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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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**1928 October 22**

**Batavia, NY - Campaign Speech**

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that today is called radical and socialistic. I refer  
to the pledge in the Democratic Platform that calls for

\*\*\* A very fair example of the difference of atti-  
tude between the two parties is in this matter of water  
power. The Democratic Party believes that water power  
should be the water power sites of the State -- should  
remain for all time in the physical possession of the  
people of the State of New York. The Republican Party  
hold to the older view of things. It is just on a par  
with what has happened in social legislation. Back  
there in 1911, in the legislature, it was the Democratic  
leaders who brought forward the Factory Investigation  
Commission, who brought forward the Workmen's Compensa-  
tion Law, and it was the same Republican leaders who op-  
posed. Why, we poor people down there in 1911 were cal-  
led socialists, radicals and if there had been the word  
"Bolshevist" in existence at that time, they would have  
tried to pin that on to us. (Applause.)

Don't it seem silly now, seventeen years later,  
to talk about people who favored workmen's compensation

laws and factory inspection laws as radicals and Bolsheviks? Times change, and this year, just as a very good example, we have got in our Democratic Platform something that today is called radical and socialistic. I refer to the pledge in the Democratic Platform that calls for an immediate and careful study of the subject of old age pensions. Now, it was called radical. Will it, twenty years from now? Perhaps it is worth studying. I think so, and I am in entire accord with the platform of my party. We know that other nations have forms of old age pensions. Some of them work extremely well. Others don't work so well, but it is worth taking up, especially do we who live -- you and I do -- in more or less rural communities; especially do we realize the hardships, the horrors that so often come to the aged and infirm in our midst. It is true, too, of the great cities, and I believe that the time has come when the great humanitarian program of Governor Smith can be extended so that those who through no fault of their own come to such advanced years that they are no longer able to live in the same degree of comfort, the same standards that they had lived in before -- some way may be found by which

the declining years may be taken care of. So that their standard of living to which they are entitled as Americans may stay with them to the end. ~~that would amount~~

And we have, too, the problem of this State of continuing to improve the Governmental machinery. As you know, Governor Smith has accomplished great things along those lines. As you know, one hundred and seventy or one hundred and eighty different departments down there in Albany have been consolidated into eighteen, and still there is room for improvement in Albany. But beyond that, I believe that the time has come in this State to go into the organization, to study the question of whether we can't improve our system of county and town government. (Applause.) ~~for public improvement, the~~

After all, our present system goes back to before the Revolution. It goes back to Colonial government days, and what we have today is nothing more than an expansion -- an extension of the same system that existed when this was not a state, but was the Royal Province of New York. And I don't believe that in 150 years it can be said that that system can't be improved on. I am convinced that we have got to take that question up as

whether we can't save money in our counties and save money in our towns -- put in modern business methods so that the aggregate savings in this State would amount to a great many millions of dollars every year. That is worth studying.

Do you find those Republican leaders talking about it? No. It was the suggestion of the Progressive Party in this State, called here the Democracy. (Applause.)

And finally, I just want to say this word, that a great many of these problems before the people of this State ought not to be partisan problems. They ought not to be handled as a matter of Republicans on one side and Democrats on the other. Public improvement, the care of the wards of the State; the care of the children; education; health -- those aren't matters in which there should be a Republican policy and a Democratic policy. Those aren't matters in which there should be a constant, continuous year in and year out row between the Governor of this State and the legislature of this State. And so I hope that we are going to get a new spirit in this thing, by which the citizens of the

Republican Party are going to force their leaders to co-operate with the citizens of the Democratic Party, through the Democratic leaders. (Applause.)

And if, my friends, the people who came to listen last week, and the people who have started right here to come and listen this week, are any indication of the way things are going on November sixth, I have no cause for alarm. (Applause.)

I look for a great and overwhelming victory in this State for Governor Smith and the State Ticket, and I am confident that Batavia will do its share. (Continued Applause.)

I have got a pretty soft spot in my heart for Rochester. (Applause.) I understand this is the place where something happened about three weeks ago (Applause); but I go back a great deal further. I go back to a convention here in 1910, the first Democratic Convention that I ever attended in my life, and in this very hall the Democratic Party nominated a ticket that swept the State in November, and it is going to happen again this November (Applause), and when I get in tonight