I just want to say this. There’s a good deal of silly talk about these days – but – and I speak as a hard-headed business man, who has to take risks and knows what he’s about – I say, you can ignore all this silly pessimistic talk. When you marry, you’ll be marrying at a very good time. Yes, a very good time – and soon it’ll be an even better time. Last month, just because the miners came out on strike, there’s a lot of wild talk about possible labour trouble in the near future. Don’t worry. We’ve passed the worst of it. We employers at last are coming together to see that our interests – and the interests of Capital – are properly protected. And we’re in for a time of steadily increasing prosperity.

Just because the Kaiser makes a speech or two, or a few German officers have too much to drink and begin talking nonsense, you'll hear some people say that war's inevitable. And to that I say - fiddlesticks! The Germans don't want war. Nobody wants war, except some half-civilized folks in the Balkans. And why? There's too much at stake these days. Everything to lose and nothing to gain by war.

I say there isn't a chance of war. The world's developing so fast that it'll make war impossible. Look at the progress we're making. In a year or two we'll have aeroplanes that will be able to go anywhere. And look at the way the auto-mobile's making headway - bigger and faster all the time. And then ships. Why, a friend of mine went over this new liner last week - the Titanic - she sails next week - forty-six thousand eight hundred tons - New York in five days - and every luxury - and unsinkable, absolutely unsinkable. That's what you've got to keep your eye on, facts like that, progress like that - and not a few German officers talking nonsense and a few scaremongers here making a fuss about nothing.

Now you three young people, just listen to this - and remember what I'm telling you now. In twenty or thirty years’ time - let's say, in 1940 - you may be giving a little party like this - your son or daughter might be getting engaged - and I tell you, by that time you'll be living in a world that'll have forgotten all these Capital versus Labour agitations and all these silly little war scares. There'll be peace and prosperity and rapid progress everywhere - except of course in Russia, which will always be behindhand naturally.

**Birling’s Speech #3:**

I don’t want to lecture you two young fellows again. But what so many of you don’t seem to understand now, when things are so much easier, is that a man has to make his own way – has to look after himself – and his family too – and so long as he does that, he won’t come to much harm. But the way some of these cranks talk and write now, you’d think everybody has to look after everybody else, as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive – community and all that nonsense. But take my word for it, you youngsters – and I’ve learnt in the good hard school of experience – that a man has to mind his own business and look after himself and his own – and—

*We hear the sharp ring of a front door bell. BIRLING stops to listen.*

**TASK #1** – Highlight everything in Birling’s speech that he gets wrong.

How is DRAMATIC IRONY being used here?

**4. Birling’s Speech #1**

**TASK #4** - Why is Birling wrong here?

*‘We’re in for a time of steadily increasing prosperity.’*

**TASK #2** – What is Priestley hoping to achieve by making Birling unlikeable?

**TASK #3** – Eric tries to speak to his father in this speech but Birling keeps cutting him off. Why do you think Birling treats Eric in this way?

**TASK #6 –** Birling presents his opinion as fact. Why does he do this? What does this tell you about his character?

**TASK #5** – Why is Birling wrong when he speaks to Eric and Gerald?

*‘When you marry, you’ll be marrying at a very good time.’*

**Status –** Identify vocabulary which suggests that Lennie admires George.

What does this suggest about both men’s status in the relationship?