
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Political Ascension

File No. 206

1920 October 11

Hannibal, MO - Campaign Speech

EXTRACTS FROM SPEECH OF HONF.D.ROOSEVELT
HANNIBAL, MO., OCT. 11, 1920

Senator Harding continues to try to scare Americans to death. He has been making speeches in the West, inventing in each some new form of horrid danger which would immediately confront us if we joined the League. He is assuming that the men and women who vote are children and will be frightened by the bogeys he is manufacturing. Every day that passes he trots out a new one. Yesterday was the turn of Japan. He was fearful that the United States would have to send an army to help Japan in case she was attacked by China. Tomorrow it will be the turn of Turkestan and Tibet. Mr. Harding's friend, Governor Morrow of Kentucky, has already talked about the danger of the League ordering us to take part in a war between the King of Siam and the Emperor of Timbuctoo.

The object, of course, is clear. Everything must be done by Republican campaigners to confuse the voters. It matters not that there is no danger of China crushing Japan - it matters not that there is no Empire of Timbuctoo in existence; some voters will be deceived. "Anything to win" - that is the slogan from Harding to Hays and down the line and back again.

I have but one new prayer to offer, and that is that Senator Harding will continue to talk about the dangers to us in joining hands with the other forty-one nations. I want him to go on pointing out that it will destroy our constitution, that it will force us into and keep us in constant war, that it will take away the rights of our Congress, that it is a failure, and a fraud and a delusion and a snare.

The time has come to ask the Republican nominee three more simple questions. I hope he will answer them:

- (1) Was the League a failure and a fraud when, the other

day, it was instrumental in preventing a threatened war between Sweden and Finland?

- (2) Do Switzerland and France and the dozen or more American Republics who have joined the League think it will keep them in constant wars?
- (3) Have these sister Republics who have gone in given up their constitutional rights and the rights of their Congresses to declare war or send their troops abroad?

Luckily for humanity, these nations have accepted the great purpose of the League as the best devised means to end war and their political leaders have not stooped to misrepresentations for the sole purpose of trying to win an election.

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