May I first of all express to you the very deep appreciation of Mrs. Messersmith and myself for your generous gesture this evening in giving us this opportunity to meet so early in our stay in Mexico City so large a group of the Americans resident here.

Those of us who have been long in the Foreign Service, like so many of you who have spent more or less of your life abroad, realize that residence outside of our country has very definite compensations as well as disadvantages. It is with complete sincerity that I am able to say that my wife and I have enjoyed our life and our work and the many associations which we have been privileged to form at the posts in many countries in which we have served, and we have left each successive post with real regret. We still feel ourselves very new here and somewhat strange in our new surroundings, but we have the confidence that the attitude of the Mexican people and of our compatriots here will be as generous and as hospitable as we have invariably found it to be elsewhere. We look forward to the opportunities which our life opens to us and to the association which we shall be able to have with you and with the Mexican people.

It is, I am sure, no new thought to any of you that all of us who live abroad, whether it be for a temporary or a more prolonged stay, are in a measure representatives of our Government and of our people. To a very consider-
able extent, and sometimes more than we realize and like to think, the people of other countries will judge our institutions and our people at home by and through us and our conduct abroad. Therefore, as representatives of our Government those of us in the Foreign Service, completely aside from our official duties, must interpret and represent to the people of the country among whom we live the best there is in our traditions and our institutions at home. You, likewise, in addition to the responsibilities and duties which you may have in a personal sense or through the reasons of business or profession which influence your residence abroad, have a similar responsibility of interpreting to the people of this country among whom you live and whose hospitality you enjoy, the best there is in our country. I have lived much, as an incident of my duty, outside of my own country. I have mingled with and worked with our American colonies in many cities in many countries. I have seen us meeting those responsibilities which rest upon us in varied measure. I think all of us resident here in Mexico, whether it is in this beautiful capital or whether it is in other parts of the Republic, have a definite consciousness that the Mexican people will form their judgments of our people at home very largely through us, and that we do not carry through our responsibilities either to our own country or to the Mexican people whose hospitality we enjoy if we do not endeavor to have a full and sympathetic understanding of their traditions, culture and aspirations, and if we do not mingle with them as we would want foreigners domiciled among
among us to mingle with our people.

We hear a great deal these days about the strengthening of the ties between the governments and the peoples of the American Republics. There are some of us to whom this is not a new thought and not a new responsibility. I have had an opportunity to see in so many of the cities of the American Republics American groups and nationals who have in so many ways through long years fostered really friendly understanding and comprehension through sympathetic contact and associations. Those of us who have lived long abroad realize that the relations between peoples are a delicate and fine flower which does not blossom rapidly and which needs careful nurturing.

The thought that the countries of this Western Hemisphere have a common destiny and that their political, economic, social and general interest are inextricably bound together is not a new one either with the governments or the peoples of this hemisphere. The succeeding inter-American conferences during the past several decades have indicated in an eloquent manner the recognition of the fundamental necessity of the unity of the Americas. In these days of crisis it is to me, and I think it is to all of us, a source of intense satisfaction that the unity of the Americas was not born in times of war and of common danger, but during periods of peace when we found that collaboration to be a cultural and economic, as well as a political aspiration. The fact that this unity of the Americas was born in peace and not in war is an indication of the virility of that unity and gives confidence that
the Americas will be able to maintain their sovereignties when everything we hold dear is threatened from without and that we will be able to fulfill our destinies among ourselves and in the world when the victory is won.

The American Republics won their sovereignty, their independence and their political freedom through the sacrifice of the blood and treasure of our ancestors. The history of the American Republics is a brilliant one of sacrifice and labor and of peoples desiring to respect the rights of others and of cultivating the arts of peace. However peaceful our aspirations and however much we may have desired to cultivate the peaceful arts, we unfortunately shall have to conserve these liberties and independence so hardly won with further sacrifices and struggle. We have learned to cherish this independence and liberty and the arts of peace to the degree that we are determined to fight for them once again, realizing that that which is worth conserving is worth fighting for.

Some years ago they developed in Germany, in Italy and in Japan a doctrine that force alone counts in the relationships between states; that smaller nations and weaker peoples have no right to exist; that it is the natural right of certain larger nations to dominate others; that the individual as such does not count except as an instrument and as a slave of the state; that democratic institutions and personal liberty are outworn doctrines and must perish, to be replaced by a rule of force and might and complete subservience of the individual; that our religion, our social institutions, and all that we have learned to cherish and all
that we have built up as our way of life must be re-
placed by pagan beliefs and the worship of individuals
who desire to set themselves up by force as the dicta-
tors of humanity. We in the democracies saw these ideas
develop and we saw the governments of these states re-
ducing their people to slavery and turning the industry
and economy into a huge machine of war for the purpose of
imposing their will first on weaker neighbors and then on
the world. Instead of taking these doctrines so directly
and openly aimed at our destruction and our subjugation
in any way seriously, we viewed them complacently and con-
tinued our own life as though that thing which we know as
war and which we hated so thoroughly had disappeared as
an instrument employed by states.

That we should have viewed this tremendous prepara-
tion for war with such complacency now seems incredible.
A nation in time of peace does not build up a huge in-
strument of war unless it feels itself threatened or un-
less it desires to use it for offensive purposes against
peaceful and weaker neighbors. Germany, Italy and Japan
were not being threatened by anyone. On the other hand,
the democracies in many ways were aiding these countries
to built up their economic life and to maintain the arts
of peace. We should have read into this preparation for
war, if we had viewed it realistically, only one objective
and that was the use of this vast armament for the des-
truction of the political and personal liberties of other
peoples and of their sovereignty.

Today, therefore, when we are in the midst of the
greatest war of history and the result of which will decide
whether
whether we shall be free peoples or slaves, whether we shall maintain our institutions and whether our countries shall remain sovereign states, the peoples of the democracies have no one but themselves to blame. There is a tendency on the part of some of us to place the responsibility for what has happened on governments. As a matter of fact, at a time when it is the great masses of the people in all countries who must make these sacrifices of blood and treasure to maintain our personal liberties, it is well for us to realize that it is we who bear the responsibility, for by our lack of comprehension we did not permit those responsible in government to take the steps in our defense and of a preventive character which were so necessary and which they realized were important, but which our very inertia and in some cases opposition made it impossible for them to carry through.

I recall that during the years between 1930 and 1934 when I served my Government in Germany, the leaders of the present German Government made no secret whatever of their aspirations toward world domination and their determination to achieve it. They made no secret of the fact that they were deliberately forging this great instrument of war solely for this purpose. I recall that on one occasion, in talking with one of the principal members of the present German Government I said that the enormous effort which the German Government was making was doomed to failure because before it could get under way and reach adequate striking power the other nations so definitely threatened would unite and prevent the realization of their purpose. To this this member of the German Government re-

plied
plied that it was I who was naive and that the leaders of the German Government had a definite purpose which must be achieved to make the German people the rulers of the world which was their natural right and for which they were fitted in every way better than any other people. He said there would be no common resistance against them by weaker or by stronger states, for the German Government would use all the instrumentalities in its power to bring about disintegration within these other countries which were to be their prey. They would seize upon prejudices, racial and political differences, internal problems, every problem between smaller states, utilize the personal ambitions of the lowest as well as the highest, and make the most of the lowest instincts of the people everywhere; that through this they would be able to prevent any unified action among smaller states and even among greater states and thus be able to pick them off one by one.

Some of these leaders of the German Government did not, even in the early thirties, conceal the fact that their ultimate objective was the control of the Western Hemisphere, as they felt that here lay the greatest wealth and the greatest potentialities, and they frankly said that they realized that world domination by Germany was not possible without their controlling the United States and the whole of the Western Hemisphere. I replied to these men, when they propounded these ideas, that theirs would be the bitter disillusionment which was their due and that they were preparing an evil future for the German people whom they were leading into this error and disaster. To this they retorted with utmost complacency that
that I was thinking naively and that they were thinking realistically and that they would conquer one country of Europe after the other without the slightest difficulty because there would be no unified action against them.

Despite these clear objectives of which the leaders of Nazi Germany made no secret whatever, we continued our complacent course. The governments in most of the democracies vainly tried to make the situation clear to their peoples and to awaken them to a sense of danger, so as to bring about the preparation necessary adequately to meet this powerful instrument which was being forged against them and for their destruction. I take the opportunity of reiterating this thought because there is a tendency these days still to shift responsibilities. We learn little from experience. Just as some nations believed egotistically that loss of sovereignty and liberty might be the fate of others as a result of the totalitarian effort, but would not be theirs, so there were many in our country who believed that whatever might happen to others, we were safe in a splendid isolation. We have seen only too clearly the results of these attitudes. But there are still those today whose principal preoccupation seems to be to determine responsibilities for the war instead of concentrating upon finding how they can best contribute to the victory. The responsibility rests upon the peoples of the democracies more than upon the governments, and it is the peoples who shall have to bear the brunt of the struggle. We must realistically face this situation.

The events of the last few years have proved to us how costly have been our errors and how greatly increased,
through them, will be the sacrifices and effort which
we have to make to win the victory. Italy, Germany, and
Japan have been forging these instruments of war and
training their peoples to use them for a period of at
least ten years or more. We in the democracies did not
begin our war preparations until the war was actually
forced upon us. We now realize that nations have to fight,
not because they wish war, but because war is forced upon
them for their survival. We are realizing very definitely
that it takes only one party to make a war, while it takes
two to make an equitable peace. Their objective is world
domination and complete subjugation of all other peoples,
and this does not involve treaties but the imposition of
brute force. When they were ready, they attacked, and we
began our real preparations only when we were attacked.

It is no wonder, then, that when we take up our morn­
ing paper or when we listen to the broadcasts over the
radio, we read and hear of the successes of this powerful
instrument of war forged through so many years of prepara­
tion. We must realize that this could not be otherwise.
Now that we have been attacked and war is forced upon us,
we are determined to achieve the victory, and will achieve
it.

The huge production machinery of the United States
built up for and devoted to the arts of peace and the
elevation of the standard of living of our own and other
peoples, is being turned with amazing rapidity into an in­
strument of aggressive warfare. To transform the industry
and economy of a country like the United States from an
instrument of peace into one of war cannot be the work of

a day
a day or of a month. I am sure that you realize that the task involved in the transformation of factories alone is one which is incredibly difficult and implies in itself increased new production for transformation only. This transformation involves in itself almost as great a problem and almost as great an expenditure of effort and funds as the production of the materials to follow. The almost superhuman task is being carried through in the United States today, and this transformation of industry from a peace-time to a war-time basis is rapidly approaching its completion. Shortly this huge machine will be producing elements of defensive and offensive warfare which are essential to the achieving of the victory. Simultaneously, we are building ships which are necessary to transport this material to the seats of war, and I should like to recall to your attention that this is one of the most difficult and vital parts of the program, which is also making satisfactory progress. We are at the same time mobilizing all the human forces of our country in order to man these machines and to carry the war wherever it is to be prosecuted. We talk a great deal about this being a war of machines, and that machines will win the war. There is no doubt that machines play an enormous role in the present war and will be a decisive factor therein. But these machines must be manned, and it is the intelligence and industry and patriotic fervor of individuals who man the machines which will win the war; for they will be fighting to preserve all that they hold dear.

In the other American Republics, the awareness of the common danger is increasingly felt and in practically all of them every conceivable and appropriate effort is being made.
made to contribute to the prosecution of the war and the achievement of the victory. The countries of the Americas, in the measure which is possible for them, are making their contribution. The cumulative effort of the Western Hemisphere when it takes the field will be irresistible, and it is the sure guarantee of the victory to be achieved.

Our confidence in the victory is not based solely on the machines and on the goods which we are producing; it is not based on the billions which we are voting for the conduct of the war. It is based on the knowledge that by the side of England, China, Russian, and the United Nations there is this united America; and the common effort will be irresistible. Our confidence is based on the grim determination of the democracies and the belief of the Americas that the victory must be won not only for their future but also for the peace and well-being of humanity throughout the world.

We have arrived at a unity of purpose among the people of the United States. We have forgotten the differences which we may have had. We have arrived at unity of purpose among the Americas. Even in the midst of war we in the Americas are increasing our collaboration in the economic and cultural fields on a long-range basis. We too, forced by fate and necessity, have forged an instrument in this hemisphere which will be far more powerful than anything which the totalitarian nations can forge. Instead of forging it for the destruction of the sovereignty and rights of peoples, we are creating it for the purpose of maintaining them. This too gives us great comfort for the future, for the problems which we shall have to solve when
when the victory is achieved will in many ways be just as complicated as those which are involved in the victory itself. It is a splendid and comforting thought that the Americas achieved their unity in times of peace. They have cemented it in time of struggle for existence. They will be wise enough, when peace comes again, to use this power to establish the democratic spirit throughout the world and for the good of the world. The Americas will know how to achieve their destiny in the post-war world and to use wisely for the common good of humanity the power which they will have attained.

May I say that this unity which we have achieved in our own country and which we have achieved in the Americas, we must have in the most complete degree among the Americans resident in Mexico. I have lived among you only a few weeks, but it has been long enough for me to realize that there is in Mexico City and in Mexico a large group of Americans with unlimited capacity for aiding the war effort and for stimulating mutual comprehension between the Mexican people and ourselves. There are institutions which we have developed here which are working in this field in an effective manner. I believe that all of us are increasingly conscious of the responsibilities and opportunities which devolve upon us through our residence in a friendly country which is cooperating with all of the Americas in so splendid a way in this crisis. We must give consideration among ourselves to the best ways in which we can achieve that complete unity among us which is so essential, and it is clear that it would be unwise to engage in any activity which does not have the most definite and clear prospect of increasing
increasing that unity and of strengthening our effort in these times. We are all keen and eager to do everything that we can, and it is a source of much satisfaction for me to know that among the Americans here resident and present this evening there are those who are giving careful thought to the best form and manner in which the American Colony in Mexico City and this country can make its best contribution. This is a problem to which we must give our earnest thought and consideration, and I am very happy to know that this is being done. My cooperation in any constructive plans and effort in this direction, I am sure I need not tell you, can always be counted upon.

May I say before I close that I have lived long enough to realize that there are few things in life finer and more to be cherished than friendship. I look forward to being able to win your friendship and that of the Mexican people. Friendship is not easily gained and once won is to be infinitely treasured. It brings with it mutual responsibilities and opportunities if it is to exist in any sense worthy of the name.

Again I wish to express the very deep appreciation of Mrs. Messersmith and myself for the honor which you have done us this evening and for the privilege which you have given us of being with you on this pleasant occasion; and to assure you that we look forward with keen anticipation to our life among you and our Mexican friends.