

cooperation to the war effort of the United Nations, compared with the sacrifice of other countries, but it has given everything that has been asked of it. On the other hand, as is the case with any other republic of our continent, we can affirm without fear of contradiction that the peace and security of the world would have never been endangered by any conflict which originated in intrigues or machinations on the part of the American nations or through their foreign policy, nor has any person beyond the seas found any reason for anxiety in our political structure. It is true that there is no way of giving sufficient recognition to the spirit and sacrifice of the peoples who have fought the war to reestablish justice. But, in considering a world peace organization, it is well also to remember the importance in preserving peace, of the fact that there is a whole continent which has known how to maintain it and is, day by day, perfecting the rules of international law in order to apply them rigorously in the relations of its states among themselves, as well as with the other states of the globe.

Our contribution to the war has been of two sorts: one moral and inestimable, when we declared our solidarity with the United States at a moment when the outcome of the war was not only uncertain but seemed to indicate clearly the triumph of the powers of despotism. The other, strategic: when all of the American states formed a united front and established strict vigilance over the activities of the Axis in America, we discouraged any effort to breach the defenses--then still weak--which the United States was endeavoring to erect throughout the world to check the attacks of Germany and Japan. If there had been an opening in America for the pacific or military penetration of an enemy who at that time had the most ambitious of plans for world dominion, who can say that the course of the war would not have been longer or perhaps more doubtful?

But we do not wish to overestimate our role nor even that of the Latin American troops and the Latin American aviators who are fighting overseas. As a whole, we are a group of small nations from the military point of view. But peoples who are growing, like ours, do not have a static place in the international community and they should be thought of as a potential force, still undefined but capable of transforming themselves, as the United States did in a century, to a higher scale of development.

From another point of view, war comes closer to our shores as the world gets smaller through the expansion

and growing rapidity of communications. It is not easy to understand why, as we become more actively and intensively linked to the western civilization from which we drew our language, our tradition, our religions, our culture, we should pay greater tribute to force and uncertainty, but we accept it as an inescapable fact. In the Napoleonic wars in the last century, which were also world wars, we took advantage of the European bedlam to obtain our independence. But in the first World War of this century some of us American states were belligerents and other neutrals. In the present war there was no neutrality nor could there be any. In the next one, if unfortunately there should be one, we would be unconditional belligerents and we are fully aware of the fact that the devastation and suffering which have been inflicted on most of the countries here represented would fall on all of the Americas, without exception, from pole to pole. Our concern with universal peace and security is, therefore, no less than that of those countries which have known insecurity and war in its most cruel manifestations. The countries of Latin America experienced violence and instability in a century and a half of domestic strife over the political principles to dominate in each state; if they hate war it is because they have undergone it; there is little difference between dying from a bayonet wound on an Andean plateau and being smashed by an ingenious robot bomb. But we have been able in general to banish war from our international relations. And we know full well that another world war, breaking out in another continent for whatever reason foreign to our direct interests, would still be our war. It is our unequivocal duty to sit with you to discuss the best means of making such a war impossible precisely because we are small, almost defenseless, countries as compared with the great powers but with an undeniable place in the front ranks of peace-loving nations, that is, of those nations who neither seek nor welcome wars and renounce them as an instrument of national policy.

The Dumbarton Oaks Proposals are based on an exact and practical evaluation of this truth; the small nations cannot guarantee the peace and security of the world; only the large ones can. We are all in agreement. But the basis for this truth lies in the fact that it is only the great powers which can menace the peace and security of the world. When, in the fall of 1944, the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals were discussed and approved it did not seem as clear as it does today that the three aggressor nations of the Axis would not again be in a position to