

more than that. It is a war between two diametrically opposed systems of government, two basically different modes of thought. That it is England and France confronting Germany is incidental to the fact that the foes of democracy, after long years of preparation, finally have launched their promised assault upon the system of government that America gave to the world.

Above and beyond the question of who may be victorious, is a problem of far greater significance, and that is, whether democracy or totalitarianism shall be the order of the day in the new world that is now taking shape.

On a day like this, as we gather here to honor the flag of our fathers, we find a changed significance to flags simply as symbols of the countries we have known. For today, in a general sense, there are only two flags—flags of democracy, and the flags of autocracy, an autocracy, that is the same in principle whether it be symbolized by the hammer and sickle, the swastika, or the symbol of any other nation of similar ilk.

But the best way to preserve the flag and all for which it stands is for the people to maintain an active interest in their government. The citizens should more actively participate in the functioning of their respective state governments. The secret of this Nation's success lies in the ability of the people, they would rise again. On the other hand, if the capacity of the people destroy our Capitols, but if we preserve the governmental capacity of our people, they would rise again. On the other hand, if the capacity of the people to govern themselves is lost through failure of use, the Constitution dies and our Capitols become monuments to our failure. We know from experience that nature will not give greater power where the power already possessed is not used. It will not waste its energies. The fish in the Mammoth Caves have no eyes. Tie your arm by your side and neglect its use and it withers. The continuing, active and energetic discharge of governmental duties by private citizens, who in fact are this Government, is not only necessary for the preservation of this Country, but is necessary to preserve the governmental institutions of a free people.

Such is the principle of government for which our flag stands.

Let us be inwardly prepared to give to our flag and all it represents the devotion and the loyalty that will make it impossible for foreign, un-American doctrines to filter in and upset it. At the same time let us prepare ourselves in a material way; let us stand firmly by our duly constituted authorities, and not only support their move for adequate preparedness, but let us demand that the utmost be done to insure once and for all that our great American flag, the flag of true democracy, will never be lowered for an instant to even the most powerful of the forces that have been set up in opposition today.

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## STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

June 10, 1940

Frostburg

**I**T is a particular pleasure to be with you here at this State Teachers College Commencement, because I understand that it has been quite sometime since a Chief Executive of this State has been your guest on such an occasion.