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RESPONSE TO THE  
ADDRESS OF WELCOME

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

by

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10:00 a. m.

It seems to me most fitting for the American Bar Association to meet in Detroit this year. For Detroit symbolizes to the whole world the American might of war production. Here also we are brought into a scene that comes very close to being a composite of the whole vast community which we call the United Nations. Here the representation of peoples--Poles, Czechs, Serbs, Canadians, Russians, French, British, and all those others working and fighting in our cause--is very nearly complete. It is good to be here.

My friend, Mr. Walter Armstrong, president of the American Bar Association, has assigned to me the agreeable duty of responding, on behalf of the Association, to the gracious welcome you have extended us. In so doing, with your permission, I should like to direct my remarks principally to our Canadian friends.

You are our visitors, who have crossed the line that physically separates our two nations; but which, always unfortified, actually links us together. Your visit does us honor. I do not mean only that your great bar is represented here by such distinguished leaders; or that our heritage of the common law holds us in a like tradition and similar faith; or, even more, because at this grim moment we fight together as brothers in arms, American Rangers and Canadian Commandos, as on the now famous beach at Dieppe. I cannot help but remember that you Canadians are seasoned veterans of the war against our common foe, who have, since the war started, poured out the strength of your resources and thrown your sons into the battle without counting costs in treasure, or in life. We, not long ago recruited, who have not yet placed our full might in the field, take this

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occasion to express our inspiration at your example. Gentlemen, we salute you!

Four years ago, the President of the United States, speaking at Kingston, told you:

"The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other Empire."

At eleven o'clock on the night of December 7, 1941, the Government of Canada declared war on Japan, seventeen hours before a like declaration by the United States.

I need not emphasize today the ties that bind us - the long years of peace, the unguarded frontier, a common language and our Christian faith. Both of us are young nations, vigorous in the tonic virtue of the new world. Tradition, I suggest, has not blunted our sense that life is an adventure rather than a habit; history has not limited the shape of our future; and from the life we have created comes the promise that life can be even better, that hope need not give way to the leveling futility of cynicism.

What we have won, what we hope to achieve is now threatened by a dark wave that has engulfed Europe, washed against the white cliffs of England, and now rises above Russia and the East, pointing to Asia, to the Pacific. The barbarism of Japan has joined the machine fury of the Western Hun to destroy us, to destroy our law, and our freedom; to rub the pride of our new world in the dust beside the trampled life that once was Europe's, that once was Christendom.

Make no mistake - the legions of the enemy march still as conquerors - in Russia, on the Mediterranean, in Asia. This hour is very dark, make no mistake. Time presses, and still they march. We have made our excuses, said we were unprepared, said that democracies move slowly. Do democracies move slowly to their death? Can we not brush away, each Allied nation in his separate field, the hesitations, the distrust, the jealousies? Democracy is a great dream. Now to fulfill its hope we who pretend to love its ways must live greatly if we are to live at all.

If in the midst of action we are occasionally to take counsel, as now, let us not waste words in the amiable platitudes that too early laid to sleep the sentries of our minds. Can we not find words to sting our hearts with action, immediate and unswervingly continued; words that will pursue us like the Fates when we go home to our little comforts; words that carry the sweat and tears and blood into our lives, that have hardly felt the havoc of the world?

Perhaps what I say needs saying more to my own countrymen than to you Canadians who so much longer have known the sacrifice and endurance that we are but beginning to apprehend. But is this not what we must say, and say again, in words that do not seek to find some easier way? Most of us here are too old to fight; and we cannot help but feel the frustration of older men, who long ago fought in another war, and who can but stand aside and watch the youngsters, see our own sons move into battle. But, since our hearts are still as young as they were then, we have our part to play. Lawyers have been leaders in the long struggle for freedom that has

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brought us where we are today. The times are dark; but men's souls have not been stirred to know the need, the desperate need, for unity and sacrifice.

And thus my greeting to you Canadian lawyers, to all of us alike, is that we are at war against an infinitely resourceful and vastly successful foe; desperately in earnest, moving swiftly towards a long-planned end.

I do not despair. I look across the vast awakening power of America, and remember the words John Milton spoke three hundred years ago:

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks. Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means."