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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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**1931 October 27**

**New York City, NY -  
Dedication of Theodore Roosevelt Memorial**

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Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Dedication  
Governor's speech - October 27-1931

Of all the public events in which, as Governor, I have been privileged to participate during the past three years, I am very certain that this laying of the cornerstone of the Roosevelt Memorial thrills and interests me the most. It is in part because of my long association with the Museum. My memory goes back to a day 37 years ago, when a small boy of 12 marched proudly up the steps of the old brick building which formed the nucleus of what has become the great American Museum of Natural History of today. It was not long after this that Theodore Roosevelt, hearing that my Grandfather had given me a life membership in the Museum, said to me, "Franklin, you can learn more about nature and life in the Museum than in all the books and schools in the world."

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I do not suppose that there is any great memorial monument more wholly appropriate than this. Theodore Roosevelt's greatest appeal was always to young people. Fundamentally he was entirely right in his emphasis that the future of the state, of the nation and of the race, depended on ~~the~~ straight thinking and right acting on the part of the rising generation. He realized well that in every sphere of life from labor and business, and science and the professions, all the way through to government itself, a mere ordering from older people at the top, and a mere blind obedience by younger people at the bottom, would result in stagnation and in eventual decline of civilization. He realized that young people must provide not only enthusiasm and courage, but that a continuing of progress calls

of courage, of enthusiasm, and even of daring to the solving of the <sup>pe</sup> problems and the mitigation of the sufferings of this confused and confusing world.

Through many generations to come, the Roosevelt Memorial erected in loving tribute by the people of his state, will inspire old and young, but especially, I hope, the young, to give to Theodore Roosevelt another tribute - the tribute of a greater interest in and feeling for, their fellow-men - a greater taking part in the ~~task~~ tasks and problems of their government, a deeper ~~sympathy~~ understanding of the fundamentals of right and wrong, and a higher purpose in lending their help.

When soon, from ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> great Plaza in Central Park, we look up to this ~~great~~ <sup>veritable</sup> Arch of triumph, and to the heroic figure of Theodore Roosevelt at its front, let us say in our hearts, "Hail, Leader and Friend, we greet you, we about to live!"

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for their actual knowledge of <sup>and</sup> participation in the daily tasks of mankind.

To me today, the laying of this cornerstone represents not alone Theodore Roosevelt's great interest in the Museum, nor alone his devotion to the cause of well rounded education, nor alone the tribute which the people of his State erect to his memory, - it is more than any or all of these. It represents rather the clear call which Theodore Roosevelt would make were he alive today, to the people of this whole nation, and especially to <sup>the</sup> young people of this whole nation, for their active participation in the solution of pressing problems which affect our national life and our very national existence. Were he with us today, how much he would bring