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the whole picture and there are all sorts of elements in the picture that we are not aware of. This was brought home to me very forcibly some years ago when I had a very good friend who had been in the British army in the latter part of the W W I. And he told me how for weeks the regiment to which he belonged was driven back in France by the German forces. And he said the great German attack came and his group was moved back holding every inch as well as they could but moving back slowly back and back and back and back giving way for weeks. O he said it was the most tedious, ~~tiring~~ <sup>tiring</sup>, frustrating experience of being pushed back and back and back and back as the German armies pushed forward. But if they had not held as strongly as they did the German army would have swept clear across France and in those days without the ~~pa/ps~~ planes and everything we have today it probably would have meant their victory in the war. But they held and held and held but were pushed back and back and back and back and they held until they reached the point where the Germans strength was exhausted, where their force was ended. their ability to go forward was completely stopped. Of course he didn't know that that was what was happening -- the Generals I suppose knew something about it, But that's happened and they held and held and held and finally the German force came to an end. and then he said they began to push forward and then in the next couple of weeks they pushed forward 4 times as fast as they had been driven back and then the war was ended when the Germans realized that this was absolutely impossible for them and they surrendered. And he said that they started in pushing forward, O he said, the exhilaration of it. When instead of holding, holding, holding, holding and pushed back and back, they rushed forward and took trench after trench, area after area and were going forward and ~~winning~~ the victory. And I thought in the work of God there are many periods when we are going forward with great success, and there are periods when we are holding, holding, holding against the great force of unbelief and infidelity, against the efforts of Satan and his great success in various sectors of life. We are to quite an extent in such a period today. But it may be just as important in God's economy; certainly it was in this situation that my friend was in there, if they had not held