The next thing we need to do, Mr. President, if I may be so bold, in this spirit of honest candor, is to appeal to our allies, in the name of reason, to frankly face the postwar alternatives which are available to them and to us as a means to preserve tomorrow’s peace for them and for us. There are two ways to do it. One way is by exclusive individual action in which each of us tries to look out for himself. The other way is by joint action in which we undertake to look out for each other. The first way is the old way which has twice taken us to Europe’s interminable battlefields within a quarter of a century. The second way is the new way in which our present fraternity of war becomes a new fraternity of peace. I do not believe that either we or our allies can have it both ways. They serve to cancel out each other. We cannot tolerate unilateral privilege in a multilateral peace. Yet, that seems to be the fatalistic trend today. I think we must make our choice. I think we must make it wholly plain to our major allies that they, too, must make their choice.

I hasten to make my own personal viewpoint clear. I have always been frankly one of those who has believed in our own self-reliance. I still believe that we can never again – regardless of collaborations – allow our national defense to deteriorate to anything like a point of impotence. But I do not believe that any nation hereafter can immunize itself by its own exclusive action. Since Pearl Harbor, World War II has put the gory science of mass murder into new and sinister perspective. Our oceans have ceased to be moats which automatically protect our ramparts. Flesh and blood now compete unequally with winged steel. War has become an all-consuming juggernaut. If World War III ever unhappily arrives, it will open new laboratories of death too horrible to contemplate. I propose to do everything within my power to keep those laboratories closed for keeps. I want maximum American cooperation, consistent with legitimate American self-interest, with constitutional process and with collateral events which warrant it, to make the basic idea of Dumbarton Oaks succeed. I want a new dignity and a new authority for international law. I think American self-interest requires it.