

"Man-on-the-Street", Austin, Texas, December 9, 1941

AFS 6372B

John Henry Faulk: Reverend Watts, what do you think about Japan's attack on our Pacific holding Sunday?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I think it was a most cowardly thing for any country to do, to attack when they were still talking in terms of peace and asking for time when they might arrive at peaceful solution to the problem that we were working with.

John Henry Faulk: Well, I gather from that, that you think Mr. Roosevelt's action afterwards was entirely correct that of asking for a declaration of war.

Reverend John Espey Watts: Under the circumstances in the events that had taken place, I don't see that Roosevelt could have done anything else other than ask for a declaration of war.

John Henry Faulk: Well, are you personally behind our country's war program now? Do you think we are following, pursuing the right policy?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I think that we are pursuing the right policy and that I personally am behind any effort that our country is going to make to defend itself. And I think it's the duty of us all to join in defending our country.

John Henry Faulk: Well, what about Japan's reasons? Do you think she had any reason whatever or any justifiable reason for attacking us like that?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I can't see that Japan had any justifiable reason for attacking us as she did. Especially when she had asked for two weeks time to mediate or to arrive at the peaceable solution to the problem, she jumps in and starts fighting within a week.

John Henry Faulk: Reckon Germany had any hand in it?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I think Germany has very definitely pushed Japan into this war to widen the afront of attack and to divert our attention from helping Britain and Russia.

John Henry Faulk: How about our chances of winning? How good do you think they are?

Reverend John Espey Watts: Well, I think that there's no question but what the United States with the Allies will win the war, but it will be much longer than the average person seems to think. The

majority of people that I have talked to about the situation thinks that won't last long, but it seems to me that it will probably be a long war.

John Henry Faulk: Do you think we ought to go ahead and declare war on Germany and Italy while we're at it?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I don't see at the present any advantage in declaring war on Italy and Germany. That will probably come in time; we are virtually at war with them, but why declare war on them when they haven't made any attack on us?

John Henry Faulk: Yes, other than maybe the indirect attack that you mentioned through Japan. Well, what part do you think Russia is going to take in this Japanese-American war. Whose side will she fall on if any?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I'm firmly in hopes that Russia will fall on the side of the United States, but that remains to be seen because Russia is still a doubtful country.

John Henry Faulk: Well, what do you mean by doubtful? I mean who she's fighting for is doubtful?

Reverend John Espey Watts: Yes, who she's fighting for and there's a possibility that Russia might fall on the side of Japan or try to remain neutral and not aid the United States as she could.

John Henry Faulk: What about the South American help for the United States, do you think that will be there?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I think that the South American countries will be solidly behind the United States, that they will do all that they can to support us in this time.

John Henry Faulk: How about our AEF that their mentioning now? Sending out another Expeditionary Force of American boys. Would you condone that?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I wouldn't condone because we've got to do something to protect our men that are already on the front line of attack. Why should we not send out additional help to them, and immediately?

John Henry Faulk: Well, you've got several friends that I know of that are in the war, that are in the army at least, and I know that you hold them in very high regard. Do you think it's worth the price that we're going to have pay? Maybe the lives of those friends to go on conducting this war?

Reverend John Espey Watts: Well if we don't send additional aid to them they will be, their lives will be lost, or at least they will be captured because one of our particular friends is in Pearl Harbor. A boy from our own neighborhood and he should have consideration and I think as all other men and they should be aided. If it takes an AEF to do it why one should be sent.

John Henry Faulk: Send an AEF Well, what about the part we should play here at home?

Reverend John Espey Watts: I think every effort should be made on the part of every individual to support the country and from my viewpoint it seems to me that that should take into fact upon the idea of Christianity. The Christian support and a Christian attitude towards other people and a more definite idea and principles of Jesus Christ should come into the life of each and every individual.