

"The Declaration and the recommendations that we have adopted lay the foundation for the kind of post-war world we have undertaken to bring into being. But the constructive task of building upon this foundation is one to which we must still dedicate our efforts and our resolve. The major objective I see and suggest to you is freedom—freedom for everybody, for all men and all women everywhere; freedom in its fullest and widest possible meaning.

"‘Freedom,’ unfortunately, is a word which has been so much used and so loosely used during the last decade or so that it has lost its force; but its value still remains. Freedom in the best and, in fact, the only sense in which the word can be used necessarily implies conditions in which it can be experienced and enjoyed to the full. There can be no freedom where there is hunger. There can be no freedom where there is ill health. Only very rarely is there a St. Francis of Assisi who can experience freedom fully in poverty and hunger.

"Poverty can be abolished. It has not been ordained by God. Poverty can be abolished. Its abolition depends on one thing and one thing only—on the will and the determination of those people who believe that it can and must be abolished.

"The Declaration we have adopted here will, if we allow its principles to guide our future conduct, sound the death knell of poverty and want, and fear of poverty and want throughout the world.

"Because of this, I regard the Declaration as a statement of social principles that will ring in the ears of all those who are to-day denied the material well-being and the spiritual comfort which only true freedom can guarantee them. Only, as the Hot Springs Conference brought out, one-half of the people of the world have enough to eat. One-half have never had enough to eat.

"Our meetings have, however, taken place on the eve of what I believe to be the greatest military offensive of all times, to make that which I have talked about and we have talked about possible. The victory of the United Nations in this war is now only a matter of time. It may be near, it may perhaps be two or even three years before the enemy in the east and in the west is finally overwhelmed. Of the outcome there is no longer any doubt, but we should not dismiss too lightly the effort that still lies ahead.

"If the war is over soon, things may be less hard for Germany in the years that follow. Retribution will be severe in any case, but it is possible to be firm without being vindictive. Hate will destroy the hater. If we hate long, it will destroy our soul and not the object of our hate, and we have got to remember that, too. If the war is not over soon, then the hatred that has been pent up in the hearts and minds of those who have suffered the cruelties and hardships of the past four years may be even greater than anything yet known. Hatred, however, cannot solve our problems. Unless we find some constructive means of avoiding a similar occurrence, we will have failed in our greatest purpose, and this war will have been fought in vain.

"It is not for me to express the feelings of men and women who have lost their families, who have seen their homes razed to the ground, who have suffered the horrors and brutality of concentration camps. I cannot conceive how human beings react under these conditions and those experiences. But I do know that unless we find a way of living with one another when this conflict is over, then war will come again. We have a responsibility to the many who have sacrificed so much to see that this does not happen.

"We have during this Conference adopted a Declaration as to what we feel should be done in connection with the occupied countries.

"Our job, the job of those in the so-called free countries, is to help the occupied countries to help themselves. France and Belgium and Norway and Holland and Denmark and Greece and Poland and Yugoslavia and the others can regain their full freedom only by their own nationals and through their own efforts. By full freedom, I mean more than liberation. They alone can save themselves. We can help by giving them the materials for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of their countries, but it must be Frenchmen that save France, Belgians that save Belgium, Dutchmen that save Holland, Norwegians that save Norway, and the nationals of the other countries that I have mentioned who must save themselves. Those with the resources at their command can help by making the materials, the equipment, and other things available in the early stages. But the occupied countries alone can do what must be done, though we can help. We owe much to their resistance under unprecedented conditions of hardships and torture and tension. It is a debt that we gladly acknowledge.

"We will, however, have to look to the world of the future and to assure those men who have fought—those men and women who have suffered during the past four years—that we are not going back to the old conditions, we are not going to betray everything for which they have given their lives. What is immediately required is to lay down for future guidance general principles of social policy. We have done that, but they must be rapidly translated into conditions that will make freedom from want an accomplished fact within the next few years.

"War ought to maximize production. But if we want to maximize production, we have to determine production of what and where and when, and also what we are going to do with the resources and the produced commodities when they have been brought into being. Why do we want to maximize production? The answer is that without maximized production the world cannot be free. As I said before, one-half of the people have never had enough to eat.

"Just a word or two with regard to the men who have gone away. It is easy to put into words the urges of our hearts and minds—not always so easy to put them into practice. Yet, I cannot emphasize too strongly that inside the possibility of its achievement, no man or woman who fought for their country should be worse off because they did so fight, and no man or woman should be better off because they did not so fight.

"We were all moved the other day by the eloquence of Mr. Tomlinson in referring to the disabled man and rehabilitation. I have seen some of it in our own organization, in our country of New Zealand. I have seen joy come to that man, not in receiving a pension, not in being told that he was not wanted, not in being told that he was not able to work, but in being able to put a foot to the ground in place of the foot he had lost. I have seen joy come to the man—I was in London a short time ago and saw a man who had lost both his legs. I saw him six months later, and he walked along the room that I was in with legs fastened to him. He said, ‘See, I can walk, Mr. Nash.’ And then he strode across the room and threw his sticks away. To-day he is flying a plane across the Pacific once more.