

II

THE CHALLENGE TO THE COMMUNITY

WHEN a ship has been trapped in a storm, has been tossed about rather badly in an angry sea, has been driven from its course by hurricane winds, and has run through dark skies with the light of sun and stars rubbed out, the navigator must go to his compass to find out where he is, how far he has been driven from his course, and point his ship back to the port of call. That is the unwritten law of the sea. But before he can retrace his course he must make sure of the instruments by which he sails. The shifting of the cargo may have deflected his compass; the tossing of the ship by wild waves may have damaged his sextant. It is utterly useless to try to retrace his course with a deflected compass or damaged sextant. There is no use proceeding with instruments in which he has no confidence. His first duty, therefore, is to make sure of the instruments of navigation.

I have often thought of that as a parable of modern democracy. Our way of life has been tumbled about rather badly. It has been driven from its course by the hurricane winds of secularism and defeatism. It has been sailing under dark skies with much of the light of faith and hope snuffed out. Now it is time that we find out where we are and how far we have been driven from our course. But before we can do that we must make sure of the instruments by which we sail if democracy is to sail on to its predestined goal. Emily Dickinson has it in another way:

The Answer to Chaos

Will there really be a morning?
 Is there such a thing as day?
 Could I see it from the mountains
 If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water-lilies?
 Has it feathers like a bird?
 Is it brought from famous countries
 Of which I have never heard?

Oh, some scholar! Oh, some sailor!
 Oh, some wise man from the skies!
 Please to tell a little pilgrim
 Where the place called morning lies!

Now the instruments of navigation of democracy are threefold, for democracy rests upon three simple facts: what a man thinks of himself, what a man thinks of others, and what a man thinks of God. I have pointed out that these same three principles are vital and fundamental to the Christian religion. He who is motivated by Christian faith can look within himself and say, "I am a child of God"; he can look out upon the world and say, "We are brothers"; and he can look up to God and say, "Father."

Wickham Steed has written an introduction to Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's book entitled, *The Totalitarian State Against Man*. In that introduction are these magnificent words with which I want to turn from that first consideration: "We know only that in the end the immortal spirit of man will break the fetters which modern tyrants and their dupes seek to rivet upon it, and will once again escape from its gaolers. Meantime the fight against the totalitarian state, with its ideals of enforced 'like-mindedness' among the sons of men, is a (holy) war for the freedom of the human soul. That fight must go on till Kipling's vision comes true."

And so, when the world is asleep, and there seems no hope of her waking
 Out of some long, bad dream that makes her mutter and moan,
 Suddenly all men arise to the noise of fetters breaking,
 And every man smiles at his neighbor, and tells him his soul is his own.

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In my first lecture I tried to say something about the attitudes of totalitarianism, democracy, and Christianity toward the individual. No one can question how sharp is the cleavage, and how deep, which separates democracy and Christianity from the Axis philosophy in the matter of personal worth. In the latter all expressions of the individual are controlled and coerced, indeed it is not even recognized as having worth; while democracy exalts personality and offers it freedom of expression.

In this lecture I would like to point out the significance of this second postulate of the Christian faith which democracy shares with it: its attitude to the community. What, then, is the Christian conception of the community, how does that differ from totalitarianism, and how can it strengthen contemporary democracy?

The Axis philosophy known as totalitarianism is constantly emphasizing the new world it is proposing to build. It has dedicated itself to the supreme task of setting up a new order. It proposes to rub out what has gone before as unworthy and inadequate. A whole new scheme for life and for mankind is to be put into operation. It plans new attitudes to society, new attitudes to family life, new moral values, new concepts of religion, and new attitudes to economics. It makes no attempt to hide the fact that a new way of life is to come to pass. It is a crusade.

There is, however, nothing new in this claim to a new order. Long ago there came One to this earth who also said He would bring to pass a new heaven and a new earth. The Christian religion also makes the claim and guarantees to set up a different scheme of things. It, too, proposes to build a new world—a world without pain, without panic, and without disease. It crusades for an age in which childhood shall not be forgotten, womanhood not neglected, and old age not

abandoned. It works for a day in which man's inhumanity to man shall be eclipsed by the finer philosophy that we are our brother's keeper. It promises a world without hate and hunger; without bitterness and strife; in which men shall live together for the common good; a world in which instruments of torture and war shall be beaten into instruments of agriculture and peace. All this and infinitely more is implied when we pray, "Thy Kingdom come." When totalitarianism announces that for the first time a new order is promised we can answer with the claim that the vision of a new heaven and a new earth was given long centuries ago.

But the striking contrast between totalitarianism and Christianity is found in the methods they employ to set up that new order. When you inquire what is the totalitarian conception of the community, you see at once the revolting aspects of this impossible and intolerant philosophy. It proposes to set up a new world by ruthlessness and revenge, by the weapons of intrigue and intolerance, by cultivating bitterness and distrust. In that philosophy there is room only for one race or one class or one section of society. You hear Hitler say to Rauschning, as quoted in *The Voice of Destruction* (pp. 81, 83): "The world can only be ruled by fear." "Haven't you ever seen a crowd collecting to watch a street brawl? *Brutality is respected*. Brutality and physical strength. The plain man in the street respects nothing but brutal strength and ruthlessness—women, too, for that matter, women and children. The people need wholesome fear." Rauschning states that envy, primitive rage, and the craving for power were the wisdom that Hitler gave his followers along their political path (p. 90). Or this word of a Nazi spokesman: "There will be a *Herren* class. There will be the great mass of the anonymous, the serving collective, the eternally disfranchised, no matter whether they were once mem-

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bers of the old bourgeoisie, the big land-owning class, the working class, or the artisans. Nor will their financial or previous social position be of the slightest importance. These preposterous differences will have been liquidated in a single revolutionary process. But beneath them there will still be the class of subject alien races; we need not hesitate to call them the modern slave class.

“We will introduce in our new ‘living space’ completely new methods. All soil and industrial property of inhabitants of non-German origin will be confiscated without exception and distributed primarily among the worthy members of the party and soldiers who were accorded honors for bravery in this war. Thus, a new aristocracy of German masters (*Herrenvolk*) will be created. This aristocracy will have slaves assigned to it, these slaves to be their property and to consist of landless, non-German nationals.

“Please do not interpret the word ‘slaves’ as a parable or as a rhetorical term; we actually have in mind a modern form of medieval slavery which we must and will introduce because we urgently need it in order to fulfill our great tasks. These slaves will by no means be denied the blessings of illiteracy; higher education will, in future, be reserved only for the German population of Europe.

“Labor is equally doomed. Trade unions and labor legislation are already memories. But, beyond that, men and women are being flung from place to place, uprooted and transplanted like so many beasts of burden to toil wherever their masters direct.” Reports are meagre, but those that reach here carry sinister implications. The noted correspondent, Frederick T. Birchall, draws a gloomy picture. More than fifty thousand Belgian workers have been deported to labor in Germany. Thousands of Poles have been forced to work on fortifications to the east and on farms to

the west of their former homes. Nineteen thousand Danes, their means of livelihood gone, have been driven to take employment in Germany. Uncounted numbers of Czech industrial workers are being deported to Germany and, in addition, some eighty thousand other laborers have been carried across the frontier under the latest labor law—which states that all Czech men between the ages of sixteen and seventy must work where their masters direct them to go. Between two hundred thousand and two hundred and fifty thousand Hollanders, mostly metal workers, have been forced to take jobs in Germany.

The slave countries, from which the Nazis expect to recruit their “great mass of the anonymous, the serving collective, the eternally disfranchised” are to be deprived of the benefits of culture as well. The famous Brussels University has been taken over and placed under the joint administration of an “educator” and a German lieutenant-colonel. Numerous Dutch anti-Fascist professors have been sent to concentration camps. Every vestige of Polish art and literature is being utterly destroyed, just as all the peoples are slated to be destroyed eventually through the fanatical hatred of the Nazis. Every Czech university is now closed and the building of Czech elementary and secondary schools is completely forbidden.

It is essentially intolerant, and imperiously demands “its own, exclusive, and unstinted recognition, as well as the complete transformation of public life in accordance with its views.”

It has simultaneously crushed the ideal of social equality which the disciples of Christ have striven to realize. It declares that the inequality of human beings is a necessary inference from the racial principle.

Hans Hauptman, a prominent philosopher-theologian of

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Naziism has this to say: "The teaching of mercy and love of one's neighbor is foreign to the German race, and the Sermon on the Mount is an ethic for cowards and idiots." How can you build on that? It proposes to make of humanity a crippled horde of slaves. A new elite is to be established round the Fuehrer who is the supreme incorporation and incarnation of the idea of inequality. "Intoxicated in his youth by the fantastic nonsense of Gobineau, Hitler visualizes history and politics as above all a problem of race. For him the Aryans are the noblest stock in the world, the supreme builders of civilization, as the Jews are the arch-destroyers. The blood stream must, therefore, be kept pure from taint in the interest not only of the Aryan peoples, but of humanity as a whole . . . Anti-Semitism is no novelty in Germany, but only with the coming of Hitler has it been exalted into a maxim of state. The training of the people in racial doctrine is entrusted to Rosenberg, the high priest of the Nordic cult, whose spiritual home is Valhalla. For him, as for Nietzsche, Christianity with its gospel of pity, sacrifice, and love, is a slave morality. His ideal is a Germany weaned from the enervating pieties and united in mystical reverence for the race-state. The philosophy is a challenge, not to democracy alone, but to the Christian churches and Christian ethics as well."

Robert MacIver has well written in his *Leviathan and the People* (p. 26): "This dark ruthless lawlessness, this rule of the jungle, is what the dictatorships oppose to the hopes and aspirations that have filled the literature of all the great civilizations of the past, and that came closer to achievement in the period preceding the Great War. 'Mankind is a zoological expression or an empty word' exclaimed Oswald Spengler, one of the advance prophets of Naziism, and the dictators have done all in their power to make it an empty word."

The Christian philosophy maintains that we all live under one roof. This world is our home in which people of all races and religions live together. It is only as the members of this family of earth live in understanding and in good will that you can save this world from becoming a madhouse. When men learn to say to one another, "We are brothers," then hope and progress are possible. Now we have adopted that philosophy in our family relationships. Members of the same family live together. They do not wear the same clothes, they do not eat the same kind of food, they have different tasks to perform, and each has his own kind of pleasure. And yet, they live happily and peacefully under one roof because they have learned to make adjustments and have learned to deny themselves certain seeming rights and privileges for the sake of the group. "Each for all and all for each." That does not work hardship. Neither is it very difficult, because they love one another. They live for the common good.

Not only have we adopted this in family life, but that same conception prevails largely in the community. A city is made up of many citizens. Each has his own work to do; each has his own way of living and dressing with which no one interferes. If misunderstandings arise citizens do not settle their argument with a gun or a stiletto. In order to live in a community people have learned to make adjustments and practice consideration. The sense of community responsibility restrains their self-interest. Rugged individualism is not ragged individualism.

But where our world breaks down is that we have failed to carry this aspect of life which prevails in the family and the community into that larger relationship called humanity. Here you have fifty or sixty independent nations and groups. Each is dependent upon the other. Each needs something of

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what the other possesses. Not one can get along without the other. And yet each nation is demanding what the other has at the point of a gun. Some day the world is going to laugh at that and call it insanity. The hope of a new world rests not on the gangster philosophy of getting all you can with a total disregard of others, but in the establishment of a way of life in which men live together for the common good and each looks with appreciation upon the contribution the other makes to the sum total of well-being.

One of the greatest spirits who ever walked this earth looked out upon the world of his day and said, "I am a debtor to the Jew and to the Greek, to the bond and to the free." He had come to see that each race and nation makes its contribution to the sum total of human happiness. In that direction alone lies sanity and peace. When mankind seriously accepts the fact that we all live under one roof and that this earth is our common home, then a better day will come. Christianity does not separate men from one another by the barbed wire entanglements of racial, economic, social, or political frontiers; rather does it recognize the oneness of the world-family and the responsibility each has toward the other. In other words, Christianity creates a sense of oneness by creating the consciousness of kind. It is natural that a person should care more for those who are in his profession than for those in other professions. It is natural that one should care more for his own family than for those of other families. It is natural that one should care more for his neighbor than for a stranger. It may be of no great concern that some tribe in Central Africa is being decimated by a vague disease, but you will not let your sister die without care. We may not be greatly disturbed because unknown Chinese coolies are dying of hunger, but you surely will not let your next door neighbor starve to death. The reason is

that you feel a sense of oneness with those who are near to you. There is a consciousness of kind. When that conception of life becomes more and more a dominant philosophy there will be hope for the world, and only then will change be improvement. You can't hold the world together by ruthlessness. That is possible only by understanding and approach.

The religion of Jesus regards all human beings as brothers and sisters, and each is called to bear the burden of the other. The modern world has moved far from the Christian philosophy of community and it is paying dearly for it. So much of this world is subscribing to a kind of Darwinian belief in the survival of the fittest. It is so dreadfully blind to the fact that the struggle for existence of which Darwin spoke covers only one-half of human life and often only the lower half, forgetting the second and higher law which compels toleration, understanding, and good will.

If mankind is to set up a new scheme of things it can never be done by the sword, but by a cross; not by power, but by good will. The ruthlessness of contemporary dictators and the Axis philosophy is turning the world into a graveyard of hope, and giving Europe a bath of blood. You can never force people into a unity. You can't coerce good will any more than you can write the Twenty-third Psalm or the Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah with a barge pole. It is true that there are some things that power can do. Power can crush; power can subdue; but power can never redeem mankind. Only love can do that.

Well do I recall that day when a weary, tottering old man came to see me. He was obviously in need of care and shelter. But that did not seem to be his first concern. He told me about his wants when I inquired about them, but I soon discovered they had nothing to do with his visit. Instead, he

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wanted me to go on a very strange errand for him. He had several grown sons who had ceased to be interested in him; they refused bluntly to give him shelter and care. He had used every available means to force and compel them to make provision for him, but they simply would not listen. After he had failed in that respect he tried to gain the cooperation of the courts to compel his sons to care for him in his old age, but something had seemingly gone wrong there. Now he wanted me to use the authority of the church to compel his sons to make provision for him. He was convinced that force should be applied in bringing this about. Some days later I met one of these sons. It was obvious that there was a good deal of bitterness and resentment in his heart toward his father. He told me that when they were all little children the father was a tyrant in the home. He was ruthless in enforcing his authority; he cuffed and punished them fiercely upon the slightest provocation. If any of them earned a few pennies by running errands for neighbors, the father took their earnings away. They were mere children and could do nothing about it. The father was strong and they were weak. But in using power their father had not awakened kindness and good will in the minds of his children. Instead, it made them resentful. Then the years passed, the boys became men and grew strong, while the father became old and weak. Then the bitterness of early childhood expressed itself, and they determined they would assert their power now and cast their father off. The tables had been turned. Power changed nothing; it only changed places. Power cannot hold family life together. You cannot save a home that way. There are some things power can do, but power has its definite limitations. Power alone cannot save a home. That is true of everything in this universe.

So it is of nations. Power really changes nothing. It sim-

ply produces the endless cycle until those at the bottom come again to the top and those at the top are hurled again to the bottom. It does not solve the problem of civilization, but only multiplies that problem. Power of itself cannot bring in a new world order. That is true not only of human power, but also of divine power. Sometimes people will say, "If God has all power why does He not do something about it?" Well, the simple fact is that power alone can never make a new world, not even God's power. It can defeat, it can crush, it can subdue, but it cannot save. Only love can do that. It is this which we must recover.

Now let us frankly admit that the weakness of contemporary democracy lies in the fact that all too often it has lost sight of others. If there is one thing which must be recovered if our way of life is to survive it is this consciousness that we are all brothers living together for the common good. All too often have we conceived of democracy in terms of self-interest. To all intent and purpose the way of life to which we give the name "democracy" has lost the community content. When all is said and done, the average man is too disposed to interpret democracy as demanding one's rights. We go to it saying, "What is there in it for me?" We are forever inquiring of it, "What can I get out of it?" Democracy is so often undiluted and crass self-seeking which has no interest beyond the individual. So often democracy in this country breaks down five miles from the town pump. Well do I recall one day standing in line in a polling precinct. A party leader approached a person who was immediately ahead of me waiting his turn to vote. Although it was quite contrary to law, this political partisan was trying to make a last effort to win a vote. I did not hear all he said, but as he walked away the last thing he said was, "After all, you have to look out for yourself."

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To ever so many, that has become the motivating consideration of democracy. We have exploited the land, draining it dry of its nourishment, and we have made of it a dust bowl. We have exploited the machine until it receives more prominence than man, and the thing which is created receives more consideration than the creator. We have exploited science until it has become an instrument of destruction. We have exploited one another, placing class against class, race against race, group against group. This concept of democracy has left us hopelessly divided. We have fallen apart into bickering groups, each fighting for some personal advantage. It has made our democracy soft and slack. We have been willing to tolerate any kind of social doctrine, economic philosophy, and political ideology so long as it did not interfere with what we wanted to get out of it for ourselves. There has been so little dedication of something outside of ourselves. Instead of sacrificing, we have become selfish; in place of discipline we have become soft; in place of singing, we have become badly frightened.

That was not the conception which our forefathers built into the ideal. Freedom was for them something beyond themselves to which they gave the last full measure of devotion. They did not ask, "What will it bring us?" but rather, "What can we give to it?" They did not interpret it in terms of exploitation, but in terms of responsibility. Whether or not liberty will forever perish from the earth, whether our American way of life will survive, will largely depend upon whether there are enough left who care to dedicate themselves to that finer concept of democracy which over-rides all self-seeking. Whether there is time enough for that, who knows? I recall one day in the midlands of England in a little burying ground by a village church seeing an hour glass upon a stone pedestal. It had this inscription, "Traveler, it

is later than you think." That is grimly true of our way of life.

It is this conception of life which answers the chaos of today and provides the only adequate solution to every pain, every heartache, every disillusionment, every dilemma, socially, politically, economically, and internationally. The ultimate hope of the world rests in the way of linked hands, of men who live with good will. More and more that fundamental conviction must take hold of our American democracy if it is to survive, indeed, if it is to be worth surviving. I, for one, am not greatly disturbed about the future of democracy if we can really make it work among us. I believe enough in the innate good judgment and inherent good sense of mankind so that if we can put into practice what we mean by our way of life, democracy will not perish from the earth. Let us say it frankly that in spite of all the hazards the danger to our democracy is not without, but within. The supreme task for us is to make it real. We must make democracy more effective by deepening the conscience toward the community. If the way of life in which we believe were to function fully and completely there would be no ignorance and illiteracy; there would be no disease and hunger; slums, sweat shops, and ghettos would be unknown; unemployment would not exist, and the disparity of standards of life between those at the top and those at the bottom would forever pass away. The trouble with us is that the dream of the reality is greater than the reality of the dream.

We have talked ourselves red in the face about democracy. But what has come of it? We have done so little about it. We have kept it in the realm of romance and speculation. We have spent so much time debating it that we have had no time left to demonstrate it. We have dealt with it as a juggler deals with ivory balls—we keep it floating in the air.

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Democracy is not only liberty, but fraternity also. The galling inequalities, the terrifying anti-social practices, have made our democracy a laughing-stock in the world. The greatest contribution we can make and must make if our way of life is to survive is to practice what we preach and preach what we practice. It would be a good thing if we would read again soberly the report of the Brookings Institution of ten years ago: "Thus it appears that one per cent of the families at the top receive practically as much as 42 per cent of the families at the bottom." In my city a few years ago one-fourth of the people lived in part or in whole upon one form or other of federal, state, or city relief, and that out of a population of seven and one-half millions. We seem to have built our order upon human suffering rather than upon human sympathy; upon greed rather than good will. A few years ago the ill-fated American gunboat "Panay" was riding at anchor in the Yangtse River in China when a Japanese bombing plane let loose on it a barrage of explosive bombs. The whole nation was shocked and enraged, and rightly so. But when the fragments of those bombs were examined it was discovered they had been made in Wilmington, Delaware. So it is possible for democracy to permit itself to be destroyed by its own greed. To personal initiative there must be added social responsibility if democratic people are to fulfill their mission.

Dr. Santayana, that distinguished New England savant, addressing a group of students in a New England university, said, "If it were given to me to look into the heart of a man and find there no good will, I would say, 'you are not an American.'" Whether or not that has always been true, I do not propose to debate here, but I do know that unless that actually comes to pass we can never hope to maintain a government of the people, by the people, and

for the people. The way to a new world is not by Corsica, but by Galilee.

May I make two concluding observations about this Christian concept of the community or consciousness of kind: first, I would like to say that it is exceedingly practical. It is workable in the everyday world in which we live. It is possible to integrate it into our world processes. A great deal is being said these days about brotherhood. Ever so many books have been written on that subject. Lectures on that theme are about as common as cranberries on Cape Cod bog land. One is almost surfeited with the theme. One day I went to the New Testament to find what Jesus of Nazareth said about that word. I discovered that He said nothing about it. He never once used the word. As a matter of cold fact, the word brotherhood is not found anywhere in the New Testament. That seems strange, but it is the truth. Never once did that word fall from His lips. He had absolutely nothing to say about brotherhood. But He had a great deal to say about being brothers, and that is different. He did not invite men to accept an intellectual proposition, but, rather, He invited men to enter into an experience.

The second observation is this: it is not only practical, but it is unchangeable. It is as true today as when the words fell from His lips on the hill back of His home. The Christian religion rests upon that conviction, and it has never abandoned nor changed its philosophy. It is true for this generation and for every generation. It is for this world and for every other world. Therein, I think, lies a fundamental difference between the Christian philosophy and the ideologies which are so much to the fore today. I have been reading recently the political pronouncements of the dictators of the modern world. I have read what they had to say about their principles and platforms. In that reading I have made a

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sobering discovery. They are forever changing their principles. There was a time when *Mein Kampf* was the gospel of new Germany. Every Nazi disciple was compelled to read it. It had to be sold in all the bookshops of Germany. I know because I have seen them there. It was to be the basis for the so-called new order. Strangely enough, that book has been withdrawn from circulation now. It is no longer on sale in the bookshops of Germany. It is no longer compulsory reading for the members of the Nazi party. It is no longer the Bible of the new era.

And why, you ask? Because in that book Hitler swore eternal hatred and bitterness toward Russia. It was the eternal foe of the New Reich. But now, after fifteen years, they have become political bed fellows. What was true fifteen years ago is a lie today. It has changed its political philosophy. The political platform of 1926 has already become outmoded in 1941. That is true not only of Naziism, but that is also true of communism. Fifteen years ago the Soviet regime appealed to mankind to embrace its political philosophy because it would forever end war and bring in a golden era of peace. It was dedicated to that fundamental proposition. Its one supreme goal was peace on earth. But after a short fifteen years, that, too, has been cast aside and changed. One year ago in January, the snows of Finland became drenched with the crimson blood of the brave, good men whose only sin was that they were in the way. The Soviet Government abandoned its principle of peace and in its place put the philosophy of power. You see, what was true fifteen years ago is a lie today. How can you build a world order upon a philosophy which is so unstable as to be altered every few years? How can you possibly erect a permanent civilization by a philosophy which is discredited by its founders every fifteen years? But the Christian philos-

ophy stands unchanged through the centuries and after two thousand years is still the inspiration of mankind and the bulwark of democracy.

Some days ago I met again at luncheon Cecil Roberts, the distinguished British novelist, who told me a moving story. He was leaving his country home to come to America. Motoring along the winding road near London he saw by the roadside a fresh-dug grave which had over it a simple stone. It seemed rather odd to have such a grave by a country roadside, so he stopped his car and began to inquire why it was there. Directly across the road from the grave there stood a little thatched cottage to which he went. There lived in it a very old lady who told him that her pet marmoset had been killed. She requested of the authorities permission to bury her pet where it had fallen. Consent was given and that explained this fresh grave along the roadside. As Cecil Roberts walked to it he saw upon the white stone inscribed the simple word, "Peter." Then he discovered underneath that word this legend: "There is not enough darkness in all the world to put out the light of one small candle." That candle is democracy and that flame is good will.

Trapped in a storm, driven from its course, sailing under a dark sky, democracy will yet ride out the storm, retrace its course, and make its predestined way to the haven of hope for mankind. The world is not done with this way of life, but the world is done without it. Democracy can stand before this generation unashamed and unafraid, not simply because of the dignity and worth it gives to the individual, but because it looks without, saying, "We are brothers."