

June 5th

## THE INTANGIBLES IN WAR

The War cannot be ignored, any more than its issue can be forecast with certain voice. It will hang like a pall over the lives of all of us for months or years. If that pall is to be lifted from the human race, it will be by the united effort of men with the will to conquer, and the manhood to die, and of women with the nobility to inspire, the courage to endure, and the zeal to pray.

And so for good or ill I shall speak to you of some aspects of the war which effect us here, remote though we are from the scenes of conflict and the chance of invasion. Like all who give any thought to the present cataclysm and its aftermath my words must be sombre and "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"; but they will not be, I trust, words of gloom unrelieved by a trusting faith and a firm hope.

For what then do we fight? How must we comport ourselves in the fight? And how must we make use of victory when it comes?

First to look ahead to the Peace. We can take comfort in the thought that Peace will come as it always has. If Peace comes through our vanquishment we shall have little to say in its terms. So let us

assume that Peace will come to us as victors. How shall we discharge the burdens it will impose? What terms shall we impose upon the vanquished? What contrivances shall we set up for the maintenance of the Peace we have won?

In the last war we fought with the comforting certainty that with Victory for our arms, all future problems could easily be settled around the Conference Board, and that measures could easily be taken which would outlaw war forever as an instrument of national policy and, in particular, make the world safe for Democracy. We rewrote the map of Europe, we allowed for self-determination of peoples, we set up the League of Nations, we destroyed the armaments of the enemy, we substituted conciliation for the arbitrament of war, we preached the economic folly of war and so on. We did everything which occurred to the minds of statesmen horrified by war and determined to prevent its repetition.

Nevertheless, as we now know to our disillusionment, our Victory, so dearly bought, did not yield Permanent Peace. It yielded only an Armistice during which all these contrivances for peace, and all the sedulous cultivation of the Will to Peace, and all the proofs we gave of our own desire for the outlawry of war, were to fail utterly.

In the two decades which followed we saw the internal collapse of the old orders in Russia, Italy and Germany and their ruins the establishment of Communism, Fascism and Naziism. These were decades which saw the

emergence to domination of parties given over to the methods of mass-murder, concentration camps, religious and racial purges, and to the denial of all human rights conflicting with the Moloch of the State. These were decades of undeclared wars and of subjugation of small and innocent nations; decades which have culminated at last in a great War which has brought to naught all that we had sought to secure, and had thought secured.

Is it any wonder then that a great American magazine was recently moved to say "There is in Europe today a war that has no prospect of peace. Who, for instance even if given absolute power, could devise a peace plan with any possible arrangement of boundaries and spheres of influence which would satisfy all parties, or, for that matter, do justice to more than half of them? Whether the war ends in victory for the Allies or for Germany, or even in a stalemate, who will be satisfied? Who will feel secure? Unless some new ideal is born, the best that the world can hope for is armistice, for a year, ten years, or like the last one, twenty-one years".

We fight then in the ultimate sense for Victory as a means to Permanent Peace. We do so without the old certitude that Victory will ensure lasting Peace. Nevertheless, fight we must for Victory, as the means of ensuring to mankind the opportunity to attempt by Reason - guided by Moral Law - to fashion a world in which the armed might of any nation shall be incapable of bringing upon us <sup>^</sup>all the barbarity of War as we now know it.

In the more immediate sense we fight for Victory, a victory which will ensure our survival; and a victory which will mean not merely the end of a war of aggression, but the end of a reign of terror.

How we shall fight is for our generals and statesmen to tell us. It is for them to recast their mental attitudes, to adapt their methods to the new conception of warfare the enemy has forced upon us.

We entered this war with the thought that Democratic peoples dedicated to the pursuits of Peace, given a few years, could match in destructive and defensive capacity a great and militant power, with a war machine fabricated over years of feverish and purposeful preparation, and set in motion without warning. This was a dangerous philosophy; for democracies have never been as efficient in the initial stages of war as dictator-nations. Now it appears as we may not be given the years of grace <sup>required</sup> to put us on a basis necessary to a totalitarian war. We have

discovered the fatal difference between National Resources and Fighting Strength. Already, though belatedly, Great Britain has been forced to abandon that philosophy and to recognize that defeat must be averted in the initial stages if victory is to come in the end. By the most revolutionary step in its constitutional history the Government has been given absolute power to conscript all persons, all property and all energy in the national effort. Great Britain has become a war-time dictatorship, a dictatorship which, however, preserves the democratic principle in that the Government remains subject to the control and criticism of the people's representatives. To this extent we minimize the delays which democratic effort involves and enable quicker and more unified effort. We still require time, however, in which to bring the whole weight of our resources to a war-time focus.

It is in this period which lies immediately before us, that we must excel the enemy in the intangibles of character, courage and fortitude, as at present he excels us in preparedness and in the tangible things of war.

I believe we can so excel him, and in the end defeat him, if we keep constantly in view what it is we are fighting for, and if we cultivate a certain state of mind.

For what do we fight? Our own Prime Minister has declared his belief "that only by the destruction of Naziism and the resistance of ruthless aggression can the nations of the British Commonwealth hope to continue to enjoy the liberties which are theirs under the British Crown, and the world itself be spared a descent into a new and terrible age of barbarism".

The British Prime Minister has declared his government's resolution "to wage war until victory is won, and never to surrender ourselves to servitude and shame whatever the cost and the agony may be;.... (and that)...The British and French have advanced to rescue not only Europe but mankind from the foulest and most soul-destroying tyrrany which has ever darkened and stained the pages of history". These armies do not fight alone for, as Mr. Churchill says, "Behind them gather a group of shattered states and bludgeoned races - the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, the Duthh, the Belgians, upon all of whom the long night of barbarism will descend, unbroken by a star of hope, unless we conquer, as conquer we must, as conquer we shall".

Put otherwise, we fight against a concept of civilization which deifies the State, and which subordinates all human values of reason, freedom, personality, and conscience to the one cardinal virtue of obedience to the pagan Caesar of a totalitarian State. We fight against it, moreover, because it is dedicated to establishing its sway over every nation of the world whom it can overcome by force of arms and brutality. We fight it because its victory means the destruction of all religions which recognize the spiritual value of man.

"Once more the nations go  
To meet and break and bind  
A crazed and driven foe".

Into what frame of mind, into what temper of soul, must we put ourselves for this struggle?

I think that first we should recall with gratitude that history tells us that our race has met and repelled the threat of conquest before, once indeed within our own vivid memory. Before that, our forefathers had faced and repelled the march of Napoleon. Perhaps we can do no better

than to adopt, now, the attitude which they adopted, then, as expressed by William Pitt in 1803:

"We ought to have a due sense of the magnitude of the danger with which we are threatened; we ought to meet it in that temper of mind which produces just confidence, which neither despises nor dreads the enemy; and while on the one side we accurately estimate the danger with which we are threatened at this awful crisis, we must recollect on the other hand what it is we have at stake, what it is we have to contend for. It is for our property, it is for our liberty, it is for our independence, nay, for our existence as a nation; it is for our character, it is for our very name as Englishmen, it is for everything dear and valuable to man on this side of the grave."

It goes without saying that we must respond in unstinted action to whatever demands are made upon us by our Government. What is of equal importance, however, is that we develop reserves of fortitude, upon which we can draw, alike for calmness in the face of calamitous news, and the moral strength to endure the personal shocks and sorrows which may beset us. We must, as Kipling said in 1914:

"Face the naked days  
In silent fortitude,  
Through perils and dismays,  
Renewed and re-renewed."



That fortitude has never failed to come before, and it will not fail us in this hour, if we remember the justice of our cause, and the utter necessity of its triumph if Christian civilization is to survive. Above all it will not fail us if we have constant trust in Him who is a God of Mercy and Justice.

We have had ample demonstration of the ruthlessness of the foe, and of his determination to enslave the bodies and minds and souls of all humanity. As we watch his approach to the homes of our fathers we must never doubt that Right, as we see it, will triumph over hideous Wrong. We must shake off the paralyzing effects of his rapid victories over lesser peoples, we must not bow down before the spectacle of his enormous efficiency, we must not enervate our resolution by panic, dread of fifth columnism, we must bear with unshaken equanimity alike the clamour of propaganda and the inner gnawings of uncertainty.

We must bear constantly in mind the deep truth of the poet's saying that "the coward dies a thousand deaths, the brave man dies but once". As the human spirit treads the dark road which lies ahead let us

seek unremittingly to keep the lamp of reason, and the torch of faith, burning as brightly as possible in our minds, and in our hearts. Let us cherish all the achievements, and all the ideals of free government, with which our ancestors have endowed us. Let us in this hour when they are imperilled, say -

"This is our heritage  
And here do we engage,  
Each man unto his son  
Intact to pass it on."

Let us, when some battle issues in defeat say, with Milton,

"What though the field be lost?  
All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,  
And courage never to submit or yield."

Let us never doubt the capacity of those in the immediate battle-lines to bear the enormities of pagan warfare. We have the testimony of the historian, Winston Churchill, to the valiant spirit of man in the late war, who "met the awful agony with new reserves of fortitude. Again and again to the hideous bombardment, again and again from the hospital to the front, again and again to the hungry submarines, he strode unflinchingly. And withal as an individual, preserved through these torments the glories of a reasonable and compassionate mind". Torments like unto these, and worse, must our warriors endure today. The least they can expect from us is the

knowledge that, like them, we are bearing our allotted share of the burden "in silent fortitude", without panic, without dismay, and with faith in them and confidence in God.

We must carry on in the faith that "to a nation the white escutcheon of unsullied morality is as priceless as to an individual", and in the hope that before long every nation will be firmly convinced <sup>that</sup> the Sermon on the Mount was infinitely more than "the idle chatter of a thoughtless Man".