

Democracy, that determination to preserve their freedom at all costs, that has ever been the outstanding characteristic of Marylanders in any emergency.

For more than 300 years, the people of Maryland have enjoyed personal liberties, privileges and individual freedom such as the citizens of no other country upon the face of the globe have known. Like the remainder of our American people, they have come to accept these privileges and freedoms as inalienable rights. Up to the present time, I doubt if any Marylander has ever seriously entertained the thought that there was danger of losing these freedoms.

Over the past two years, however, there have been mounting instances throughout the world of the spread of a new ideology absolutely opposed to everything that America understands and values. From the bitter experience of other lands, which have been overrun by the forces of militaristic despots, the conviction has been forced upon our people that the good things of life which we have enjoyed are not something peculiar to the American way of life, are not something that must ever be a part of the American pattern. We have been reminded that just as these good things had been won for us through toil and sacrifice, so must they be defended. We have seen how bitter has been the awakening of those countries and those peoples who did not value their freedoms enough to prepare adequately to defend them.

While it has ever been unthinkable that Americans could be forced to relinquish their freedom, and to pay tribute to a conqueror, we must all admit that there is such a danger today. In the face of this threat, Marylanders, alert as they have always been to the implications of any movement against their State or National existence, and resolved to defend to the utmost the heritage of American freedom which has been peculiarly a Maryland heritage, have rallied to defense of Democracy to the last man and woman.

Maryland's sons today are scattered across the seven seas, fighting the battle of Democracy. Some of them already have made the final glorious contribution of their lives, while others, by thousands and tens of thousands, either are on active duty now with our forces in the Southwest Pacific, in Iceland, in England, in the Philippines, or are in training in camps in America preparing to join their fellow-Marylanders whenever the call may come.

In keeping with the Maryland tradition, Maryland boys in numbers far out of proportion to the comparative size of our State, are serving in the Army and Navy, in the Coast Guard and in the Naval Reserves. Only last week it was my pleasure to join with the Naval Recruiting Officer in Baltimore in a radio broadcast in which it was pointed out that Maryland leads the Nation in volunteers for the Naval Service, in proportion to population.

Likewise, it was most interesting to hear from a draft board official in one of our counties that voluntary enlistments in his area had so far exceeded the quota required, that several hundred men were listed on the roll of his Board, ready and waiting to go. Because their quota had been exceeded by enlistments, however, no calls were being made upon them at the present time.

Beyond all this, Maryland, which 300 years ago became the cradle of Democracy for all the world, now once again is showing the way to the other.