

a certain amount of skill in public speaking. We may have an abundance of knowledge stored in the cerebrum, but if we are not able to apply this knowledge in speech when necessary, then we have missed an important part of our education.

Let, us, then, with this golden opportunity for public speaking which is offered us, get up and express our views before an audience and without consternation. Let us firmly resolve that we will work hard in this particular phase of our training, so that when we depart from college life shall be able to express our thoughts on our feet without the use of nerve pills.

FRANCIS BOLGER, '47

COULD IT REALLY HAPPEN HERE?

I returned thoughtfully to my room and, arrived there, seated myself heavily in my desk chair. It was one of those signs that was bothering me again, you know, one of those war posters. One usually becomes used to them and, sad to say, does not always think as much about their import as he should. But this afternoon I was unusually pensive, and as I was returning to college my eye fell on a sign illustrating some Nazi atrocity and stating beneath, "It Could Happen Here." I started thinking on the words, and while, of course, they were meant to refer to the atrocities committed in countries overridden by our enemies, I somehow confused them and applied them in my mind to the state of affairs in Germany itself.

How awful, I thought, to have our whole countryside, our vast plains, our meadowed lowlands, our rugged mountain districts, and our thriving little seaside cities and towns no longer the haunts of peace and freedom but to have them become the sanctuary of tyranny plotting the world's overthrow. No longer a country loved and admired by its inhabitants, but so many acres of fertile and arid soil, so many power-producing streams, so many fields capable of yielding food enough to support the army that was the very life interest, not of the inhabitants, but of their overlords—their mechanizers.

I brought myself up with a start—Oh, this was ghastly! Moreover, it was foolishness. I must stop thinking about it. It was ridiculous to envisage any of our government leaders whom we all know so well having such interests as these. Why should they want to break up families and regiment their units from the father to the five year old son? Or why should they want to legislate against our most sacred things—religion and art and all that accompanies them? Besides, even if they wanted to (how foolish it was even to suspect it), how could they get the army behind them—that army that had just spilt out its blood for freedom and whose soldiers were our very own boys?

I pushed these foolish and almost traitorous thoughts away, but in a minute or two my persistent mind lapsed again into further consideration of the matter.

Come to think of it, I reflected grudgingly, Hitler and those dictators didn't have the army behind them when they started. Well, then, how the ... ?—how did they get where they are? BANG. It hit me all of a sudden; I realized it now. The people were behind them; they put them where they are! The people put them there??? But how—when—why should they do that? It was their condition, I saw; they were reduced and had lost their national pride and self-respect. They would support any means of redeeming themselves in their own eyes. But didn't they value their freedom? Why did they let their votes establish the system which had since developed into the tyrannical power ramping through the world today? Ah! poor people, I realized, they must have become so lax from sacrificing principle under stress that they were then unconscious of their duty to safeguard their freedom with their votes. They forgot that voting was the exercising of their right to maintain democratic or any other form of government. The combination of men venturing to bring false principles into government and of the resignation of people to attaching no value to their votes was the situation which gave birth to the present day tyrannical dictatorship and allowed them to thrive.

No value to votes—Ah! My protests against the far-fetched thoughts faded. Here was something supporting my wild suppositions. My confusion of the war-poster warning had led to something dangerous, really possible—indeed

I was to conclude, quite probably if something wasn't done soon. My mind became flooded with thoughts of the significance of this fact. True, there were no false principles in our government—at least not openly. Graft there was but no false principles. Still, governments to come might well be supported by false principles because of the conditions of philosophy on our continent. I didn't know much about that, but knew that truth in the field of philosophy was placed so far beneath originality or the revolutionary that no unity or stability could be hoped from that science. And if, as appeared quite probable, a post-war depression should come upon our country as after the last war, then our discontented people might call for something new in government, and this would probably be born from the field of chaotic American philosophy.

Moreover, a proposed government with any amount of backing would have to be very bad to be stopped by the people's votes. For, did I know the value of a vote, the common citizen's estimate of the value of freedom in our government? To be sure, it was exactly ten dollars, a bottle of booze, or a promise of remuneration, and easy work given once every four years at election time. If that was the measure of their worry in this regard there was practically nothing to be feared from that quarter by those who might be desirous of establishing a dictatorship in our country. Of course, people might object after they discovered what their lack of care for the precious pearl of freedom had led them into, but then what can pitiful cries from under the iron heel avail?

As I sought the reasons why a people so recently come from the patriotic pioneer days should allow it even to be thought that they might throw away their freedom, there came back to me the plea for the people given by a person with whom I had once discussed the matter of carelessness about voting. He had claimed that in this generation people are careless in this regard because they have not been taught sufficiently. The explanation now appealed to me. It would eliminate several of my difficulties.

To begin with, it would erase any apparent slur on the character of Canada's people by showing that in their false evaluation of their most precious gifts as citizens they were only partly, if at all, culpable. Then as I proceeded logically

to think about some remedy for this situation, my friend's explanation and manner of facing the problem eliminated another of my difficulties.

Like many students, I am sure, and like many citizens I had only a vague notion of why students are being allowed to continue their education in wartime. Now the reason was clear. If lack of education was responsible for a great error on our countryman's part then education was the remedy. Who, on the other hand, could educate but the educated? Suddenly I saw the tremendous role that was being played by thinking students not only in wartime but always. There was an unending, if unnoticed, campaign against tyranny and falsehood. Just as truly as armed soldiers combat evil forces that threaten their country, conscientious and public minded students ever present a united and aggressive front to those same enemies.

A thrill of pride went through me as I realized the great role I was being permitted to play, if only I looked at things in this larger light, and, resolved to do my task to the best of my ability. I turned my chair around to my desk and returned to my work with gusto, zeal, and inspiration.

JAMES KELLY, '46