

Preparedness, yes. But the threat which the free world faces is not merely the military threat of armed aggression. There is a spiritual and moral threat even more sinister, pervasive, challenging. The peoples who are the heirs of the Christian tradition, and the peoples in all the countries where freedom has not been exterminated by the all-power state, must face this threat, and defeat it or the steps we are taking to defeat aggression in the military field will not bring peace or security.

Here again the answer lies in preparedness - but of a different kind, with weapons drawn from the arsenal of our moral strength; especially from the faith and the freedom we have inherited. From this we can gain the strength necessary for victory in this other conflict - but only if we recognize that freedom without discipline and responsibility defeats itself; and will soon bring about a society where freedom itself has become the possession of only a tyrannical few.

The guardians of this other arsenal are institutions like this college of St. Michael's. Our Prime Minister, Mr. St. Laurent, who visited you a year ago on your hundredth birthday, said then "The churches, colleges and schools are the main repositories of our spiritual heritage and the main sources of the spiritual strength of the free world".

This is profoundly true and from what I know of this college, and the role which its teachers, its students, and its graduates are playing in this community and throughout the world, I am confident that this spiritual and moral strength will not diminish in the years ahead.

In a lecture which Professor Jacques Maritain gave in Paris in 1939 on the eve of the last war, entitled "The Twilight of Civilization", he said "Each time that someone in any country cedes to some infiltration of the totalitarian spirit, under any form whatsoever, one battle for civilization is lost".

The faith on which this college was founded and on which it so solidly rests has never yielded, and will, I'm certain, never yield, in this battle for civilization. I know that you who are graduating from St. Michael's this year will play your part in that battle.

It is, I know, customary on occasions, such as this dinner, to try to exhort and inspire those who are about to leave college. Your exposure to this process is a small price, of course, to pay for the happy years of college of which your presence here tonight is the witness. Recalling my own experiences as a student in years gone by, I have resisted the temptation to preach or to persuade you; or even to suggest that never before has there been such a fine group of young people released from a college upon an unsuspecting world.

You do not need me to tell you that you are graduating at a time of turmoil and turbulence; of great struggle and great opportunity. I suspect that this has been told every graduating group since the first commencement - or graduation dinner - held in a cave sometime around 5000 B.C. Nor has this kind of challenge ever disturbed any man of spirit.