I am happy to say that the American workman is showing a decided change in his attitude. Where once he would not think of striking, he is now willing to do so in order to secure fair wages and working conditions. This is a great change and one for which we are all thankful.

"I am grateful to Mr. Roosevelt for his timely visit. He has done much to bring about this change in the attitude of the workmen. I hope that all the workmen will continue to show the same spirit in the future.

Cubans Bring Roosevelt Fund

MIAMI, Fla., Aug. 5—Cubans and Puerto Ricans, President and Secretary of the Roosevelt Memorial Association of Cuba, are on route from New York to Washington. They are the headquarters of the Roosevelt Memorial Association in Washington. They will receive a copy of the dedication of the memorial which will be presented to the Cuban Government.