

To the older people here and throughout the world I would say: In the last Great War the flower of our youth was destroyed and the rest of the people saw but little of the battle. This time we are all in the front line and the danger together and I know that the older among us are proud that it should be so.

Remember this. If war brings its separations it brings new unity also, the unity which comes from common perils and common sufferings willingly shared. To be good comrades and good neighbours in trouble is one of the finest opportunities of the civilian population. And by facing hardship and discomfort cheerfully and resolutely not only do they do their own duty but they play their part in helping the fighting services to win the war.

Time and again during these last few months I have seen for myself the battered towns and cities of England and I have seen the British people facing this ordeal. I can say to them all that they may be justly proud of their race and nation. On every side I have seen a new and splendid spirit of good fellowship springing up in adversity, a real desire to share burdens and resources alike.

Out of all this suffering there is growing a harmony which we must carry forward into the days to come when we have endured to the end and victory is ours.

Then, when Christmas Days are happy again and good will has come back to the world, we must hold fast to the spirit which binds us all together now. We shall need this spirit in each of our own lives as men and women and shall need it even more among the nations of the world.

We must go on thinking less about ourselves and more for one another; for so, and so only, can we hope to make the world a better place and life a worthier thing.

And now I wish you all a happy Christmas and a happier New Year. We may look forward to the New Year with sober confidence.

We have surmounted a grave crisis. We do not under-rate the dangers and difficulties which confront us still. But we take courage and comfort from the successes which our fighting men and their allies have won at heavy odds by land and air and sea.

The future will be hard. But our feet are planted on the path of victory, and with the help of God we shall make our way to justice and to peace.

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