

all the discussions have been sifted down, however, I think there are few within hearing of my voice tonight who will question the fact that the matter claiming first attention in the minds of the people of America today is simply this:

"What is going to happen to Democracy—to America, first and outstanding exponent of Democracy—during these next four years: How best can we here in America assure the preservation of those free institutions which already have been trampled upon in France and Poland, and in all the other conquered European countries? Which Party, in past crises, has shown an ability to appreciate and understand the problems presented, has offered leadership, has taken definite steps based on sound understanding of the Nations needs, to meet changed conditions?"

Shall we be satisfied with promises from an admittedly well-meaning, but just as admittedly inexpert candidate, or are we safer in choosing again *that proven leader* and that party Party whose record of successful achievement guarantees so much more than the mere promises of the opponent? Even tonight the magic of the radio brings to us word of incessant-fighting throughout practically the whole of Europe: at times brings to our ears even the crash of exploding bombs. As we send up a silent prayer of thanksgiving that those crashing bombs are not falling on unprotected American cities, are not killing defenseless American women and children, it is well to realize that there have been incessant threats to our national peace and safety during these past seven and one-half years, but that so skillfully have our affairs been handled in Washington, we have been able to avoid becoming embroiled in all the wars now raging throughout the world.

How long we are going to be so fortunate, no living man can say. Certainly, however, it is wise to expect that those who have kept us out of war for seven and one-half years are the ones best suited to keep us out of war for four years more. In the meantime, the best assurance we can have that we will not become entangled in wars not of our seeking, is to be prepared so thoroughly that even the most militaristic dictator nations would hesitate to affront us seriously.

Such defense preparations now are in full swing—our manpower is being mobilized upon the most effective basis; our airplanes, our battleships, our fighting material of every description are being rushed to completion as fast as geared-up industry can produce them.

Again, isn't it reasonable to expect that the administration that has started these defense preparations, that has called to Washington outstanding leaders of every phase of industry concerned, should be the Party best equipped to push though to successful completion the defense preparations now well underway? Here, too, with even the best intention in the world on the part of the Republican candidate, it is almost certain that a change in administration in Washington, with the promised shake-up in directing personnel, would seriously impair the now well-programmed defense movement.

But international problems were not the only ones claiming the attention of the administration during the past seven and one-half years, nor are its accomplishments in diplomacy, in keeping us out of war, the only achievements which the present Democratic leadership and the American people generally can contemplate with deep satisfaction.

The people of this Country do not have short memories. They know what happened when the Republican Party was in power for 12 years. They rem-