



# "WHAT CAN I DO?"

By Dorothy Thompson

FOR many weeks past I have been receiving letters—hundreds and hundreds of letters, all asking the same question: What can I do? The authors say, "We feel that we are in a crisis; we know that we are arming with immense rapidity, while, at the same time, we are giving all possible aid to Britain in her effort to stem the tide of tyranny, despotism and chaos. But meanwhile I feel so idle; I feel that I haven't the right just to devote myself to the usual tasks. I want to *do* something for my country and for democracy. What can I *do*?"

Sometimes I think one trouble with our society is that we think too much in terms of "doing" and not enough in terms of "being." Every living human being creates around himself or herself an atmosphere. It transmits itself to one's husband or wife or children, to the friends of one's inner circle, to business contacts and club contacts. The sum of that atmosphere, created by millions of Americans, is what is known as "morale." Without "doing" anything very active, you can help build up that morale, or tear it down, by your day-to-day behavior, in all your relationships. Remember the old adage, "They also serve who only stand and wait." Whether they serve or not depends on the poise and temper with which they stand and wait. The Battle of Britain, for instance, is being won not only by the glorious R. A. F., of whom Churchill said, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few"; it is being won not only by the regular army, the home defense corps, the innumerable workers in the factories, and the women and girls who culist in the fire brigades. It is being won by hundreds of thousands who do none of these things, but just calmly hold confidence in Britain and Britain's leadership, and never, for an instant, lose faith.

Every American who never for an instant loses faith in the American ideals of freedom and democracy and testifies to that faith whenever the opportunity offers, and in however modest a way, is doing something for America in this hour.

**We are All Americans.** To transform a peace economy into an economy geared to total defense means all sorts of new problems and new adjustments, and new taxes. Think to yourself: The men who are planning our defense and making all these arrangements are Americans. Maybe they are Democrats and I'm a Republican. But they are all Americans, and they believe, basically, exactly the things I believe. They are doing their level best to save America and make a stronger, greater, better America. The man at the head, our President, was elected by a majority of us. If Mr. Willkie, who did his best to defeat him, can give him *his* unswerving loyalty, I can. I want him to be the greatest President America ever had, because if he is not, my family and my country will suffer. Therefore, I shall listen to no criticism of him *made in malice*. I shall lend an intelligent ear only to constructive criticism. I shall not listen to personal attacks or silly rumors.

If my taxes are higher, I shall do everything to readjust my standard of living to that fact, and I shall not complain. I shall remember that, in comparison with people of my class—my work,

my profession, my trade—anywhere else in the world, I am rich.

I know that the enemies of this Republic and this Democracy are doing their best to stir up unrest and dissension among us. I know that they are stirring up race hatred. I shall close my ears to this sort of talk, and I shall denounce it when I hear it. If someone urges me, by a pamphlet or a speech, to regard all Jews as my enemies, I shall remember that stirring up hatred against Jews is a Hitler tactic, and I shall ask myself whether the Jews, or any Jew, has ever harmed me or my family. I shall remember that freedom and democracy teach me to live and let live.

I shall look about me, in my own community, and see whether these new times have created any new problems that perhaps I, and the people associated with me, for instance in a club or a chamber of commerce, can help to solve.

**New Community Problems.** Perhaps a new factory has come to my town, or perhaps an old one has suddenly expanded, and is drawing workers from distant parts. Upon the skill and devotion of these workers as much depends as upon our armed forces.

Have they got comfortable places to live? Could we find furnished rooms for them, at a reasonable price, that doesn't profiteer? Are there, perhaps, some empty mansions, long on the market, that we could turn into comfortable, homelike boarding houses for them? Could our woman's club, perhaps, do something like that? Would they like to join our church? And what does our church have to offer them, in the way of companionship and society?

How about all this talk about fifth columnists? Hadn't I better leave most of the investigation of this sort of thing to the F. B. I.? If someone comes and whispers to me that this or that German family is probably a secret "Bund" member, how about thinking about that family, and asking myself whether I really and honestly believe it? Wendell Willkie is of pure German ancestry, isn't he? And he wants freedom and democracy to win out in this struggle. Maybe that German family does too. Do I want to lend myself to a wholesale campaign of persecution against honest, decent individuals? Couldn't we perhaps get farther if we brought our German friends into a program for an American peace, "with liberty and justice for all"?

If I want to help my country in this hour, I must stop being afraid. Stop being afraid of war, stop being afraid of taxes, stop being afraid of some future depression, stop being afraid of the President or of the Republicans . . . in short, stop being afraid.

The human race has gone through desperate times before, and has survived. It will survive these desperate times too. And the people who survive them best are those who are most cheerful, most confident, who know what they believe in and stick to it, and who are least afraid.

Every single individual, however modest or limited his influence, can contribute to that virtue and that behavior which mean survival: the survival of the society, of the nation, and of the ideas for which the nation stands. The way one *is* is just as important as what one *does*.

# DEFENSE AND MORALE

By Dorothy Thompson

NOW that we are all out for a big defense program, have voted an enormous budget and started conscription; now that some people—myself among them—are talking to hallfuls of other people about our dangers and our duties, one may pause to ask what the first essential of defense is. I think the answer has been given in Europe, but I am not sure that we yet know what it is, blinded as we are likely to be by relative statistics regarding the number of airplanes, divisions, tanks and guns.

Airplanes and tanks are all very well. As the world has come to be, we have to have them. Still, Czechoslovakia had them and handed them over to her enemy. Why? Because her spirit was broken when her allies deserted her. France voted the money and knew the danger, but didn't even produce the planes or the pilots in anything like sufficient numbers. Why? Because the French mind had lost its integrity. People were full of doubts—one side doubtful whether the other really meant business, the other doubtful whether the business might not cost too much; a doubt as to who was really the enemy—Hitler, or capitalists, or Socialists, or Communists.

England muddled along toward ruin, until disaster, overwhelming disaster, produced in England exactly the opposite effect from what it produced in France, produced an effect that neither world power, world prestige nor national glory was able previously to call forth: the full, complete realization that there is something greater than oneself, greater than one's wealth, greater than one's nation—something, whatever it is, that gives meaning to life and meaning to the nation, and fortitude to suffering and a peace in one's own soul so great that one can calmly accept death. Then came that resurgence of spirit that translated itself immediately into action—into individual action and into communal action. Then Britain behaved "as one person," and that "one person" took on a face and a demeanor, displayed, as all faces and demeanors do, a soul, and behaved in a manner to excite the admiration of the world.

AS I WRITE these lines I cannot possibly guess what events may transpire before they are printed. I cannot possibly guess whether or not Great Britain will be able to hold out through this winter. But this much I know: that between the ghastly collapse of Norway, the tragic retreat from Dunkirk and the day in September when I write these lines, something happened to Britain; and that what happened to Britain was all the difference between ignominy and heroism, between collapse and greatness. Of this much I am sure: that Britain has made immortal human history, whatever the outcome of the war.

In the late summer, and in response to a broadcast which I made to England, I received a series of letters which were all written by poets. The writers did not know that they were poets. They identified themselves as a gardener's wife, a "black-coated" clerk (the English say "black-coated" where we say "white collar"), a Canadian sapper, a lady in a bombarded coastal town, a government employee, an aviator—to take a few at random. But—since poetry is only the most

perfect and complete expression of something completely realized, in the mind, in the emotions, in the soul—the letters were pure poetry, and even from obviously uneducated persons found perfect expression.



It was not flamboyant expression. Not one of them said a word about "freedom" or "democracy" or "patriotism." They talked of the lambs in the fields, of the great trees and the quiet rivers; of the little son, sitting with his parents in the sitting room; of the cabbage and the cosmos; of "Winnie"—who was Winston Churchill; of America, and how wonderful it was that we received the children of England with affection; of the strange, beautiful summer that went on in spite of bombs; of Shakespeare and Housman. They remembered that Elizabeth had been here, and stood on this cliff, and watched the Armada. They knew that nothing lovely ever really perishes, and that a thing of beauty is a joy forever. They expressed the absolute certainty of a great world peace. They spoke of Hitler as though he were some vast impersonal evil which they, with their bodies, were destined to oppose. They spoke of irrational and unprovable things, and of real, close and intimate things—of what they loved. And they spoke out of the very heart of faith.

THE writers of these letters had passed into another dimension than the one in which we live our pedestrian lives. They had found out something. I cannot put into words what they did not put into words, but only revealed *through* words. But all that they wrote seemed to say: "Life is good; England is good; great have been our faults and manifold our sins, but in the very heart of us, Britain is truly great. Sometimes we doubted it, but now we know it. And because we know that Britain is very dear, and very great, we know that man is very dear and very great. It was worth everything to find this out."

And since the belief that man is great is the very basis of democracy, and the only justification for human freedom, one needed no longer to speak of "democracy" or "freedom." One was living and dying for the essence, not the word; for the content, not the form.

The morale of a democracy, the only form of society which is based on a transcendental faith in humanity, must arise out of that faith—out of a passionate love for all the things that man at his best has apprehended and expressed, whether in the fields he has tilled, the gardens he has planted, the cities he has built, the words he has uttered or the songs he has sung. It must arise out of the passionate conviction that humanity will one day till wider fields, plant better gardens, build lovelier cities, utter greater words, sing nobler songs. When people feel these things, though democracy is threatened by all the hosts of hell, it will defend itself. And if it falls in one place, it will rise again in another.

DECEMBER, 1940

# On The Record

By Dorothy Thompson

## "This Way Of Life"

THERE WAS a curious juxtaposition of headlines in the Sunday Herald Tribune. Right across the page at the top was the banner: "Willkie says this way of life will pass if he loses." Under it: "Japan says she will help make over the entire world."

"This way of life" is passing with extreme rapidity all over the world, and some ingredients of our way of life are certain to pass, peace or war, or whoever wins or whatever the outcome. Even if the war had never occurred, "this way of life" would have been profoundly modified. Indeed, the war is part of the process of modifying it, and there is no one who can imagine any means of survival that does not imply modification. Certainly Mr. Willkie cannot for he says that democracy, to survive, must be dynamic, not static, and he supports conscription in peace-time, which, in itself, means a drastic break with our traditional way of life.

The great internal problem in this country and all countries is, indeed, to find out just what in our way of life we want to preserve, come hell and high water, and what we are willing to change.

There is a tendency among the more prosperous native-born, middle-class groups to identify the American way of life with the particular system of private enterprise, big business leadership, mass consumption of highly advertised products, monopolistic merger at the top and ruthless competition elsewhere which certainly dominated American life from the beginning of the great industrial expansion after the Civil War until the great crash in 1929.

**BUT THIS WAY**, and the values deriving from it, never had unchallenged sway. Rural New England looked back to many forms of cooperative endeavor; all the Utopian dreams and Utopian experiments in which this country has been inventive, from the Oneida Community to the Mormons, had quite different customs and ideals; this way of life has been challenged and criticized for two generations both by the radicals and by the real conservatives, and most of all—most consistently and unanimously—it has been challenged, and without exception, by American poets and philosophers.

So, what is the American way of life?

Actually, in surveying the past and contemplating the present, we observe that the American way has meant very different things in different periods of history, and very different things among different sections of the population at the same time.

The American way is not the same for a Negro sharecropper on an Alabama plantation and for a Vermont farmer. The latter lives in an economy which grew up as the successor to chattel slavery in a defeated and impoverished section of the country, and which we are only beginning to regard as a national problem. The latter pursues a way of life according to an almost unbroken tradition of over a hundred years.

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entire world." It is, we read, to be divided "into spheres of influence." The process of so dividing it threatens freedom and equality throughout the world. And only the limited imagination can believe that if the basic tenets of the American faith perish elsewhere in the world they will live in undiminished vitality here.

LONG AGO, William Graham Sumner pointed out that the success of a domestic tendency or policy depends upon the worldwide constellation in regard to it.

This idea of "spheres of influence" is wholly arbitrary. One can find its parallel in our business world, in the form of monopolies and agreements (among them), but nowhere in our political tradition, not even in the Monroe Doctrine.

Our viewpoint, in harmony with our faith in freedom and equality, has been that nations of people have the right to their own soil and the shaping of their own political destinies, and that the relations between them should be governed by law on the basis of equality, whether they are small or large. Thus we treat Holland or Switzerland as an equal with Germany, although the latter is immeasurably stronger than the former; nor have we ever granted the right of any nation to treat us as unequal in political, economic or intellectual intercourse with any other nation on earth.

THE MONROE DOCTRINE has been variously interpreted at various times, but even in our most imperialistic moments it has never been interpreted as our right by reason of superior numbers, wealth and force to exercise an exclusive "sphere of influence" in South America or Canada.

We have traded and enjoyed cultural and political relations with our neighbors on the same terms as everyone else, establishing as a policy only the freedom and independence from foreign control of all the American States.

THAT IS A VERY DIFFERENT thing—it is the opposite thing from dividing the world into hegemonies: Germany, and her vassal Italy supreme in Europe; Japan supreme in Asia, and we—if we are able to drive a shrewd deal with the Germans—supreme in the Western Hemisphere. We do not wish supremacy, even if we were granted it, but freedom, equality and cooperation not only in the Western Hemisphere but throughout the globe.

Thus, on a world scale, the Fascist states look forward to a few interlocking monopolies, and we, if we follow our faith, must look forward to a world-wide cooperative commonwealth.

But the world outside and the world inside are intimately related. The concepts and values cultivated by monopolistic big business lead logically to the Nazi form of world order. The American dream rejects it with the spontaneity with which a healthy organism vomits poison.

# Fair Enough

By Westbrook Pegler

## The De Luxe Dole

I WISH it were possible to hold a super-colossal investigation of the whole New Deal from March 4, 1933, down to the present hour, similar to Ferd Pecora's open-air grand jury performance on the gyp bankers and promoters back there when most of us were, in a political way of speaking, very young. It is my belief that such a probe or quiz, as we would call it in the papers, would reveal such a system of larceny, white graft and fraud as the world has never known, operated in the name of democracy, and that the late Sobbing Sam Insull would measure up as nothing more than a bush league confidence man.

My first misgivings as to the purity of the New Deal occurred way back when the dew was wet on the rose when I went around to the old Postoffice in Washington and discovered our old friend Wild Will Lyons stowed away in an office of his own, with his name on the door under the title of Special Assistant to the Postmaster General. Old Will had been a traveling drummer for years and years, selling two-pants suits with pinch-back coats to the cowboys and beet fields hands out West.

HE WAS WHAT we called a character around the fight business, often to be found in Billy La Hiff's tavern, where the mob hung out after hours on fight nights at the Garden. Around Washington there had been some talk that Jim Farley was going to drop him into a job of some kind, but I thought that was just talk, and then, all of a sudden, sure enough, there was our Will with a private office in Washington, keeping the scrapbooks for Jim—just pasting up clippings.

I never did discover what his salary was and heard it estimated or guessed variously between \$4,000 and \$6,000 a year, but I said to myself, "Hell's Fire! There goes a lot of people's income taxes just to gratify Jim's generous impulse."

There are thousands, probably hundreds of thousands, of poor citizen stiffs around the country who have to sit down every year and fill in a lot of blanks and send a few little bucks to the Internal Revenue to pay the salaries of such appointees. Then, when they have forgotten all about it, around comes some fig cop with a briefcase and goes over the whole mess, nickel by nickel, and winds up saying he can't allow the deduction for the bum debt which has been written off and will have to stick the taxpayer \$8.26 more, plus interest at 6 per cent.

WELL, Will Lyons was only one example, and a minor one at that, of the generosity of the bleeding hearts of the New Deal with money entrusted to them to bail the country out of hock. Old Theodore Bilbo, an eccentric character from Mississippi, turned up in another department, also pasting clippings in scrapbooks, at \$6,000 a year because they wanted to pacify him and get him off Pat Harrison's neck.

BUT THIS WAY, and the values deriving from it, never had unchallenged sway. Rural New England looked back to many forms of cooperative endeavor; all the Utopian dreams and Utopian experiments in which this country has been inventive, from the Oneida Community to the Mormons, had quite different customs and ideals; this way of life has been challenged and criticized for two generations both by the radicals and by the real conservatives, and most of all—most consistently and unanimously—it has been challenged, and without exception, by American poets and philosophers.

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THE WAY OF LIFE of an industrial worker on an assembly belt has little relation to the way of life by his ancestors, who carried their own tools. The way of life of Long Island society is not the same as the way of life of a Manhattan garment worker. The way of life among first or second generation immigrants in great cities and huge industrial centers is not the same as the way of small-town Americans who are members of the D. A. R.

One can discern a thread that runs through everything—through progress, regression and constant change, in unbroken continuity—the desire of this people for greater freedom and equality; for more real freedom in terms of education and human dignity and for equality geared upward, not downward; the conviction that this end is to be achieved through political liberty and an undaunted idealism and faith that it can be won.

In times of general prosperity the faith is likely to languish. But in danger it revives, as the most wholesome sign of the basic oneness of this so divergent people. In those times of stress and danger the leadership that knows how to play on this one unbroken string is invincible. That string produces a familiar and trusted music. For it is part of our destiny that we are a Nation of idealists.

Now, this Nation is in danger from without because—as the second headline indicates—there is a plan abroad "to make over the

in South America or Canada.

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And from that time on they just dropped pretense and yelled "Come and Get It!" and did those free-loaders come a-running! Everywhere you turned you ran into somebody you used to know, most of them either dried out drunks, simmering alcoholics or embittered flops with no excuse at all for failure except their own incompetence and inability to get along, holding jobs in 'the Guv'ment and drawing down people's taxes.

THIS WAS the de luxe dole, and as the Administration spread the graft increased, and mystery was made of the multiplying departments and subdepartments after the manner of the swindling financiers of the old regime with their pyramids of holding companies.

The graft was spread out over the country, too, and railroad men long ago got used to the Chinese tickets or script on which swarms of busy little fuss-budgets rattle around the country, always on the cushions and always on business of great public importance, at the expense of the unknown and forgotten man—that reactionary, copper-headed tory who pays taxes. This system has become so wide and fat now that anyone who questions it is an economic royalist and sure to get a kicking around from his local collector of internal revenue, who is a New Deal politician himself, for speaking of it.

The arrogance of them is something suitable for framing, too. They are now "the Guv'ment." "Trying to make democracy work" for the masses against the greedy resistance of the pernicious reactionary, and if you add them up their pay will equal. I am confident, all the stealings of all the crooked bankers up to the time when the roof fell in.

Certainly, the system is no more honest than that of the bankers, and nobody in Washington attempts to justify it on moral grounds. They just say it is politics, and that is supposed to explain all. It does, too.

# A Nation United

By Dorothy Thompson

## Thoughts During This Struggle

THE COLUMN that appeared here last Monday on "Thoughts After the Fall of Paris" has had such a remarkable response that now I know that I did not really write it, but picked it out of the air.

In deeply troubled times, when the nerves become strained with mental anguish, there comes to people that integration of thought and emotion out of which grows the kind of conviction which is really an act of faith: "The substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things unseen."

In times of great crisis individuals either fly to pieces, or all the pieces in them fly together, and what is true of individuals is true of peoples, of nations. When an individual fails to react to danger by that spontaneous mental and physical coordination that alone will save him, he is suffering from nervous breakdown. The same is true of nations. And the faith that is in my heart arises from seeing that, although Washington is truly suffering from nervous breakdown all along the line at this moment, the American people are not. Watching with horror-stricken eyes the apocalyptic spectacle of the collapse of a world made of the stuff of dreams and vanished with a sleep, they are pushing through the chaos to clarity, to realism, reason and truth.

EVERY ONE of us is asking himself today what he really cares for and what he really believes. It has become a necessity of our lives, as real and necessary as bread. In that process of self-criticism, that stripping for action, it is amazing how much one throws away in order to lighten the pack one carries.

For what do I really care, one asks oneself. What is essential to my happiness? Immediately one rids oneself of a great load of material things. Pleasant things, even lovely things, but not things for which one really cares. Do I care about this large apartment, that sweet house in the country? No. I need a room of my own, where I can be quiet, and think and work. I need a room for my child.

I do not need any other shelter whatsoever. I need a certain amount of caloric content of food each day, and I need no other food whatsoever. I need sufficient clothes and changes of them to keep clean, and I would like them to make me look as nice as possible, because that helps one's courage, but I need no other clothes whatsoever.

That house in the country. Yes. I love it, because I planned it—took the old structure, ripped out this wall, planned that chimney there and that window there—dug in the garden, planted the irises—it is part of myself, and I love it. But for what was I making it? For my family and my friends. But who are my family and my friends? Everyone today who suffers what I suffer, and wants what I want, and needs what I need. I think of the hundreds of thousands of orphaned children in France and Belgium; tomorrow in England. Democracy's children. I have rooms for them, and food for them, and I want to reach them.

No, I do not want the state to take over my house. That is what the Communists would do. They would make it into an institution. It is a home. The state cannot make it into a home. They do not understand my house. But if

cause that is destructive of all order. I am willing to share the results of my work with all who work. But I am not willing to give it to the parasitically lazy. For I do not ask that I myself shall live without working. And since I know that work is a self-creating process I am jealous of it for all men and women.

WHAT IS IT that I believe? I believe what I know. All the rest is speculation, fascinating, protean, excellent mental exercise, but not knowledge. It becomes wisdom only when it is recognized and validated by that conscious and unconscious experience of life which is reality.

I have read a library full of books in my life, and some of the most brilliant and seductive have been the most nonsensical. Who does not know that exquisite pleasure, however, that springs from the printed page when one reads a word that opens a blind in the windows of one's mind? One says, "that is true." One knows it instantly—it is the key for which one has been looking—it brings all other thoughts into shape, it adds to a harmony, it helps create the mind. It calls unconscious observations into the consciousness. It is food and drink to the spirit.

WHAT DO I KNOW about human societies, from all the experience of history and reality? I know that they cannot be based on hate. That remark is of an extreme banality, but some of our brightest intellectuals do not recognize it, perhaps because it is banal. (Many banal things are so.) That is why the Communist revolution is the most ghastly failure in history. It has eaten away the creative power of a great slumbering race, and it will disappear ignominiously from history, brought down by the weapons of war, conspiracy, division and treason which it forged itself.

That is why I know that the Nazi system will fail, even if Hitler conquers the whole earth. It is based upon hate, upon an arrogant assumption of unreal superiority, and everything it does in the long run will prove to be false. It is an attempt at worldwide political and economic monopoly, and it is as true now as it ever was that "all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Just now it is the greatest success story in history; but do not tie to it; it will go down in one way or another: Either from external pressure or from internal corruption. Germans with light in their minds and reality in their hearts know it. Why did they speak to me in Europe when I met some of them, here and there, wringing their hands and crying, "We are going to win this war!" And agony was on their faces. Not on everyone's face. No. But on the faces of those whose wisdom is deepest.

I do not know when this will happen—whether in my lifetime—but it will happen. I wait with fascinated eyes for the peace terms offered to France. If they contain a ray of noble magnanimity, I shall be somewhat shaken. I shall think "they are being sly, and it will take longer." But if they divide France and plunder her liberties utterly, then I shall know that the day of reckoning is not so far off. For there is a natural law, and it never fails.

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That is why I know that the Nazi system will fail, even if Hitler conquers the whole earth. It is based upon hate, upon an arrogant assumption of unreal superiority, and everything it does in the long run will prove to be false. It is an attempt at worldwide political and economic monopoly, and it is as true now as it ever was that "all power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Just now it is the greatest success story in history; but do not tie to it; it will go down in one way or another: Either from external pressure or from internal corruption. Germans with light in their minds and reality in their hearts know it. Why did they speak to me in Europe when I met some of them, here and there, wringing their hands and crying, "We are going to win this war!" And agony was on their faces. Not on everyone's face. No. But on the faces of those whose wisdom is deepest.

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But democracy, noblest dream of man, what crimes have we committed in your name, that you suffer now such bloody agonies? When did you degenerate on the political side into a filthy vote-buying machine? When did you degenerate on the economic side to a money-worshipping stagnation? When did labor bosses become racketeers instead of democratic leaders of strong and prideful guilds? When did society become a perpetual war instead of a family in which each member performs his function under an authority that lives by the respect it commands and not by naked force or votes manipulated or seduced? When did you forget "that hospitality that forever indicates heroes?"

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## LESSONS FROM FRANCE

By Dorothy Thompson

So there stands France today--France, the birthplace of democracy; France, home of the sweetest and most humane of civilizations--her face smeared with blood, her hands empty of weapons, with the black hooked cross flying over the city of light.

People are responsible for this. So thinks the common man in France. The last spurt of energy, the last gasp of fury is directed inward, not outward. Hatred burns in the wounded and defeated heart. Somebody is to blame for this! Find the culprits!

The culprits, they think, are everywhere. The industrialist grinds his teeth and remembers the French New Deal. While Germany was working her factories morning, noon and night, shift after shift, every worker catalogued, every worker driven, 30 per cent of the total energies of the nation--energy units, not money units--working every moment, every year, for arms, arms, arms, the French trade unions were demanding shorter days, slower work, higher pay, a "more abundant life." Where is the abundant life now? Where is any life?

Tomorrow they will work for Germany, under the German rules.

###

The workers' eyes blaze with fury. Didn't they promise us appeasement? All those people who had investments in Germany, who were in cartels with Germany? Weren't they kicking about taxes, trying to protect their money with one hand and France with the other? They made the diplomacy that got us into this. They declared we were "neutral" in Spain--and now the Spanish and the Germans have ganged up on us. They were so scared of the Reds that they made us break the Russian-Soviet pact. They gave the Czech guns away--to the Germans to be used against us.

Our Allies let us down, they all scream together: Why didn't Britain

have more divisions? Why wouldn't she introduce conscription? How about a Government that was kissing Hitler up to the last minute. . . Wasn't that the British government? How about our politicians? Maneuvering among themselves as to which party and which individual would come out on top, right down to the last tragic minute.

And so thousands of them begin to say: "In the world in which we live the Nazis have proved that they are fit for survival. All we have said against the Nazis and thought was just words and thoughts."

Yes, this is happening in France, where hatred, exhausted outward, turns inward.

###

The lesson to be learned from this disaster is that defense begins internally and not with guns. It begins with unity. But unity must be mobilized around something concrete. It cannot be created by sermonizing about its virtues. People unite for a common purpose and for a common activity. You cannot, for instance, unite for a common grab except a common grab of some outsider's property. A common grab within is a contradiction in terms.

A defense program must be for defense of a policy and an objective. Otherwise the guns we forge may be used one of these days for purposes we who build them never dreamed. We speak of "defending the Western Hemisphere." But defending what Western Hemisphere? A political and economic policy, a philosophy of politics, must be created, in order that one may know what one is defending.

As things are now in the Western Hemisphere, it will be as difficult to defend it as it was for France and Britain to defend the separate states of Poland, Rumania, Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium. Does anything really tie North and South America together except fear? That is a very weak foundation on which to build--fear. At present, the South American states are afraid of losing their European markets, and tomorrow many of them will be scrambling to switch into

line with whatever policy Hitler wants.

The lesson of Europe is that a unity can be defended but not a political association that may at any moment dissolve by the mere change in a premier. The Balkan states were wedded to Germany not by loans, which can at any moment be repudiated by a sovereign state, but by the most intricate web of economics in terms of real things, not money. As it turns out Hitler is getting all the money that the British and French lent their allies. The Turks were and still are the allies of Great Britain. But their guns, even if paid for in English pounds, were purchased in the Skoda works, formerly belonging to Czecho-Slovakia and now in German hands, and the ammunition for those guns had to be purchased in Germany.

Germany created the real interests in the Balkans. The Allies created transitory political alliance and easily soluble financial dependencies.

~~###~~

THEREFORE, if we mean to defend Pan-America we must have a Pan-America. And that involves a very great and difficult program. The Europe that a victorious Hitler will create will be a European customs union, with a managed currency, and it is going to be very difficult to compete with in this world. We certainly cannot confront that system with anything less well welded together.

Pan-America means a customs and currency union and a common Army and Navy. It means a common economic policy toward the rest of the world. It means making our economies complementary rather than competitive. These things are possible, and not only possible but offer the only hope for the establishment in the Americas of a real "New World."

But such a program would mean being able to throw off our old habits of thinking. It would certainly mean that we must industrialize this country much more than it is industrialized at present and greatly increase its population

by immigration. For we shall have to eat South American products, and there are not enough of us to eat them. We certainly are not going to be able to buy them and throw them in the ocean. You cannot go against nature like this.

We failed to make a system of collective political and economic security to protect the scheme of things that we had after the last war. This column has consistently maintained that it would be a thousand times easier to protect the European democracies, by all holding together, than to adjust ourselves to what would follow if they collapsed. But that is all water under bridges now, except for the last heroic stand of Britain with the aid of whatever we can send her. We should send her everything we have, because she is using her men and material against the only force on earth that threatens us from the Atlantic side.

But one must also have foresight to prepare for the eventuality that she loses the war as definitely as France has lost it. And that means complete United States isolation, in an extremely bad strategical position, with two oceans that are no defense at all unless one holds naval and air bases in them at strategical points, and with an extremely weak position in South America; or it means vigorous New Pan-American politics and economics that will be proof against everything because they are really mutually beneficial and bound by ties that cannot be dissolved by a mere change in ministries.

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In union is strength. On this hemisphere we are where we were on this continent 150 years ago.

## A NATION UNITED

By Dorothy Thompson

### Thoughts During This Struggle

THE COLUMN that appeared here last Monday on "Thoughts After the Fall of Paris" has had such a remarkable response that now I know that I did not really write it, but picked it out of the air.

In deeply troubled times, when the nerves become strained with mental anguish, there comes to people that integration of thought and emotion out of which grows the kind of conviction which is really an act of faith: "The substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things unseen."

In times of great crisis individuals either fly to pieces, or all the pieces in them fly together, and what is true of individuals is true of peoples, of nations. When an individual fails to react to danger by that spontaneous mental and physical coordination that alone will save him, he is suffering from nervous breakdown. The same is true of nations. And the faith that is in my heart arises from seeing that, although Washington is truly suffering from nervous breakdown all along the line at this moment, the American people are not. Watching with horror-stricken eyes the apocalyptic spectacle of the collapse of a world made of the stuff of dreams and vanished with a sleep, they are pushing through the chaos to clarity, to realism, reason and truth.

###

EVERY ONE of us is asking himself today what he really cares for and what he really believes. It has become a necessity of our lives, as real and necessary as bread. In that process of self-criticism, that stripping for action, it is amazing how much one throws away in order to lighten the pack one carries.

For what do I really care, one asks oneself. What is essential to my happiness, immediately one rids oneself of a great load of material things. Pleasant things, even lovely things, but not things for which one really cares. Do I care about this large apartment, that sweet house in the country? No. I

need a room of my own, where I can be quiet, and think and work. I need a room for my child.

I do not need any other shelter whatsoever. I need a certain amount of caloric content of food each day, and I need no other food whatsoever. I need sufficient clothes and changes of them to keep clean, and I would like them to make me look as nice as possible, because that helps one's courage, but I need no other clothes whatsoever.

That house in the country. Yes, I love it, because I planned it--took the old structure, ripped out this wall, planned that chimney there and that window there--dug in the garden, planted the irises--it is part of myself, and I love it. But for what was I making it? For my family and my friends. But who are my family and my friends? Everyone today who suffers what I suffer, and wants what I want, and needs what I need. I think of the hundreds of thousands of orphaned children in France and Belgium; tomorrow in England. Democracy's children. I have rooms for them, and food for them, and I want to reach them.

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WHAT IS IT that I need and seek? I need to live in a society and a world that makes sense. I cannot exist in an insane asylum. I need to live in a world that I trust. I cannot live in a world that I do not trust and that does not trust me. I am willing to try to love my neighbor as myself. But not better than myself, because that is destructive of all order. I am willing to share the results of my work with all who work. But I am not willing to give it to the parasitically lazy. For I do not ask that I myself shall live without working. And since I know that work is a self-creating process I am jealous of it for all men and women.

###

WHAT IS IT that I believe? I believe what I know. All the rest is speculation, fascinating, protean, excellent mental exercise, but not knowledge. It becomes wisdom only when it is recognized and validated by that conscious and unconscious experience of life which is reality.

I have read a library full of books in my life, and some of the most brilliant and seductive have been the most nonsensical. Who does not know that exquisite pleasure, however, that springs from the printed page when one reads a word that opens a blind in the windows of one's mind? One says, "that is true." One knows it instantly--it is the key for which one has been looking--It brings all other thoughts into shape, it adds to a harmony, it helps create the mind. It calls unconscious observations into the consciousness. It is food and drink to the spirit.

###

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Are you not the revolution, of which these others will be ill-cast forms, broken to bits in universal destruction? Are you not the revolution to end revolutions for centuries, and bring us peace?

If so, let us set about building you, with the love of our hearts, the intelligence of our brains, and the work of our hands.

Anywhere, at all times, in all ages, the line of truth moves. The real truth is that which under pressure causes increasing numbers of persons to look in the direction of the same truth. Those of most exactitude are joined by the multitude, and so the many tell the few. The few talking in silence, each to himself; hearing the voices of others through silence and space, now find all space and the only living thing filled with the multitude all in ~~an~~ friendly sound.

And so one knows the heart of the multitude for the first time, and is glad.

For this heart is neither gay nor silent. It is the reservoir, the magnificent universal reality of the thing itself--the soul, the ultimate and only reality of the now--the truth of things seen and not seen.

As the ones agitate in the pressure, a song arises. And so glad may we be.

June 21, 1940

Dear Miss Thompson:

In your mail, you probably never  
will reach this one.

But, if one of those who open  
the mail is a bit of you yourself, you  
may see it.

Sincerely,

Thompson's challenge to me, a man, is simply this: "How does a fat Democrat save himself from a little Despot?"

The Democrat streamlines in a turkish bath, along the lines of Pepper's seven points.

All detailed acts are to prepare for the Hitler attack. Any proposed act that does not do that is hog-wash.

Any Democrat knows under pressure time is the essence of the contract, and that leadership in direction must be absolute. Example: A liner on a peaceful sea hits an iceberg. The captain commands. The passengers demand a captain to command.

We Americans proudly must ask the captain to command, and give him him commission of command for the duration of the defense need.

Since all power is corrupting and corruptible, Senate and House should sit in continuous session to revoke all enlarged powers in whole or in part if abused. But the giving in good grace of the whole framework now is the speedwagon that a democracy must ride into action. The giving of the President this part and then that part of a speedwagon when he asks for it, and giving with grumbling, will wear out the leader and the speedwagon will never be assembled in time.

The Pepper proposals are the speedwagon.

Some one agency--agency of the people--must give. It is sincerely hoped that no one asks.