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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. 255**

**1927 October 28**

**Radio Address -**  
**Humphrey Lynch Campaign Committee**

[1927]

From Humphrey J. Lynch Campaign Committee  
199 Main Street, White Plains, N.Y.

Released for immediate use.

Address by Franklin D. Roosevelt of Hyde Park over Station WHCA last night (Friday) October 28 -- the sixth Radio Rally of the Humphrey J. Lynch Campaign Committee. Mr. Roosevelt is Chairman of Justice Lynch's Campaign Committee.

"Every once in a while" said Mr. Roosevelt, "people are asked to go to the polls and vote on some question which has little or nothing to do with whether they are Republicans or Democrats. These questions sometimes are phrased in the form of a referendum and at other times are involved in the candidacy of a man for an office.

"Through most of the last Century judges owed their selection in the vast majority of cases to the political party to which they belonged.

"But in this generation more and more demand is being made to keep the Judiciary non-partisan, and this move is a country wide one, and is based on the fundamental principles of our form of government. Ever since Theodore Roosevelt was President, Federal appointments to the Federal Bench have shown more and more regard for this principle of non-partisanship. The Supreme Court of the United States has, of course, always had on it a fair balance of both Republicans and Democrats, and of late years Republican Presidents have occasionally appointed Democratic judges to the lower Federal Courts and vice versa.

"The principle is recognized in our own Court of Appeals, the highest New York State Court. This year, because there are several more Republican judges on that Court than Democrats, both parties have endorsed for election the Democrat who is filling a vacancy.

"That then is the reason for all this? The answer is that experience over many generations proves that justice is

best administered if both parties are represented on the bench. This gives not only a balance of thought on matters of judicial policy but prevents an outburst of indignation against a Court which may happen to render an unpopular if wholly correct opinion. Also if both parties are represented there is less chance that charges of political influence or political prejudice will be made.

"Here in this State we are not always careful in either Democratic or Republican strongholds to keep the Judiciary non-partisan. Sometimes Democratic leaders in the past have tried to grab all the judges - sometimes a Republican upstate organization tries to get a bench packed wholly with Republicans. Either case is equally reprehensible and dangerous to our fundamentals of government.

"This year a very concrete example of this danger has arisen in the Ninth Judicial District, comprising Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange and Dutchess Counties, in New York State.

"There are seven justices of the Supreme Court, six of whom are Republicans and one a Democrat. This Democrat was appointed by Governor Smith to fill a vacancy caused by the death of Justice William Popham Platt, himself a Democrat, and the only one out of the seven.

"Much to the surprise of seasoned lawyers and judges the Republican leader of Westchester County, Mr. Ward, who is also a power in the other counties, decided to nominate a Republican for the remaining place on the Supreme Court bench, and if this nominee, County Judge Bleakley is elected there will be seven Republicans and no Democrat on the Bench.

"When I told Judge Lynch that I would help him in his campaign, I said I did so not as a Democrat nor as a lawyer, but merely as one who does care to fight for a principle. This

is an off year in the sense that we are electing neither President nor Governor. But it is not an off year on a fight for a principle. Nor will party regularity be a controlling factor. Hundreds of Republicans have come forward to support a non-partisan judiciary, and while the District made up of these five counties is heavily Republican on President or Governor it often shows its independence in voting for local officials.

"This office of Supreme Court Judge ought not to be considered in any sense from the point of view of party regularity. It is, or ought to be above and beyond party.

"Yet by the action of Boss Ward the issue of party has been injected. If these five Counties want a Supreme Court bench with seven Republican judges on it and not a single Democrat they will choose County Judge Bleakley; or if these Counties are indifferent and don't care who or what make up the Bench they will let Judge Bleakley win by the usual normal Republican majority.

"But if the voters of this District really believe that a grave issue is before them, if they realize that a deep seated principle of our form of government is involved, then they will vote above and beyond mere party lines and keep Judge Humphrey J. Lynch on the Supreme Court Bench.

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