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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. 468**

**1932 March 16**

**Albany, NY - Org. of Block-Aid for  
Unemployment Relief in New York City**

Organization of Block-Aid for unemployment relief in New York City, radio address, Executive Mansion, Albany

March 16, 1932

Yesterday morning a million residents of New York City received with their morning milk an invitation to become leaders in the great Block-Aid movement now being launched in the five boroughs of Greater New York.

These invitations were delivered without charge by the generous action of the managers and workers of the New York Milk Conference Board.

This is the first time, I believe, that milk companies have consented to deliver leaflets with the milk bottles, and it indicates how warmly every public spirited citizen in New York is rallying to the support of Block-Aid. What is Block-Aid? It can be a big help in the problem of unemployment and destitution. Given loyal support by every citizen, Block-Aid will help to reduce want and suffering because it is planned on a scale large enough to fit the existing emergency.

Block-Aid means just what it says. Each of the 16,113 blocks in the five boroughs of New York City is being organized under its own chairman to aid itself and its neighbors. This means that New York City will have 16,113 relief units. By placing the work in the hands of at least 100,000 Block-Aiders, who will give every citizen a chance to contribute from a dime to a dollar each week, and no more, Block-Aid works along the line of the American theory of democracy.

The slogan of Block-Aid is "Stamp Out Want."

The ingenious method by which Block-Aid operates is being so fully explained in the newspapers that I will not take up your time by describing it, but let me say, that it is already achieving the proportions of success.

Up to noon yesterday 2,383 blocks in the five boroughs had been organized for Block-Aid, which means that more than one-fifth of the tremendous job of organization has been done, and that actual relief work can begin within a fortnight, provided Block-Aiders continue to come forward at the present rate.

Because it is always encouraging to the members of any organization to know about the leader who directs them, I should like to say a word about the man who has volunteered his services as chairman of Block-Aid.

Wilton Lloyd-Smith is a New Yorker through and through. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather all served as judges of the Supreme Court of New York. He is a distinguished lawyer, a great hunter of big game and he commanded Battery "C" in the 13th Field Artillery in the Argonne. He is 37 years old. He is the kind of man to whom we can confidently turn for leadership in an emergency, for he represents the kind of enthusiasm and vigor which spells results.

If you live or work in New York City I urge you to become a BlockAider today. Report to your block chairman. If you don't know where to find him call Digby 4-9800, which is Block-Aid headquarters. They will tell you where to report and get your materials and insignia.

Those of us who live in other cities should carefully watch the work of Block-Aid in Greater New York. Let us see how quickly it can attain its purpose of breaking down a city with seven million people into many thousand small communities, each of which can help to provide the money necessary to make jobs for people who are experiencing hardship and tragedy because of unemployment. A plan that succeeds in New York City should sweep like wild-fire across our country, because no other city offers such an intricate problem of organization.

We are watching New York City with the keenest interest and we are glad to see great posters all over the city which read "Join the Block-Aiders in your Block," "Stamp Out Want." I hope you will all do your bit.