

It requires more than courage; it requires downright presumption on the part of any man of my generation to come to you with any advice as to what you shall do with your lives. Someone recently had the intellectual arrogance to propose as a topic for discussion "Will Youth Follow the American Way." They seem not to understand that whatever way American youth goes will be the American way, and that your generation has just as much right to create an American way for its time as my generation has had to create an American way for my time, or my grandfather's generation for his time.

I must be frank in saying to you that I do not see much in the accomplishments of my own generation to demand from you great respect for its opinions. If you have not yet demonstrated individually that you can be successful, at least you have not demonstrated that you are collectively failures. I can not say as much for my own generation. I should think that when any of the Yale fathers arise to give unctious advice to Yale students you would simply say to them "If your generation is so wise, why is it in such a mess."

You young men are old enough and have had enough contact with life to know at least that you are facing very important problems, that you are not yet in control of the world you are going to live in and that it is still being guided by men of my generation or older. As you seek for the answer to your problem, turn from group to group and see what you find.

I would not deny that among the men of my time you find individual men of outstanding intelligence and courage and character. I don't believe it is below the generations that went before it. But in spite of the examples of individual wisdom, you find some insurmountable obstacle to the attainment by groups or by society collectively of a level which is adequate to the problems we have created by our mass production, our inventiveness and our resourcefulness in material ways.

I hope I do my own time no injustice in saying that its collective and group action and thinking is chaotic and confused, that we see everywhere a lack of willingness to face our own problems. Strong men stand terrified in the presence of conditions they have created themselves. The need of the time is for men who are not afraid of the chaos about them but are willing to deal fearlessly and unshackled by traditions with modern problems.

You would be entirely right in saying that despite the failures of these other groups the primary responsibility for leadership of organized society rests upon Government and that it is up to those in Government to provide a leadership that will meet the requirements I have outlined.

The fact is that Government is afflicted with an immense inertia. Power is infinitely divided and responsibility vastly distributed. In spite of the fact that responsibility is diluted, a fairly definite direction to governmental policy has been given by the Administration although tremendously neutralized and sterilized by opposition within Government itself. For want of a better title for the collective personalities and parts involved, it is called

the "New Deal" by its friends and much less complimentary epithets by its enemies.

I am not here to contend that this New Deal adequately answers your questions or solves your problems. If there are those who would claim that it has brought your generation, or even its own, entirely out of the woods, I do not belong to them. It has a long ways to go to a permanent solution of the basic problems which affect America today.

The judgments which you render upon my time are somewhat the judgments of history. After all, you view the work of your elders with more perspective than we can view ourselves. If you are not history to us, you at least partake of its detachment and perspective. I venture to say that whatever faults either you or history may find with the leadership which the New Deal is supplying, whatever inadequacies or excesses or other defects you find in it, your verdict will be that it constitutes the only group in America today that is actually and realistically facing your problems.

And what is your problem? Whatever else may be said of Mr. Hitler's speech, there is no doubt that it represented an effort to strike Democracy in its weakest spot, not only to discourage the democratic peoples with democracy but to encourage European peoples to accept dictatorship. And with this motive, Mr. Hitler pointed to democracy as a system of government unable to solve its own problems, chiefly the problem of unemployment, the problem of bringing security to its own people. Recently a poll by Dr. Gallup showed that 52 percent of the working population of our cities and towns were either on relief or so close to it that they shared the relievers' feeling of insecurity. I know that you young men

who are seeking only of the world an opportunity to exchange your best efforts for a reasonable position in society share the uncertainty of the future. I know too that if the Gallup poll were extended to farmers it would have found extensive insecurity among them and doubt as to whether their best productive efforts will be able to produce enough to meet their obligations. And we all know that the business world is complaining loudly that it has no confidence, and it demands that the Government give the confidence that it can make profits while these others are demanding confidence that they may have the necessities of life.

Plainly the problem of democracy is to reconcile these conflicts and to solve these insecurities. Faced with this problem, there are three things that the Government leadership has done toward the solution which has not yet been achieved.

First, it has identified the problem and faced it as a national problem. This is the first administration in history that has squarely faced the bad adjustment of our internal economy as a problem of national concern. It has set up machinery for the first time in our history to deal with unemployment, with dependent old age, with credit for small business, and an adequate machinery for farm relief, which latter has not yet been allowed to function.

Second, this Administration has purchased time for the democratic process to solve these problems which it has thus recognized. I would grant that W.P.A., P.W.A. and many of the other measures are emergency steps and stop-gaps, and that they would require great reconditioning to become permanently part of our scheme of things. But they have kept our democratic government right side up while many nations that refused to accept similar stop-gaps have been tipped over.

Turn to the world of international affairs, and you behold a world in which reason has failed and force threatens to disorganize our whole civilized existence. Turn to the influential groups in our own country. Since you are interested in the Yale News, turn to the press. What answer do you get to your problems from the wisdom of the American press? Perhaps the recent able address of William Allen White to American Newspaper Editors analyzes sympathetically and intelligently its strength and weakness.

In Washington the leading men of business are assembled as the National Chamber of Commerce. Get all of the help you can and all the inspiration you can from those business leaders. They opened with an appeal to go back to 1929 conditions! I do not know what they will close with.

Follow the proceedings of the National Association of Manufacturers. the best brains of the country engaged in production. Follow them sympathetically but insistently for answers to your questions.

Soon the American Bar Association, representing, by its own admission, the best intellects in the country, will assemble. Read its proceedings with care. Read them for the last ten years and get all of the inspiration and help that you can from them. Do the same with the American Banking Association.

Turn to the field of labor with its division of counsels that is one of the tragedies of our times.

Soon the professional politicians will be gathering in convention assembled. Study their proceedings and their antecedents for years and get all the hope you can out of them.

You all look forward to an election in 1940. You are almost alone among the peoples of the world who will have a free election to choose their leader. The newspapers will abuse the President and our whole Administration, and the Government will carry the newspapers to their subscribers for them. Speakers will make loose and irresponsible attacks on the Administration with no fear of going to concentration camps. Every citizen will have a ballot on which his choice will be a secret, known only to himself, and the votes will be counted. The democratic process has been preserved and is functioning and will continue to function and the people of the United States will make their choice in a democratic way as to who their leader will be.

A third accomplishment of this Administration has been to get rid of certain judge-made restrictive interpretations of our Constitution which have heretofore prevented a policy democratically decided upon from being made effective. Mr. Arthur Erock has pointed out in the New York Times that "The New Deal has wholly won its lone fight to modernize and invigorate judicial construction of the commerce clause." He might have said the same of the taxing power, the due process clause and the general welfare power.

I do not know whether this work will inure to the benefit of a Republican administration or a Democratic administration or an administration by some party as yet unborn, but I do know that the state of the law is such that today the measures of the party chosen by the people at the polls are not likely to be stricken down wholesale as they were in the days of the New Deal.

To have identified and faced squarely your problems, to have

preserved the democratic mechanism for answering them, and to have cleared away the traditional and unwarranted obstacles to making the public decision effective is the great contribution which the New Deal has made to American history.