

will not be taken unawares. We shall be prepared to endure the ordeal with the minimum of losses through injury, or other causes, that thorough preparedness can insure.

This isn't to say that our job here, or anywhere, is complete. Your County Defense organization still needs volunteers, and many of them. And I can only repeat, from the heart, what I have said before, namely, that there never was a greater obligation laid upon the conscience of any American citizen than the duty now upon our people with regard to this vital need of Civilian Defense.

What an unbelievable change three months of war have wrought in the pattern of American life! Try as we did, over the years, and particularly in the months since Belgium and France were first invaded, it simply was not possible for our peace-loving, Democratic people to envision the possibilities of such a war as that in which we are now engaged.

The treachery perpetrated by the Japs at Pearl Harbor, and the brutality and ruthlessness which both our European and Asiatic enemies have shown, simply are beyond the understanding of decent people. The thing we do understand; however, is that we are pitted against opponents to whom decency and respect for accepted international usages mean nothing—an enemy against which there can be only one policy to pursue. That policy is to give them a taste of their own medicine—and to make it a bitter dose!

With relentless pressure, with ever-increasing strength, the tentacles of our Axis enemies tighten their grip. The "pincer movement" is on! Let us not deceive ourselves with half truths, nor drug ourselves with unwarranted optimism. To be free men—or enslaved. To be the hope and champions of World Freedom—or not to be. To be Americans, in the ancient and honorable meaning of that word—or to lose that distinction shortly and possibly forever.

Yes, the "pincer movement" is on! We can feel it. We can feel the clutching fingers as they try to apply the strangle hold to our National existence. Events of the past months—past weeks—even the past few days—have given us additional lessons in the shrinkage of geography. How far away is the Malay Peninsula? How distant in Java? Almost close enough for us to hear the crunch of the iron heel in streets once as peaceful as ours. Don't let us make the mistake of thinking that Australia is "Down Under" the ends of the earth. Melbourne, relatively speaking, is no farther from Tokyo than Washington is from Berlin.

Our great Allied Leaders—President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill—have repeatedly told us that the news is bad and that there is worse to come. We know that they have not painted the picture too black. By every law of probability the year 1942 seems destined to be the time of our meeting here in the United States. We Americans do not ask to have our bitter pills sugar-coated with false information. What's more, able to think for ourselves, we are not foolish enough to fall for propaganda, whether that of misguided friends or of wily foes. A clear look at the world map suggests the grand strategy likely to be attempted before this year is many weeks older.