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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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**File No. 183**

**1920 September 29**

**Morganstown, WV - Campaign Speech**

EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH OF HON. F.D. ROOSEVELT  
SEPTEMBER 29, 1920

I am going to keep on hammering at the painful task of finding out Senator Harding's "honest to goodness" position on the League of Nations. First I would take up the negative side, in other words, what he really thinks Governor Cox's position is on the League of Nations. Senator Harding in his recent speeches has evidently been trying to create the impression that Governor Cox insists on a ratification of the treaty and league without any reservations of any kind. The Republican nominee in Baltimore the night before last is quoted as saying: "The Democratic candidate for President says he is in favor of going into the League as it was fashioned at Versailles". Let us get this point clear - First, is Senator Harding deliberately attempting to fool the public into the belief that the Democratic policy is necessarily, and absolutely and unqualifiedly a ratification of the League without the crossing of a "T" or the dotting of an "I". Secondly, if this is so, I challenge Senator Harding to prove this assumption.

Let us be honest about the positions of the two candidates in this most vital of questions. Senator Harding's utterances so far on this particular point must indicate one of two things: Either an unfortunate failure to read and understand the very simple and very clear position taken by the Democratic nominee for the Presidency, or else it is a deliberate and wholly unwarranted effort to mislead the people of the United States. I cannot believe that Senator Harding would be guilty of the latter. I must assume that he has failed to follow the clear-cut position of his opponents, but no American voter can determine the true reason unless and until Senator Harding answers

this question.

I have thought that Governor Cox and I had made the Democratic position clear. If Senator Harding is unable to explain his apparent attitude as shown in his Baltimore speech, then I shall be very glad, and I know Governor Cox will also take pleasure in telling him in words of one syllable once more as to the exact position which we have taken and continue to maintain.

When this point has been cleared up, I propose next to go back to the constructive question of finding out what Senator Harding means when he says - "I will not go into 'this' League". I propose to find out what that little word "this" means.

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[Morgantown, W. Va.]

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