The great American experiment in Civil Liberties has been forged by peoples from many lands and nations, from innumerable nations and races. Our population has come by immigration from four continents. We are essentially a nation of minorities who only become a majority when groups of minorities are combined. Beginning with colonial days we had two great streams of immigrants; the first was from Northern or Western Europe and the second, beginning with the Civil War and continuing to the end of World War I, was from Southern and Eastern Europe. The majority of the early population was Protestant, although some were Catholics and a small number Jews. In the second group came a larger number of Catholics and Jews. Southern European immigrant groups are a minority group in relation to older, English-speaking immigrants. But they are part of the white majority in relation to the Negro community. Catholics and Jews are a part of the white majority in relation to the Negro community but a part of a minority when considered beside the dominant majority of Caucasian English-speaking Protestants in the United States. Yet this majority of white Protestants is but a combination of minorities when we consider the cleavage in many communities between Baptist and Methodist, Fundamentalists and Reformed- Jehovah's Witnesses and followers of innumerable cults and Divines.
Statistics are always dull and uninteresting but it may not bore you, but help me to present a clear picture of the diversity of our population and its many minorities to state that one out of every four Americans is today either a foreign-born white or the child of foreign-born white parents; that one out of every five white Americans speaks a language other than English in his home; that one in every ten Americans is a Negro; that over a million and a quarter Mexicans or persons of Mexican descent live in the United States, mostly in Texas and California; that 400,000 American Indians live mostly on reservations in the West and that almost 500,000 Chinese and Japanese live in the United States, mostly on the West Coast until after the evacuation incident of World War II.

By reason of the varied nature of our population different relations have arisen among the groups and individuals, not always reflecting our American belief in equality. Basic to our American heritage is the belief that all men are created by one God, therefore in His sight they are brothers and entitled to equality of opportunity by man and groups of men in society. In order to insure the rights of the minorities of which our country consisted from its infancy, James Madison, in 1789, introduced seventeen constitutional amendments protecting civil liberty. The Senate approved twelve which were then submitted to the states for ratification. Ten of the twelve were ratified and became our federal Bill of Rights.

I do not need here to enumerate what are the rights protected by these ten amendments. You are well acquainted with the fact that these amendments are prohibitions against the federal government violating such fundamental rights as freedom
of religion, speech, press, assembly petition, unreasonable search and seizure, right to trial by jury. I desire rather to call to your attention the fact that the framers of the Bill of Rights knew that its brief list of civil liberties was not complete. The Bill of Rights of many states contained much more detailed and longer civil declaration of the liberties, than those appearing in these amendments. Therefore, the founding fathers included in the Bill of Rights a provision known as the Ninth Amendment, which provides: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny nor disparage others retained by the people."

What are these rights retained by the people? I should classify them as follows:

1) The right to safety and security of the person. Certainly every man and woman has a right to life, the day and the hour of the end of life is in God's hands. Yet in our country so insecure has been the life of certain of our people that in the decade from 1933 to 1946 thirty-six individuals were lynched. The fear and insecurity which arose in the breasts of the Negro minority who were forcefully the subjects of the hideous crime of lynching, spread its curse upon other minorities by weakening their sense of responsibility to protect every man in his right to life and security. It made possible the evacuation from their homes of 100,000 Japanese at a time when our civil courts were functioning and our country was not under martial law. The denial of the fundamental rights of trial by jury to these minorities can happen to other minorities tomorrow. It is the responsibility of all citizens and particularly of those groups who by reason of national origin, race, religion have been treated as a people apart - a
minority - to create and preserve a public opinion which insists upon the generous and wholehearted support of the spirit as well as the letter of the Bill of Rights, by which our civil liberties are protected.

2) The second right retained by the people is the right to freedom of conscience and expression. I am not unaware that in a world becoming increasingly divided, that our government must take all rational precautions against acts which threaten or seem to threaten our national security and existence. We need not, however, create a police state to escape a police state. It can make little difference to the citizen who loses his liberties and dignities as a human being whether his loss came from an enemy or from a native oppressor who subverts democratic government in the guise of protecting it.

There is in our history no evidences that our faith in freedom of thought and speech is not well founded. Jefferson, in his inaugural address, laid down a foundation for this freedom when he said, "If there be any among us, those who wish to dissolve the Union, or to change its Republican form let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated when reason is left free to combat it." Following this doctrine for one hundred and fifty years, the most violent dissidence of political expression has been allowed, not only as a monument to "the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated when reason is left free to combat it" but in the firm belief that "the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas."

It is now apparent that the American people have become so wanting in courage and skeptical of our foundations of
of government as to fall victims to the fears of frightened men inside and outside of government. The Group for Advancement of Psychiatry states that this fear is due to failure to protect the civil rights of our citizens. Experiences that result in frustration, insecurity, fear, and hate undermine the mental health of individuals and create unhealthy relationships between persons and groups. A mentally healthy people could not have produced a Hitler, nor a Mussolini nor a Thomas Committee. Insecurity of the person, of the job, of life, produces fear, which in turn, results in investigations, witch hunts, purges, gestapos, and concentration camps. There are alarming signs that persecution for opinion, if not soon curbed, may reach a point never before attained in American history. The more alarming aspects of the situation include the Loyalty Order of last spring, the more recent "Statement of Security Principles" by the Department of State and the performance of the Un-American Activities Committee. It is the right and heritage of every American freely to form political opinions and to express them; when accused of offense, to be presented with the charges against him, to be confronted by his accusers and given an opportunity to defend himself before a jury of his own peers, cloaked with the presumption of innocence and not of guilt. But the procedure followed by the Un-American Committee and that prescribed by the Loyalty Order and of the "Statement of Security Principles" are such as to subject the citizen to intimidation and abuse without redress and to expose another great minority, two million federal workers, to loss of reputation and livelihood, without the opportunity to defend their honor or their jobs.
3) The third right retained by the people is the right to equality of opportunity.

(a) The right to work is a prerequisite to the right to live. How can a man provide food for himself and his family if, because of God given differences in color, nationality or his own religious convictions, he cannot find work.

(b) The right to rent or buy a house to protect one from the elements of nature is an equally fundamental right — denied large segments of our society by restrictive covenants or the blatant refusal of banks and other financial institutions to afford credit to Mexicans, Japanese, Indians, Jews, Negores and others of the numerous minorities that constitute America.

(c) The right to an education is basic to man’s need and desire to improve his cultural, religious and economic status. Yet millions of Americans cannot attend the schools best fitted to prepare them for citizenship because of the badge of minority status.

I might continue to enumerate the denial of equality of opportunities not characteristic of any section of the United States but experienced throughout the nation by citizens of this country because of their race, religion or national origin. I can never come to New York City to spend a night in a hotel without fear of refusal. Even though I carry a written confirmation of my reservation, I may encounter hours of waiting and disagreeable argument before the room assigned is given to me. To obtain a bed in a hospital is even more difficult in the North or South, in the East or West. Recently a distinguished diplomat of dark complexion, the Haitian Ambassador to the United States, was ordered
from the airport in Nashville, Tennessee because he took a seat. So varied is our population, so diverse the relationships between the groups that one cannot describe even in so monumental a work as The American Dilemma, what may be the inequalities experienced by a member of one of the numerous minorities that constitute our heterogeneous population.

I am, however, a firm believer in a divine purpose for all the problems that face man in his daily concerns and irritating duties. The division of the American population into diverse minorities has its purpose. We are leaven in the bread of the American way of life; the central theme of which is the importance of the individual person. Stemming from this principle is the obligation to build social institutions that will guarantee equality of opportunity to all men, and the basis of which is a fundamental belief that man was created by God in his image. We, in America, have conquered nature—we have harnessed the waters, spanned the seas by air and boat, tunneled the mountains and extracted the wealth of the earth, smashed the atom and in a ball the size of my palm developed a bomb that can destroy man and his discoveries, but we have never been able to breathe into a test tube the breath of human life. We are forced to acknowledge God as the sole creator of man. Thus our American heritage places prime importance on the dignity and integrity of man, the son of God, the father of all mankind. Yes, we are all the children of God, each possessing some divine characteristic, that resembles his image. It is the duty and responsibility of those millions who compose the various minorities in America continuously to prick the conscience of the majority by insisting that all men enjoy those "rights which shall not be construed to be denied
nor disparaged others." Yes, we minorities are God's chosen people, transported to this land and permitted to multiply in the midst, frequently, of disease, ignorance, undernourishment, unemployment, in ghettos on the wrong side of the railroad track or of Park Avenue.

When we minorities unite our strength to protect, safeguard, and secure the rights endowed all the people, then and only then will America prove herself capable of leading the people of the world to eternal peace and security.