

and many of the best of our traditions. How important then, it must be, that we in this, our "Land of the Free," fans anew the fires of Liberty, lit and nurtured into flame by such as those who did the deeds that made this place a shrine.

And today, alas, there are other lights. The sky is red with them—the bonfires of war and destruction. If those terrifying flames serve no other purpose, at least they do bring out in relief the solid structure which we call American Democracy. The flag—is still there! But let us make sure it continues to fly as a guarantee of our rights and of our liberties.

Let's remember that all human beings are apt to take for granted the very things by which they live. Until we are hungry, we never really appreciate the necessity and value of food. Until we are lonely, we seldom give friendship its full value. We are not likely to stop and thank God for the air we breathe, until we hear that children overseas are wearing gas masks.

Food—friendship—air—the things by which men live, and another of these things is human liberty.

Let's not take that for granted either—least of all on this particular anniversary of the Star Spangled Banner. In this country, we have never known the want of freedom. For us, and for the many generations before us, it has been as commonplace as food and friendship and air. We would laugh if someone suggested that any American official would undertake to send to a concentration camp anyone who expressed opposition to his theories. We wouldn't believe it if we heard that every editorial in our daily paper, every broadcast from our radio, had passed through government censorship. No, we're so used to being a free people that we seldom stop to count our blessings. The bursting bombs and glaring rockets in the European sky should should us this,—if nothing else—that the possession of human liberty is not only precious, it is also precarious. The price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

Under the threat and danger of infection, both at home and as a result of wars abroad, it behooves each and every loyal son of his Country to place himself, at this time especially, on guard both in mind and act, to the end that the "Star Spangled Banner" shall continue in triumph to wave and protect each and all of us throughout this, our beloved Land.

There are no guns pounding away at the Star Spangled Banner today, thank Heaven! It still flies proudly in the breeze, a symbol of individual liberty and personal security such as no other country in the whole world, or in the whole of history, has ever produced. But it is today, perhaps, the one remaining symbol of its kind in the world that still radiates its assurance of individual liberty and collective security. As Francis Scott Key gazed upon it reverently, and voiced the patriotic hope, "O Long May it Wave" so today it behooves us to dwell upon its meaning, and to see to it that it will continue to wave, "O'er the Land of the Free."

I like to believe that Francis Scott Key was speaking to and for the American people when he appealed for God's blessing in the final stanza:

"Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just;

And this be our motto, 'In God is our trust'"

As Governor of Maryland, I am proud to say that this State has always contributed her share of great men to the Union. We have given statesmen and soldiers and jurists and scientists; and we are happy to add to these, the name of a poet.