Yet I would say--and this is my sixth proposition--that we are still a pluralistic nation and will remain that way a long time. We probably have an advantage over cultures which do not have the same degree of pluralism, the same richness of potential biological strength to draw upon as of cultural strength. Each of the immigrant groups that came to this country from the beginning was like a river carrying its own cultural freightage into the common sea of American life. This, along with the biological richness, had lead to creativeness in American life. If you take, for example, what has happened to Spain since the 15th century, when it chose to expel some of its most creative stock and if you compare it with what has happened to America, you get at least one of the consequences that has flowed from this diversity of ours.

(7) It is not desirable that the various cultural groups should become assimilated. I do not believe in Americanization in the sense of assimilation. Israel Zangwill once wrote a book called "The Melting Pot," and for some time we felt that immigrant groups should go in to the melting pot and become "Americanized." The best thinking today does not go along with that. We tend to think today that each individual American ought to be a member of the larger American culture, but that he should also retain his sense of identity in his subculture, whatever it be. Instead of assimilation we now speak of integration.

I may give an example of what I mean. I said a moment ago that for some time I felt a sense of distance between myself and my family. I do not think that was healthy. I was moving away from them, away from the roots I had in their great tradition, I wanted to put roots down in the American cultural tradition; that much was right. But to put roots down in the American soil did not mean that I had to tear up the roots I had in the tradition of my fathers. There were many of those who tore up their roots and found themselves alienated, torn away, with a sense of emptiness--and who felt bruised by the whole experience. A good many of the problems of mental health in America come either from these conflicts or from the lack of genuine roots. As I went on, going back to my family and its cultural, religious, and historical tradition, I found that this was happening to my whole generation. It is an experience which the American historians recognize as characterizing many of the third generation--in my own case second generation, but mostly the third generation.