

There are, of course, other nations who have different systems of government, but who are not less concerned than ourselves to secure a way of life which these principles reflect. And this is because it is on their maintenance that rights fundamental to human life or progress plainly rest.

From those principles, I believe, derive rights that, following your Declaration of Independence more than 150 years ago, and following also that historic speech by your President ten days ago, I would assert for all men to-day: The right to think, speak and act freely within the law, and to have free access to the thoughts of others; the right of free association, both national and international, with their fellow-men; the right to live without fear of aggression, injustice or want; the right to believe and worship as conscience may dictate. It is the vindication of these rights that men passionately desire.

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The British Commonwealth has grown in an atmosphere of freedom, and has overcome the principle and practice of self-government. We see the fruits of it in the march of free men from the four corners of the earth, men whose loyalty to a common crown—for them the symbol of liberty—has brought them to fight by sea, land and air at our side to-day.

The Nazi system is bondage, bodily and spiritual; political and economic. According to the Nazi philosophy, the State both may and must claim the whole allegiance of man's body and soul. Truth, conscience, mercy, honour, justice, love—where these clash with what is held to be the overriding interest of the State, they are regarded by Hitler as offences. As Hitler plans the world under his so-called 'New Order,' it would be divided into Germans as the master-race and other nations as second-class peoples with rights and interests subordinated to those of the ruling caste.

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It is sometimes suggested that the evil things against which we strive are less black than they appear. We are but witnessing to-day—so runs the argument—one of those titanic outbursts of human energy that, since the dawn of history, have blazed the path of progress. As then, so now, time will purge the dross until from the ashes new truth and new beauty spring.

Such a judgment takes no account of the stark realities with which we are faced. This struggle is a mortal clash of two philosophies, and we only delude ourselves if we suppose that the civilisation we share with you could survive a Nazi victory. It is not only with physical invasion that you or I are concerned, but with a spiritual invasion which, if permitted, would work greater havoc than all the tons of high explosive that it is in the power of the German Air Force to unload.

That, then, is why we are at war—to save our Freedom and the world's Freedom from being murdered, as it has been murdered in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium and France.

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I dare to hope that in this, as in other matters, our two peoples will appreciate the immense responsibility that will jointly rest upon them; and that, in the words of Pascal, 'we may combine justice and power, making what is just strong, and what is strong just.'"

## THE REGISTERED NURSE AND SAFE STANDARDS FOR THE COMMUNITY.

We have received several letters warmly approving the Editorial article which appeared in last month's issue, pointing out to Registered Nurses their duty in reference to professional status and economic security, which they enjoy through the Nurses' Registration Acts of 1919; now that the Royal College of Nursing is permitting its policy to peep out in support of the establishment by law of a Roll of semi-trained "Assistant Nurses," to be controlled by the General Nursing Council for England and Wales, the Governing Body of Registered Nurses, which is entirely financed by them, and which the Council has, *in camera*, approved, and so intimated to the Ministry of Health.

Such action, in our opinion, as No. 1 on the State Register, is a breach of contract with the hundred thousand nurses who have qualified, and paid for the privilege of legal status and economic security.

Moreover, these nurses have paid hundreds of thousands of pounds during the past 20 years in support of the organisation of their profession, and publication of the Register of Nurses, conducted by the General Nursing Council, as the Treasury has no financial responsibility whatever for the administration of the Nurses Registration Act. Thus, any power Parliament exercises under the Act has no claim for assuming autocratic control.

As enfranchised citizens, Registered Nurses must be up and doing, and must let it be known that they do not intend to submit to any gross breach of faith or contract, which the Ministry of Health, the General Nursing Council, the Royal College of Nursing, or social influence, may attempt to inflict upon them. They must take their stand unflinchingly, not only on their rights and privileges, but for the protection of the community in sickness and in health.

If this war has proved anything to the people of this country, and through them to the whole world, it is that duty inspires their action to the death, and it is in the recognition of their duty to the community that Registered Nurses must come out and fight for safe standards of knowledge and skill where national health is at stake. Ignorance, expediency and autocracy will then go down like ninepins.

That the Royal College of Nursing should have sprung this attack upon the Nursing Profession at this time of national stress, when all we nurses have to give of service, energy and health is due to our beloved country, makes its action the more reprehensible. We cannot believe, however, that the rank and file of the College will support this policy of professional suicide when they realise its significance. Members in high places, and those retired from active nursing, are in no danger of economic disaster. We suggest, therefore, that they do not attempt to use their power to influence others in less security to support a policy so detrimental to their professional status, economic security, and, worst of all, to their self-respect, through which the highest altitude of personal integrity is often attained.

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