

LET US PRAY

The President's prayer last night was the nation's prayer. This nation was born in the only revolution in history made in the name of God. It was born of the conception that the rights of man are not conveyed to him by any accident of class or color, race or creed, are not conferred or withheld by any government, but are given him by God as the inalienable birthright of the human being. It is to defend this inherent right of the human being, the right of free will, against the most ambitious tyranny that ever shadowed the earth that we are today storming the beaches of Europe with the legions of all the people, conquered and marked for conquest, who would rather die fighting than live as slaves.

We have come to the hour for which we were born. We go forth to meet the supreme test of our arms and of our souls, the test of the maturity of our faith in ourselves and in mankind, and it is fitting that in this hour we at home, citizens of all confessions and no confession, should follow the ways of our fathers and solemnly place the fate of our country, our cause and our sons, in the hands of God.

We pray for the boys we know and for millions of unknown boys who are equally a part of us. A year, two years ago, they were the grinning, careless youngsters we saw on the campuses and ball fields and streets of every American town. Now they are steeled and exalted into men; they are the heroes in the hardest and most crucial adventure in history. All too literally, their flesh and their spirit are our shield, the shield of the Republic. "Lead them straight and true, O Lord of Hosts; give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness to their faith."

We pray for our country, this country that is ourselves, as strong as we are strong, as great as we are determined to make and keep it great. In the eyes of our soldiers, looking back for one last look at home as they go forward into the unknown dangers before them, we see that "home" means to them all the world is fighting for. In this moment of pure light that burns away all trivial issues they see the war aims with perfect clearness, and so do we. Our prayer is to be worthy of their courage and their faith in us and the future and brave enough to keep on fighting for peace when they have won it for us.

The cause prays for itself, for it is the cause of the God who created men free and equal. Victory may be hard to win, but it is as certain as the eventual triumph of good over evil is always certain. In this searching hour we are humble as well as proud. We know that we are paying not only for the awful sins of those who willed war but for the sins of those who did not will peace hard enough to take responsibility to maintain it. We are paying also for our own sins. Let us pray for the grace to avoid committing them over again. On our knees let us seek the wisdom to turn the victory we will buy with a great price into a reign of justice.
