

As the years followed, however, it became apparent to thoughtful observers that leadership in European nations was far from idealistic. Political ambition and national greed with imperialistic design again asserted control. The ideals for which the great War was claimed to have been fought were either forgotten or abandoned, except for an occasional convenience of speech. The policy that they can take and keep who are strong enough became dominant again. The result has been what might have been expected—another European War underway in full fury.

It is highly significant that we did not celebrate our entrance into the World War. We celebrate our withdrawal from it. We realize that in its true sense Armistice Day is no longer a celebration, rather it is a solemnization. The debt which we owe to the men to whom this War Memorial is dedicated can never be repaid, unless it come about that the purpose for which they fought can be realized. No better place than this, in the very shadow of the War Memorial could be imagined wherein to solemnize a pledge of peace.

The noble objectives for which America fought and sacrificed has apparently failed. But the ideal is not dead. After the rage and destruction of the present conflict that same ideal, which actuated us, will revive to aid the troubled people of that continent.

While disappointed, let us not be dismayed. Rather let us dedicate ourselves anew to America, its ideals, its institutions, its traditions, and its glorious achievements—thankful for the ocean which separates us from the turmoil and disaster of another European War.

Let us be thankful that our Country is blessed with freedom made possible because men once fought to establish it. Let us, above all, be thankful for the men who braved everything to make certain that American ideals and American institutions should not be discarded. As long as the memory of their deeds remains fresh, as long as their noble example is followed, America is safe.

THE ANNUAL BANQUET OF THE MARYLAND CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

Emerson Hotel, November 18, 1939

Baltimore

UPON acceptance of the invitation to attend this gathering of the largest number of State employees yet held, it occurred to me that it would be fitting to have a straight-from-the-shoulder talk with you regarding the Merit System. I could imagine no topic which would be of greater interest, and concerning which you have a better right to know the attitude of the present administration, than regarding the classified service, affording benefits to its individual members as well as to the public generally.

Before entering into a detailed discussion of various phases of the Merit System let me observe that all of us, from the Governor to the humblest employee, are servants of the people who have a right to expect dutiful and efficient service. The time has long since passed, and fortunately so, when inclusion on the public payroll meant an easy job with irregular hours and an absence of exacting requirements. Through successive stages, public service