

movement of opinion developed even to the length of urging the retention in America of supplies of equipment and munitions desperately needed by Britain. Ominous rumours spread and gained credence that Britain could not hold out.

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