

In this land of liberty, the preservation of our liberty is the chief problem which confronts us today. Few will deny, I think, that now there is a distinct threat to our National and individual liberties from outside—from those forces of totalitarianism which have continually expanded their military ambitions once they had even partially digested the results of their previous conquests.

Because that is the more apparent threat, it is the only one that many people recognize. Liberty, however, faces other dangers from within, and not the least of these is license. Reasoning men can draw a clear line of distinction between liberty and license, but the self-seeking groups intentionally or otherwise demand license while prating patriotically of liberty.

When a nation faces, however, a savage assault by a mighty military machine, perfectly organized, and mechanized as no army ever before has been equipped; if that nation so endangered wants to survive, it must surpass, or as nearly as possible approximate, the military and mechanized strength of the opposing force.

There is no time, no place for endless discussion in such a circumstance, as France knows today to its sorrow. Democracy as we know it here in America is the most wonderful system of government ever devised, but like all other human achievements it has its admitted defects. Possibly the greatest defect of democracy in times of great emergency, when decisions must be made instantly, and when national activities must be coordinated quickly, is that it doesn't function as effectively as in peace time.

Only the fact that other nations have engaged the attention of the dictators of Europe, only that fact may have saved us from even a more direct threat to our national security than we now face. If Hitler and his mighty military machine had elected to attack the United States of America instead of marching into Austria and Czechoslovakia, and if his destructive military and air forces had been directed at our Country, with all the savage cunning evidenced in their various conquests to date, we can doubt very much whether even the most rabid protagonist of American courage and resourcefulness would deny that this Country would have had a very difficult time of it.

We weren't prepared then and, such are the deficiencies of democracy, we are not nearly as well prepared now as we should be, as we had hoped to be, as everyone proclaimed we would be at this stage of our defense program. We are, however, fortunately whipping our defense industry into shape at an exhilarated gait. With the recognition by everyone that we are as a Nation in danger, and with the determination on the part of every American citizen that this threat to our national future will be met, with each succeeding day and month we shall be better equipped to do what we possibly couldn't have done two years ago. This is, to defend this land and those freedoms which our courageous forefathers entrusted to our care.

This is a mighty Country, and Americans are a valiant and resourceful people. As long as we keep in proper perspective the priceless privileges which we almost alone in the world today enjoy; and just as long as we are alert to defend those privileges, America and democracy will survive, and the dignity of man as an individual will be preserved upon the face of the earth.