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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. 188**

**1920 October 1**

**Louisville, KY - Campaign Speech (lgh.)**

File

I hate to seem insistent, but it is necessary. A few days ago I asked Sen. Harding where he stood on the League of Nations. I did not say a league ~~but~~ or an association, but the League.

He answered in Wheeler's as follows: "I will never favor any alliance, league or compact that can impose ~~its~~ its will by its vote on the people of the United States. I will favor friendly association and conference of the people of the world."

I did not ask him this and it is not an answer to my question. I agree with him ~~about~~ in his stand against other nations imposing by their votes their will on our people. I too am in favor of friendly association of nations. But we get

nowhere by having him wait  
~~answering the plainly~~  
~~small~~ ~~the plainly~~

Therefore I ask him once  
more ~~of~~ the question and  
I will make it so clear that  
every school child can understand.  
Here it is:

"If the U.S. can enter the  
existing League of Nations in such a  
way that the will of the League ~~can~~  
can not be imposed on us against  
our will, ~~and if it is~~ ~~then~~  
~~is made clear that our Constitutional~~  
and Congressional rights regarding  
war are in every way preserved,  
would you, Senator Harding, <sup>then</sup> ~~flavor~~  
our going in? ~~with the other nations~~

Faithfully I do not believe  
that Senator Harding will answer  
that question. To do so clearly and  
unquivocally means the loss of

his support either by the <sup>Anti-League</sup> Senator  
 Johnson element or by the <sup>pro-League</sup> President Taft element. This is  
 the dreadful dilemma which has  
 faced him for three months. I  
 fear if Mr. Harding replies at  
 all he will ~~answer~~ <sup>again avoid</sup> a direct answer  
 but my question is so definite  
 that I look for dignified silence  
 only. I make no reference to  
 Senator Harding's Baltimore declaration  
 that he has no specific constructive  
 plan in regard to our foreign  
 affairs because I hope that he  
~~has~~ said that in the excitement  
 of giving an extemporaneous  
 answer to a verbal question.  
 Surely a candidate for the Presidency  
 must have a policy.

[Louisville, Ky. - Oct. 1, 1920]