

But Britain did hold out, and held out magnificently. The world's vision cleared, Great Britain stood forth as she has through the centuries, an impregnable fortress of freedom. On this side of the ocean despair vanished. The English channel came to be viewed as the first line of defence of the United States and of the new world. This break in the encircling gloom, this dawn of fresh hope on the horizon, inspired in the United States a new desire to do all that was possible, short of actual war, to aid Britain in her resistance, and in her determination to destroy the enemies of freedom.

The practical expression of that new hope was a steadily increasing supply of planes and guns and munitions and other essentials of war from the factories of the United States to the battlefield of Britain and the training fields of Canada. As each week passed, British determination evoked increased admiration. As admiration increased, support also increased.

The overwhelming majority of the people of the United States came to see in Britain an outwork of their own defence. They saw the need of giving all possible assistance to Britain. But they saw, too, the need for strengthening their second line of defence. If the coasts of America were to be immune from attack, naval and air bases were needed on the islands of the Atlantic. Joint action between the United States and Canada was recognized also as necessary to their common security. From the point of view of Canada and the whole British commonwealth, what followed constitutes the most significant development in international affairs in the three months since our parliament adjourned in August. In ultimate importance, it far surpasses the formation of the triple axis.

The first inkling of developments already under way was given to the public by the president of the United States, on August 16. On that day Mr. Roosevelt announced that:

The United States government is holding conversations with the government of the British empire with regard to acquisition of naval and air bases for the defence of the western hemisphere and especially the Panama canal. The United States government is carrying on conversations with the Canadian government on the defence of the western hemisphere.

I shall have something to say to the house in a moment about these conversations. I wish first to recall the events which followed immediately on President Roosevelt's announcement.

The following day, which was August 17, I met the president at Ogdensburg. Our conversations that day, in continuance of conversations previously held, culminated in the formulation of an agreement which was

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

made public the next afternoon, in a joint statement issued by Mr. Roosevelt and myself. I should like now to place the joint statement on record. It has come to be known as the Ogdensburg agreement. These are its terms:

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defence in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States.

It has been agreed that a permanent joint board on defence shall be set up at once by the two countries.

This permanent joint board on defence shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land and air problems including personnel and material.

It will consider in the broad sense the defence of the north half of the western hemisphere.

The permanent joint board on defence will consist of four or five members from each country, most of them from the services. It will meet shortly.

The Ogdensburg agreement was reached, as I have said, on August 17, and the joint statement setting forth its terms was issued on the following day. On August 20, Mr. Churchill announced in the British House of Commons the decision of the British government "spontaneously and without being asked or offered any inducement" to offer the United States sites for naval and air bases in the British possessions in the western hemisphere. I should like particularly to draw the attention of the house to one sentence of Mr. Churchill's announcement of the decision of the British government. "In all this line of thought," he said, "we found ourselves in very close harmony with the government of Canada."

On August 22, the Canada-United States permanent joint board on defence was appointed. Colonel O. M. Biggar, K.C., became chairman of the Canadian section and Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia of New York, chairman of the United States section. The first meeting of the board was held at Ottawa, in the following week. The board has met since on several occasions, and has been engaged upon continuous study of the sea, land and air problems immediately related to the defence of the north half of this hemisphere.

The next significant announcement came on September 3, the anniversary of the British declaration of war. On that day President Roosevelt announced that an agreement had been reached between the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States by which sites for bases in British Atlantic possessions were to be made available to the United States. In Newfoundland and Bermuda these sites were leased for no other consideration than Great