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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. 441**

**1931 September 12**

**Remsen, NY -**  
**Steuben Memorial Park Dedication**

SPEECH OF THE GOVERNOR AT  
DEDICATION OF STEUBEN MEMORIAL PARK, REMSEN, N. Y.,  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1931.

FOR RELEASE 3 P.M.

Today marks <sup>nearly</sup> not a re-dedication of a monument to the memory of a great soldier of the Revolution. We come rather to assume, on the part of the people of this State for all time to come, the care of <sup>these</sup> ~~the~~ acres and to give access to the ~~peaceful~~ ~~acres~~ to future generations of Americans.

In this peaceful country-side today, far removed from armed conflict or <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ preparations ~~for armed conflict~~, inhabited by a citizenry largely untrained in the arts of war, we can visualize I think the difficulties which confronted our forefathers in 1775 when they found that only through war could they maintain their liberties. The country-side of the thirteen colonies of those days was equally peaceful, the citizenry equally untrained. Embattled farmers could win a skirmish but a trained Army <sup>also could</sup> ~~must~~ win a war.

That is why <sup>it was fitting that</sup> ~~why~~ Friederich Wilhelm Baron von Steuben, soldier of Frederick the Great, became the Drill Master of the American Army and a trusted Lieutenant of George Washington, Commander-in-Chief.

Those of us who have given deep study to the prolonged problems of our ~~war~~ <sup>War</sup> for independence appreciate in full the difficulties of maintaining a citizen army through eight long years over a fifteen hundred mile front - problems that were as greatly concerned with esprit de corps and the use of home made materials as they were with military tactics and strategy.

In this long struggle the State of New York was in more ways than one the principle battle-ground of the Revolution, the key, the maintenance of which controlled the stability of the arch. Here during the greater part of the war were the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, of the munitions and supplies, and of the preparing of the combatant units for actual conflict. As a natural result Steuben, Major and Inspector General of Washington's army, was within the borders of New York during the greater part of the Revolution.

As a result also it was not strange that after the war he considered that his ties with New York were closer than with any other of the thirteen states. Let us remember that of all his companions in arms who, coming from other nations, assisted us in the winning of our independence, Steuben was the only one to become an American citizen and to live out his life among the people whom he had helped.

Mr. Ambassador, it is proper that you, the representative of the great German people, should be with us today in this tribute to one who was born a German and received his training under the great Prussian King. The German people are rightly proud of von Steuben and his memory must for all time cement the friendship of our two great nations.

But we of the State of New York have at least equal claim to this soldier of the Revolution. He became not alone an American citizen but also a resident and citizen of the State of New York. To him the people of this State granted a tract of land which for all time will be known as "Steuben's Patent." We stand on a part of that patent at this moment. After his death he was buried on his own land which he came to love so well. For many years his friends and neighbors in the town of Steuben kept his memory green and it was through

the efforts of their descendants in this and neighboring towns and, indeed, the people of all of Oneida County, that this monument was erected.

Sixty-one years ago a great Governor of New York, Horatio Seymour, took part in the dedication of this monument and through all these years these immediate acres have been held in trust for the people of the State by the church of this community. Now the State itself resumes the whole of this trust and it is our purpose that the hundreds of thousands who revere the name of Steuben will come here in the future years and feel proud that the thirteen million people of the Empire State have undertaken this task.

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In this peaceful country-side today, far removed from armed conflict or <sup>it</sup> the preparations for armed conflict, inhabited by a citizenry largely untrained in the arts of war, we can visualize I think the difficulties which confronted our forefathers in 1775 when they found that only through war could they maintain their liberties. The country-side of the thirteen colonies of those days was equally peaceful, the citizenry equally untrained. Embattled farmers could win a skirmish but <sup>as we would</sup> a trained Army ~~must~~ win a war.

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Germans and Americans stand side by side today in renewing our tribute of appreciation and honor to one who so greatly helped the cause of human liberty.

At Dedication of Steuben Memorial Park, Remsen, N. Y.,  
September 12, 1931

*Baron von Steuben*

p. 766  
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