

For twenty years after the close of the War of 1914-1918, it was customary in some circles to refer to that conflict as *the Great War*. In the light of international developments since 1939, however, that term has fallen increasingly into disuse. There is a growing suspicion throughout the world that before the present armed struggle shall have ended, it will have so dwarfed by comparison all previous conflicts that even the tremendous events of the four years from 1914 to 1918 will constitute, if not a small, at least only a moderately sized war.

Yet I would not suggest that the present international struggle should be called the Great War. Even though it should continue and spread until battles as extensive and desperate as those which have lately taken place between the Germans and the Russians were its common features—even though it should finally engulf all the continents of the world in armed conflict—even though it should persist until all nations on earth were obliged to range themselves on one or the other side—even then I should still maintain that this war could not properly be called *the Great War*.

It should not be called the Great War for the reason that there is another and greater war beside which any struggles of guns and planes, of seventy-ton tanks and motorized columns, of battle cruisers and submarines, of dive-bombers and bayonets, are mere skirmishes for position.

This greatest war, this most crucial of all human conflicts, is the struggle for the control of men's minds. It is a struggle which is always going on, but it becomes more intense and difficult in times of great stress that a democratic people needs most desperately to win this greatest war. For that reason, it appears to me extremely desirable that we who wish to act with purest patriotism in our Country's hour of peril, should try to understand the tactics and the strategy of the never-ceasing war for the control of men's attitudes and ideals.

The issues in this struggle are very complex on the surface, yet deep underneath that surface run two main currents in opposite directions. One is the current which bears men in the direction of surrendering control of their thoughts and their ideals to some other man, a great Chief of some kind, whether he be called *Duce*, *Fuehrer*, or supreme dictator—or to a relatively small group of men with supposed special powers of thought and feeling, whether they be called the leaders of the Party, official mouth pieces of the Emperor, or some other awe-inspiring title.

The other current bears men in the opposite direction of retaining the control they now have over their own thoughts and ideals and of trying to widen, strengthen, and perfect that control.

This is the central battle of the Greatest War, and from it all other battles, including those fought with high explosives and weapons of steel, are derived. For if men surrender the control of their thoughts and their attitudes to a Chief of any kind, they are on the road to a dictatorship or they are already there. If they retain control of their own thoughts and feelings, they are on the road to democracy. This is the basic reason why dictatorships and democracies clash in the international field, and it is also the reason for many clashes between groups representing those two points of view within one Nation.