
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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Henderson, KY - Campaign Speech

EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH OF HON. F. D. ROOSEVELT
HENDERSON, KY., Oct. 2, 1920

According to new dispatches this morning, Senator Harding has once again "defined" his attitude on the League of Nations, and once again I must really confess that to me, as it probably does to most every one else, it means absolutely nothing - "My task is to so harmonize the views of American leadership that we shall be able to adopt a policy in our world relations to which Americans will unitedly subscribe".

It begins to appear that the amiable gentleman from Ohio who ~~is~~ has Presidential aspirations, is an optimist of the first water, and that he believe, or would have others believe, that his election this Fall means the arrival of the millenium. Otherwise it is hardly conceivable how he expects to work out any theoretical association of nations and a plan for world peace that would meet with the approval of every individual American.

As every school child knows, our very form of government is based on differences of opinion, with the resultant rule of the majority, and it is not conceivable to expect Senator Harding or any one else to work out a plan that will be "unitedly subscribed to" by the American people.

In the next sentence of his quoted statement, Senator Harding ventures an assertion which those of us who have been reading his varying statements on his League position, cannot subscribe to, for he says: In deliberate public addresses I have given a clear statement of my own suggestions for our future international policy, and you may ready your answer therein". Reading this, our minds naturally hark back a few days ago to his illuminating but damaging admission that he was without any specific constructive programme for an association of nations.

It is evident that there are squalls ahead for the steering committee of the G.O.P. Every day the irreconcilables in their party are growing more and more restless as their

standard bearer fidgets and twists and strives in vain to keep from offending them and at the same time to hold out a ray of hope to his lukewarm supporters of the Taft class, who still profess to believe he has no intention of scrapping the present League.

No, Senator Harding, you are still side-stepping the issue. Once again I put up to you bluntly the question I have asked repeatedly without an answer: "If the United States can enter the existing League of Nations in such a way that the will of the League cannot be imposed on this Nation against its will and it is made clear that our constitution and congressional rights are in every way preserved, will you then favor the United States joining the League"?

The American ~~man~~ public has a right to your answer. Your own supporters have a right to your answer, and if I read aright the temper of America today, you can ill afford to continue your evasion.