assumption that the war to end war made mankind’s experience in the search for peace irrelevant brings today its stern retribution. In a characteristic gesture America promoted the outlawry of war, but the prohibition upon war has had the fate of a domestic prohibition, and temperance in the use of arms has not gone as far as temperance in the use of alcohol. Therefore Napoleon walks again; intense, swift campaigns in the last few years have startled Europe, and England stands once again with her back to the wall. We may be reminded that Napoleon was beaten at Waterloo; we may be reminded that something over one hundred and twenty-five years ago people said, “If only that bomb which almost killed him had killed Napoleon, we might have peace.” They took pains to incarcerate his body on St. Helena, but they took no pains to lay his ghost. Caesarism walks again today, though the Kaiser chops his wood at Doorn. I would not be ungracious, especially upon this day, but there is significance in the fact that anybody in the United States can tell you, not only the day, but the hour of the Armistice, but probably no one in this room, not even the professional historians, can tell you the moment when peace was proclaimed. It may be that precisely because we saw the end of fighting as the end of the war, it turned out to be an armistice indeed instead of the peace of which men had dreamed.

Perspective, I say, is the cure for many things. It is the cure for overexcitement about the pressure of population. We have been hearing about the “haves” and the “have nots”. And who are the “haves” who give? Czechoslovakia must have been a “have”, now given to a “have not”. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania must have been “haves”, for were they not forced to give to a “have not”? And perhaps Belgium and Holland—they must be rich, they must be powerful, they must have all that it means to “have” or else they would not now be menaced in order to provide “Lebensraum”.

In our colleges students have been all of a dither for ten years about birth control, while the totalitarians have had a reverse interest in order that they may have more cannon fodder. Yet, the theory and the practice of birth control were the property of the Egyptians and the Greeks centuries before the Christian era. The pressure of population is almost as old as man.

Taxes are in the public mind today, even in my mind, not because I pay them, but because they keep you from giving to Amherst and to Brown the crumbs that might fall from a rich man’s table. Yet, descriptions of the situation current in the third century contain most of the
“new” features which concern us so deeply today. Evidences of codes based upon principles similar to those of the N.R.A., if you can remember back that far in our history, may be found centuries ago. Foreign exchange control, which is now proclaimed as the basis of a “new” international economic order, was skillfully practiced by the Bank of England in the eighteenth century.

It is not necessary for me to insist that history repeats itself; I do not take too literally the old saying, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be, and that which is done, is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun.” Nor am I put in the position of believing that the pattern of history is “sealed” or that history reveals “laws” of universal validity. Without going that far, it is nonetheless perfectly evident that the shock and terror of incidents decline if it is realized that the same sort of thing has happened to this old world before, and that the world has survived. The wisdom of the remark, which you will find way back in the beginning of the Scriptures, “This also shall pass away”, is profound. On the morrow of the hurricane last year, we heard that the glory of New England was gone, and I heard that Amherst was virtually blown away. But in the springtime, with its smiles, when so much of the damage had been repaired, we realized that the same sort of thing had happened before in 1815 and in 1869; the splendor of the foliage this fall reminds us that the glory of New England survives.

So, also, it will be helpful in these days of doubt regarding democracy to realize that democracy itself is not some fresh and untried invention, that it is a sturdy growth maturing through the centuries, that in Britain and America, at least, its roots have struck deep into the soil. Where there was a mere veneer of democracy, the intense heat of the World War and its aftermath has blistered it and destroyed its finish. Where democracy was grafted onto an alien stock, the graft, in some cases, has parted and the bough has withered. But those events, unhappy and unfortunate as they are, do not affect the validity of its principles or the sturdiness of its growth.

If one’s perspective is right, then the perennial crop of Utopians, every new group of panaceas, and many catastrophic events fall each into its proper niche among transient phenomena, and not infrequently among the trivial.

It is perfectly clear, however, that perspective has not been the objective of the public schools and of many colleges during the last two decades. The emphasis has been put upon knowledge of today, upon
knowledge immediately useful. The social studies have been crowded with data of the current scene and successive editions of textbooks have tumbled from the presses in order to keep up to date. Ancient history has fallen from favor, and more and more emphasis has been given to current history and particularly to the current history of the United States. Schools have stressed those events, called "social" and "economic" history, with a direct and obvious bearing upon the problems of today. But the material is out of focus. The simple fact is that the distant past is no more dead to youth than the recent past. If an event happened before he was born, it is just as dead as one which occurred a hundred or a thousand years ago. We may remind ourselves upon this Armistice Day twenty years after, that the students in college today know nothing of the World War except what they are told, and I say to you that to them Caesar is no more dead, either physically or spiritually, than Woodrow Wilson. Indeed, the ideas of Caesar are right now more in fashion than those of Wilson. Good teaching can make one life as real as the other.

But there is this one vital difference, namely, the teacher can indicate the ultimate outcome of the policies of Caesar, but no man, however wise, can yet evaluate the outcome of the policies of Woodrow Wilson. From the teaching standpoint, in the effort to contribute perspective as one of the constituent elements of wisdom, the events which are long past, and the ultimate effects of which can be well assessed and fairly evaluated, are often much more useful than those more recent happenings, the meanings of which belong in the realm of speculation rather than of knowledge.

In recent educational emphasis, distance in space has been treated much like distance in time. At the very moment when "artificial ties" with Europe, against which Washington warned in the Farewell Address, have been bound tightly with steam and motor vessels, airships and airplanes, telephone and radio—at the very time when those things have linked us more closely with the old world than ever before, it is held that the teaching of foreign languages is unnecessary. It is of dramatic significance, I think, that we opened the trans-Pacific air lines to the Philippines at the time when we voted them their independence; we began to get close to them as we drifted apart.

We are told on the morrow of the World War, during which two million Americans went abroad, that the teaching of foreign languages is not necessary. At the very moment when every school boy can hear the voices of the Pope or Mussolini or Hitler or Daladier, we are told
that foreign language is an alien thing that we do not need to know, and yet the voice of Hitler is as near, if not as dear, as the voice of Rudy Vallee or Jack Benny. So, the languages, with all their contributions to perspective, have been grossly caricatured as merely "traditional" studies and as having no "magic"; in fact they are treated with ridicule.

We must also consider television—and I may say that last Saturday, a little later than this by about two hours, I saw my first television of a football game. But the time is coming, and apparently not so far distant, when we will see those events in Europe by television, and see them first-hand. Today there are ten million Americans in daily contact with the foreign languages; there are twenty million listeners to foreign language broadcasts; indeed, the American people are the only ones who turn on the radio with the bath and turn it out with the cat. And yet we are told that the foreign languages do not belong here.

Well, enough for perspective. Foreign language gives a perspective upon events abroad that nothing else can give, and I shall not argue the point further.

There is another important constituent of wisdom as a basis for education for democracy, and that is disciplined emotion. Perspective comes first, then disciplined emotion. I would describe disciplined emotion as a response to values. Such an ideal is as far as possible from the ideal of the conditioned reflex. It is as distant as the two poles from the theory that "facts will lead you to a conclusion". We may well remind ourselves that the great Regents Inquiry in New York found no evidence of high correlation between the acquisition of facts and the attainment of citizen-like attitudes. The students who knew what seemed to the authors of that inquiry terrifyingly little about the government of their towns or the number of newspapers published or the number of churches or all the other community facts that they asked them about, were found to have, in marked degree, a liberal response; however, as they acquired facts, there was an actual decline in their readiness to do anything about their community problems. Well, no one in his right mind would contend, if he thought about it for two minutes, that facts would lead a man to vote. We had a very vital election in the City of Providence on Tuesday in which about one-fifth of the registered voters came out to declare what form of government they wanted for that city. Facts! The papers had piled facts on them, but political parties not being involved, nobody carried them to the polls. The power of the great political machines has not been built or destroyed by the possession of facts or the absence of facts among the voters, but
of human passions, the whole range of human feelings. They may find men grappling with the same urgent problems the world faces today. They may find ideas as clear and thoughts as noble as those for which we hunger on this 11th of November.

But that, ladies and gentlemen, is not the course that the public schools and the colleges have followed. It is infinitely significant that we impress upon every coin, down to the last penny, "In God we trust"; we used to make an exception to that. We left the buffalo nickel without it, but when we put a "free thinker" on the nickel, right across the bridge of his nose we put "In God we trust"—a kind of emotional compensation for putting Jefferson there. Though we put it on our money, I have looked in vain to find "In God we trust" carved over the door of any public school in the United States. We have felt it necessary to withdraw the Scriptures from the public schools because they are partisan, while we lay emphasis upon "the facts of everyday life". In this "new" world, in this "modern" flux, anything as stable as an eternal verity is statistically impossible! Why anyone should expect a healthy emotional response to democracy to develop in that atmosphere is difficult for me to imagine.

I spent some of the summer in Denmark and visited one of the Folk High Schools founded by Bishop Grundtvig. When Bishop Grundtvig and his disciples sought to reawaken Denmark and set it upon a new course, they did not attempt it by showing all the weaknesses and shortcomings of the policy which had led to the defeat of that state; they did not dwell upon the rape of Schleswig-Holstein; they did not dwell upon the loss of two-fifths of the land; they did not dwell upon economic doctrine; and they did not dwell upon social amelioration. They said nothing about how the people were clothed or fed or whether a third of them had too much or a third of them had too little. Instead, they carried the peasants back to the folk songs, the old legends, the stories of ancient days, to the wisdom of the ages. They sought to inspire those beaten youth, they sought to reawaken courage and the spirit of piety. Christian Kold exclaimed on one occasion, "When I am inspired I can speak so that my hearers will remember what I say even beyond this world"! Their aim, in other words, was not to bring the facts of everyday life to the youth of beaten Denmark; it was a disciplined emotion which they had as their goal, and they said: if ever you can awaken courage and a judgment of values, then knowledge will take care of itself. If minds are stimulated and hearts are warmed, then the formulation of policy will also take care of itself. The event has proved they were abundantly right.
The process in America has been the precise reverse. We have become afraid of emotion; we regard it as "sentimental". Even art has to have a message; if it is beautiful, we damn it as "prettified"; if it does not show the garbage can or structural and human dilapidation, we say it is not "honest". The accent is on the triumph of ugliness, and art is too often muckraking on canvas. We have passed through an era of hero smashing. Biographers have tapped youth's idols to show their feet of clay. Some years ago two biographies of Washington appeared almost simultaneously, both devoted to "debunking" the first president. The Constitution was interpreted as the result of an effort by speculators in government bonds to make good their gamble. From Gladstone's magniloquence about that instrument to the modern version of its provenance, the descent has been from the loftiest ideal to the level of a sordid transaction. How that may win devotion has not yet been shown. The emphasis has been shifted from the triumphs in American life to its shortcomings and its failures. We hear little now of the rise from the cabin to the presidency; we hear instead of the "lost generation" and the "tragedy of youth". We hear less and less of the gifts of the industrial revolution, which has brought the slaves of the lamp and many other slaves to do our bidding, and more and more of technological unemployment, until fear rather than courage is the emotion which we inspire. Because of alleged fear of a "sentimental" view of the past, we have interpreted spiritual achievements in materialistic terms. Poetry has been interpreted merely as "response to environment" rather than as a profound emotional insight into eternal verities. Determinedly, the story of the race, on the social and the political side, has been robbed of the sense of victory and achievement; it is all too often interpreted as a record of exploitation and frustration. In fact, the only "success story" currently popular in the public schools is in the field of science, which is non-ethical or ethically neutral, and serves with even hand the will bent upon constructive effort or destructive purpose.

Democracy, itself, has been criticized as not giving "security". If one seeks to discipline emotional response for life in a democracy, I say to you that security is the worst possible ideal. When Woodrow Wilson asked for a world safe for democracy, Gilbert Chesterton came back with the retort, "Impossible; democracy is a dangerous trade." So indeed it is, for if democracy does not live dangerously, giving its enemies the greatest freedom, then democracy does not live at all. Are we not amazed at what goes on in England today? Talk, talk, talk, by Lloyd George! Talk, talk, talk, by Mosely! Talk by Bernard Shaw! All in a world of action! It is dangerous to guarantee freedom of expression to
thoughts we hate. To permit vigorous opposition in a world of blood purges, political assassinations and concentration camps is dangerous. But that course of action, with all its dangers, is the price of democracy.

If you set up for America a political slogan of “Safety first”, it is corrosive of the very central ideal of democracy. Democracy requires the pursuit of many ideals and their pursuit is always inherently hazardous; to set safety above them ends our pursuit before it is fairly started.

In one of our football games this fall there was a serious, indeed a tragic, injury. If “Safety first” were the motto of football, it could not have happened. But the alumni will be in the stands this afternoon crying “Fight!” and “Hit them hard,” because it would destroy football if safety were set ahead of the game. But if football is so precious that we are ready to have it hazardous, as it must be, why should we expect that greater adventure, democracy, to be made safe.

It is, therefore, no accident that an age which has made a fetish of “security”, an age which seeks to escape the hazards of life, has not been effective educationally in forwarding the democratic ideal. Democracy is a great human adventure, and only the adventurous spirit makes it possible. The sense of adventure is an emotional matter, and education must deal constructively with the emotions as well as with the intellect.

There is a third aspect of wisdom of which I would speak this morning. Wisdom is not easily acquired. “For at the first she will walk with him in crooked ways, and will bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her discipline . . . If he go astray, she will forsake him, and give him over to his fall.” Patience is necessary, but industry is even more so. Industry is the third important constituent of wisdom, yet the virtue of hard work is selling at a serious discount in the public schools of America. So meanly do we regard our children that one of the commonest assertions is that the disciplines which have so long charmed the mind of man are “too hard”. Schools doubtful of their own programs, schools crowded with students kept there against their will by the law of the land, schools under political pressure to “pass” their students, schools suddenly supersensitive to the psychological dangers involved in the concept of failure have tended consistently to substitute less and less arduous and infinitely less significant materials of instruction. It is a self-defeating program, if wisdom is our goal.

I do not suppose it is realized by most of you in this room that there are two hundred and fifty public school systems in America where a teacher is forbidden to give a failing grade. It has been preached for
twenty years now that the failure of the student is the failure of the teacher, as though failure were not one of the common, one of the in-escapable experiences of life. "Passing the buck" for failure from the student to the instructor is establishing an escape mechanism that will exact a dreadful toll in the years to come. Learning by industry and by foresight to escape failure is one of life's greatest lessons, and to short-circuit that lesson by abolishing failure by edict is to give a false definition of success and to lend an illusion of achievement where none exists. Such a course of action, whatever the motive, must put industry at a discount, just as blaming things on "society" relieves the individual of his sense of personal responsibility. The substitution of data-laden courses for the ancient disciplines, the substitution of the motive of gain for the motive of service, of materialism as an explanation of life for idealism, the desire to be supported by the state instead of to support the state, all these rot away the incentives to industry.

No man in his right mind wants to abuse the youth of today, but we are in far more danger of killing them by mistaken kindness than by overwork. These children have largely been freed from economic effort; indeed, many avenues for experience in economic self-reliance are closed to them by law. I used to live here in the Connecticut Valley, in Holyoke and in Springfield, and spent my summers for many years in this immediate neighborhood. One time I counted the number of things that I did before I got out of high school to make money; sixteen different occupations lined (rather thinly!) my pockets with money. Of those, twelve are completely closed now by law in order to protect our youth from exploitation. Of course I am not in favor of child labor, but it is fair to point out that when you close the doors of economic experience by law, you must find some substitute.

The students do not walk any longer, even to college; they take a car from the fraternity house to chapel. They are furnished with books and materials in the public schools that once were hard to acquire. All these things, mistake it not, are desirable, but only if in compensation it is recognized that they have released time and energy for the use of education. If those gains are frittered away, there is no real gain at all, and kindness becomes betrayal.

Much of course can be done by modern devices to facilitate instruction. But when the last movie reel is put back in its tin box, when Walter Damrosch's voice fades from the radio, and all the sugar coating has disappeared, the process of learning will still be difficult. Whoever pretends that it is easy is attempting to cheat our youth. Any procedure
which miscalls failure by the name of success does not advance, but prevents, education. Any refusal to make a boy face ideas, because ideas are more difficult to grasp than facts, results in simply stuffing him instead of educating him. Any pretense that the material can really be "correlated" outside his own mind misleads him.

Learning, the use of the mind, is hard work. It requires industry of a courageous kind. I have seen many a boy who would sweat all summer building roads and then quail before a book. But books must be faced; and even worse awaits. What is there must be remembered and reflected upon until it is no longer a piece of a book stuck into the mind, but until the ideas are digested and become an integral part of the mind, just as food well digested becomes part of the body. Admittedly there are some of such feeble mentality that they cannot learn. But there is more danger of mistaking laziness for stupidity than of overworking the feeble mind.

Democracy is the most difficult, it is the most dangerous form of government. It achieves progress in the hardest possible way, in the belief that the process is as important as the result. That process is the realization of the fullest potentiality of each individual citizen—not merely his most convenient use by the state, but his richest self-realization. To that end the state, in normal times, waits upon his voluntary activity for the solution of its hardest problems. Democracy seeks to fulfill that ancient ideal: "The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world." That ideal can never be attained by training for skills alone; it may be attained by education for wisdom—through perspective, response to values, and industry.