# Franklin D. Roosevelt - "The Great Communicator" The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945 

Series 1: Franklin D. Roosevelt's Political Ascension

File No. 207

1920 October 11

Canton, IL - Campaign Speech

During the past two monthe I have been travelling all other this Country carrying not only a mesaage of Domoaracy to the people of the Land, but a negsage of another gort as well. This message is of so much vester import to America today, as well as to the generations of Americane yot unborn, that therexamakemsx I wish it were possible for me to oarry it to overy hamlet in this broad Land of ours.

This Nell Amerion's honor is at gtake, for the issue between the two oandiates in now so olearly defined that there is no excuso for any voter who attempte to evade. Sither the glectorate will send Governor Coz into the Whito House, plodged to maing the United staten into the existing League of Mations but with every conatitutional right safeguarded, or it will send senator larding there, who, after vacillating for weoks in a vain effort to stave off a rupture in his own party, has finally comitted himsele agsinst our going in.

The responsibility now rests with the individual. Bach voter in the Unitad States must take his position squarely for or againat the Leagua. Each one of you, it seoms to mo, ghould feel the fall importacas of the responsibility whioh reats on you. By your vote on November and you will skesk help to decida what the America of tomorrow tll be. One courge leads us toward a nationel isolation, the hermitilke existence that for countless years to come will keep ua from the full development of Priendiy ralations with other nations of the globe, that will include a handicap to our ever growing business and an impeiment of our standing as one of the great nations of the world.

In diract aentrast, the alection of Governor Cox means the opening of a new and better ora for Axarioa - it meeno an honorable pepae im which our allies hava $\$$ perit, ani not a eoparste peace, the Efay of which Mill oxing to the fiair name of our country after your chilaron and your grunohilaren bevo pased beyond. It menns that oux boloved country will taiko hor plaow ageln whore she was on Hovember 11, 1918, at the very forefront of all the great nations, the acknowledgeat leader of the ork.

A year age the people of this country wero practianlly unamimous in favor of our going into the Leagrae. During that yoar a conetant stream of poison propaggands has beom paurad into thoir eers by a partian Prass. Jo have been trying to aorruct some of tis erroneous ideas and the miaconeontions of the Joscua rama by people tho have heen etther misiniormed or who are ill-inforwed.

It is a remariabie thing to me to what lowgth nen will. 80 to attain thoir and polithealiy. Where are seoren, yos hundrads, of proainerat Roproliaens who in their privete and businase iffe are modolo of reetitude gad who would not stoop to deceive, who are csi2y msking deliverate whimalacious misatatenents about the Lescue of Untions. They buy thingu that they know sre felse, and say them

 places. Toduy thoy moet with choor's and applauge ac thoir oheap trickery in oloaking thaix anti-laague propaganea under a guise of patripotism for the momont appoaly to their haarors. In the tomorrove
 men will share the opprobrium of Pature generations with that little group of wilful political obetruetionists who blocked the pagsage of
the League in the sonate for petty political gain.
I wonder, my friencis, if you realige that this Fall you are aotwally writing history and that on your docision at the polfs hingee the whole future of brepica. It is for you to decide whother your children and your ohildren's chilarem are to live their lives thocergix free from the titanic tragedy like thet the worle hos just undergone.

It is up to you men and womon alike individually to face the issue ao clear-out betweon the two parties; a vote for cox in a Fote for the League; a vote for Harding is a vote against it.

Ihring the past two monthe I hava been trevelling all other this Countzy carrying not only mencage of Democraoy to the poople of tho Land, but a meesace of another gort as woll. This meseage is of no much vaster import to Americs today, as well
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In direct contrast, the election of Governor Cox means the opening of a new and better era for America - it means an honorable peace in which our allies have a part, and not a separate peace, the sear of which will cling to the fair name of our Country after your children and your granchilaren have passed beyond. It means that our beloved country will take her place again where she was on November 11, 1918, at the very forefront of all the great nations, the aoknowleaged leader of the World.

A year ago the people of this cowntry were practically unatimous in favor of our going into the League. During that yoar a constant stream of poison propaganda has been poured into their ears by a partisan Press. We have been trying to sorrect some of the erroneous ideas and the misconcentions of the League made by people who have been efther misinformed or who are ill-informed.

It is a remarkable thing to me to what length men will go to attain their and politically. There are scores, yes hunareds, of prominent Republicans who in their private and business life are models of rectitude and who would not stoop to deceive, who are daily making deliberate and malacious misstatements about the League of Nations. They eay things that they know are false, and say them with a deliberate intent of fooling the voter. They are what I call
 places. Today they meet with cheers and applause as their cheap triokery in cloaking their anti-league propaganda under a guise of patripotim for the moment appeals to their hearers. In the tomorrow of the World's History another story will be writton, and these same men will share the opprobrium of future generations with that little group of wilfyl political obstructionists who hinntran the passage of
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## EXTRACTS HROM SPIECH OR HONF.D.ROOSEVELT

 CANTON, ILH., OCT. 11, 1920From nov on the hundreds of thousands of voters who have been watching and reading, vaiting with perfect justification to make up their minds definitel; before casting their ballots, will continue to come out in the open in favor of the candiamey of Governor Cox. I read this morniig of an interview with old John Burroughs, the splendid lowr of birds, beasts and humanity, who has brought so much pleasureinto American homes. "Oom" John's reasons for supporting the Democatic candidate are so clearly put, I would like them read by every roter in the United States. They are three:
"First, beaause I am fe the League for Peace as the only way human thought has devised to put an el to wars.
"Second, as a sequencebo the first, because Coy is for the jague for Peace.
"Third, because Cox ithe stronger man of the two oandidas, the more progressive and more recesentative of the idealism of the natia".

The same day I read aat Hemilton Holt, Editor of the "Independent", has switched to te support of Governor Cox because he can no longer stand the vaciation of Senator Harding on every public question and his opposion to having the United States join the other forty-one nations of he world in any way in the existing League.

One cannot wholly bine Mr. Taft for closing his eyes, gritting $h i s$ teeth and remaini as a supporter of $M r$. Harding.

The exchange of telrams between $M r$. Taft and President Wilson in 1919 showsbeyond anyuestion of doubt that the former

President made suggestions and that they were agreed to and carried out by the President in Paris. Mr. Taft was wholly satisfied with the treaty and the League as brought back in final form and es submitted to the Senate.

I suppose it would be too much to ask that Mr. Iaft should go back on his friends in Ohio who helped to nominate and elect him to the Presidency twelve years ago, but it is a distinct disappointment to his many admirers that just because he has been the head of a party he should feel it necessary to support that party against his own convictions. Mr. Taft says by way of apology this morning that he was bitterly disappointed when the President did not accept the reservations voted by the Republicans. Unfortunately, that is not an excuse for voting for Harding this year. The question is not one of what President Wilson did or did not do, but of what Mr . Cox or Mr. Haraing will do in the future. Mr. Harding has made it clear that he is opposed to going into the existing League, even with reservations as voted by the Republicans. Governor Cox is definite in his statement that he is in favor of joining With the other nations in the League and has no objection to reservations which will make absolutely clear the position of the United States and the retaining of all our Constitutional and Congressional Rights.

Other Republicans who, like Mr. Taft, favor going into the existing League, will, of course, not be bound by the same kind of party obligation which Mr. Maft thinks he is bound by. Other Republioans will follov the lead of Mr. Herbert Parsons, Republican National Committeeman from New York, and will place the good of the United States as a whole ahead of a mere party victory.

This morning in quincy, Ill., a boy came up to me
and said: "I was a member of the Second Division - we were among the first to land in France and the last to leave. Nobody knows better than we do that if we go back to the old conditions that existed between the nations in 1914 we may have to go back and take part in another war, or at least our sons will have to do it, because anybody who has the least bit of cormonsense knows that America cannot remain wholly on the outside if another World War starts. I have always been a Republican, but I am wise enough and have seen onough to know that if we want to make it unnecessary to send millions of men across the sea again, we shall have to join with all the other civilized nations in this association. Everybody in Europe knows that it is a practical, working organization that is making good. I want to see the United States go into it and take the leadership. Those people over there and from every other part of the world have a very high respect for the unselfishness of the united States, and when we enter the League our voice will carry more weight than that of any other nation."

This is in in line with the general sentiment which is being expressed to me by men and women who have been quietly thinking the big issue over and who have now come to realize its importance to the future peace of the United States and of the whole world.

If the campaign could continue for two months more, Senator Herding vould either loose every State in the Union or would have to retract and wholly abandon his present position. Sven as it is, the swing of the thinking voters from Harding to Cox has made Governor Cox's election a certainity.
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