

Headquarters, Third U.S. Army, APO 403

July 13, 1945

General notes on remarks to be made to divisions.

"You men have just won a great war. You won it because you were better trained, better equipped, better clothed, and better fed than any soldiers in the history of the world. I sometimes wonder if you fully realize how very great you are.

During combat, I talked to every unit which it was possible to reach, and I told you what to expect in battle and the best methods of rapidly, cheaply, and decidedly defeating the enemy. The record of your achievements speaks for itself. **As a moderate estimate we killed, wounded, or captured ten Germans for every American we lost, killed, or wounded.**

Now that all or nearly all of you are returning to civil life, I believe that I should continue to do my best TO INSTRUCT YOU HOW TO SAVE YOUR LIVES AND THE LIVES OF YOUR CHILDREN. I realize that in doing this I shall be criticized, but my conscience will be much clearer in the knowledge that I have done my duty as I see it, and have evoked criticism, than it would be if I avoided criticism and left my duty unperformed.

It is certain that the two World Wars in which I have participated would not have occurred had WE BEEN PREPARED. It is my belief that adequate preparation on our part would have prevented or materially shortened all our other wars, beginning with that of 1812. Yet, after each of our wars there has been always BEEN A GREAT HUE AND CRY TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE WILL BE "NO MORE WARS," THAT DISARMAMENT IS THE SURE ROAD TO HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PEACE, AND THAT BY REMOVING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, WE WILL REMOVE FIRES. These ideals spring from wishful thinkers and from the erroneous belief that wars result from logical processes. There is no logic in wars. THEY ARE PRODUCED BY MADMEN. NO MAN CAN SAY WHEN FUTURE MADMEN WILL REAPPEAR. I do not say there will be more wars. I devoutly hope that there will not, but I do say that the chances of avoiding future wars will be greatly enhanced if we are ready.

At school, the big, strong boy seldom gets in fights. His companions know his capacity, and he respects their weakness. A prepared America is a strong boy, but a big or little boy who is not physically strong, and particularly one who indulges in unsolicited advice, gets into many fights until at last he is so badly mauled that he loses his manhood. Remember this, AND REMEMBER FURTHER THAT PREPAREDNESS MUST BE PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND SPIRITUAL.

If we have, as we could have, the greatest Army, Navy, and Air Force in the world, AND YET ARE NOT MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY PREPARED TO DO OUR DUTY AS MEN, our efforts will be only partially successful. MANY OF YOU KNOW BY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS TO ADJUST YOURSELVES TO THE BRUTAL REALITIES OF BATTLE AFTER A LIFE-TIME OF BEING TOLD THAT THERE WOULD BE NO MORE WARS. IF WE PRODUCE ANOTHER GENERATION SIMILARLY INDOCTRINATED, WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO WIN THE BATTLE.

Twice in my lifetime America, the arsenal of democracy, has come from behind to ensure victory. It is not evident that should another war arise, those producing it will make every effort to see that the arsenal of democracy is knocked out in the first round? How this can be done I do not know, but I do know that the progress made in airplanes and self-propelled missiles is such that the possibility of an early knockout cannot be discounted.

Perhaps a good illustration of what I am trying to put across to you is this. When I went to school, and I presume it is the same now, all the children were taught how to form a column, and march out of the building in an orderly manner in case of fire. **This instruction did not, so far as I know, produce fire, but when fires occurred, the lives of the majority of the children were saved.** If we go to the extreme of saying that preparedness produces wars, then the instruction in fire drill would produce fires, therefore, we should not teach children that a fire may come, that the building may burn, and as a result, have the sad duty of removing the charred little bodies from the ruined schoolhouse.

You men are all American citizens, and in your generation, you will have a large voice in determining the election of our public servants and the enforcement of our laws. I am sure that you have found out that DISCIPLINE, SELF-RELIANCE, and MUTUAL RESPECT AND FAITH ARE NECESSARY IN THE ARMY.

Referring again to the fire department aspect of the prevention of war, a very large proportion of the duties of the departments in large cities is not the extinguishing of fires, but their prevention through advice and supervision. You men are all potential firemen. You have put out fires by your heroic efforts. **Is it not your duty as citizens to see that other fires do not occur, and that you and your children are not again called upon to extinguish them?**

I have been speaking to you not as your commanding General, but rather as an old man to young men. I am in no way trying to propagandize you, but as I said before, it is my considered opinion that my duty demands that I should explain to you things as I see them.

In closing, let me say that it is my profound hope that we shall never again be engaged in war, but also let me remind you of the words attributed to George Washington. 'In time of peace, prepare for war.' That advice is still good."

G. S. Patton, Jr.