

THE WORLD WAR II CONFERENCES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.  
AND QUEBEC CITY: FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT  
AND WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

by

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation seeks to show the evolution of the diplomatic relationship between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston S. Churchill from 1941–1945 based on the five conferences that were held in the Americas beginning in December of 1941. Three were held in Washington, D.C. in 1941, 1942, and 1943. Two were held in Quebec in 1943 and 1944. The relationship was a true marriage, complete with disagreements, arguments, and consensus. The meetings, however, would cement the relationship of Churchill and Roosevelt well enough for it to withstand destructive elements within and long enough for the Allies to win the war—together. The personalities of the two

leaders, the roles they played as leaders of their two nations, their decisions, and the postwar impact of many of those decisions can best be viewed in the context of how they worked together within the conferences to overcome both differences on policies and their own sometimes obdurate personalities. The issues discussed at these meetings included topics of great significance for the joint war effort and for the postwar world including the joint relationship with China, military leadership in the war effort, the joint military campaigns of North Africa, Italy, and, of course, D-Day. Other issues included the sharing of atomic bomb information, relations with the Free French and Charles de Gaulle, and the future of postwar Germany. The five conferences are the setting for change in the dominance in the partnership. The alliance between the two nations began as one of equals and yet it evolved during the war as the United States became the predominant partner.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In his famous “Iron Curtain Speech,” Churchill rhetorically asked, “Would a special relationship between the United States and the British Commonwealth be inconsistent with our overriding loyalties to the World Organization? I reply that, on the contrary, it is probably the only means by which that organization will achieve its full stature and strength.”<sup>1</sup> While he was speaking of the United Nations organization, then in its infancy, Churchill could just as easily have been referring to the Anglo-American alliance that helped win the Second World War. What is so fascinating about this alliance, however, is that it was so successful. Underneath this great union was a dark side of disagreement, anger, distrust, Anglophobia, anti-Americanism, and resentment. Churchill and Roosevelt publicly presented to the world a picture of harmony, friendship, and alliance, in part because these two men did have a true and deep friendship that lasted until Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945. Eleanor Roosevelt once referred to it as “a fortunate friendship.”<sup>2</sup> The alliance, however, became increasingly strained as the Americans, led by Roosevelt, came to dominate the war effort. After 1943, Roosevelt was less interested in satisfying British needs and looking ahead to other postwar relationships. By that time Great Britain had become the junior partner in the alliance and Churchill was not above begging to get what England needed. At

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<sup>1</sup> Winston S. Churchill, “Finest Hour”, *Journal of Winston Churchill*, Summer, no. 135 (2007), 28.

<sup>2</sup> Jon Meacham, *Franklin and Winston: An Intimate Portrait of an Epic Friendship*. New York: Random House, 2003, xx.

Quebec in 1944, when Roosevelt hesitated before signing the agreement to extend Lend-Lease for Great Britain, Churchill emotionally asked, “What do you want me to do? Get on my hind legs and beg like Fala?”<sup>3</sup> This manuscript will explore how the relationship of Churchill and Roosevelt evolved using the five conferences Roosevelt and Churchill held in the Americas between 1941 and 1944. These conferences were the Arcadia Conference in Washington, D.C. (December 22, 1941 – January 14, 1942); the Second Washington Conference (June 19, 1942 – June 25, 1942); the Trident Conference in Washington, D.C. (May 12, 1943 – May 25, 1943); the Quadrant Conference in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada (August 12, 1943 – August 24, 1943); and the Octagon Conference in Quebec City (September 12, 1944 – September 19, 1944).

There are a great many scholarly works on the relationship between the two leaders and most discuss the five conferences in very general terms, giving them a cursory page or two.<sup>4</sup> They usually discuss the primary topics of the conferences and, perhaps, a few of the agreements that the two leaders and their military chiefs ironed out. They do not, however, examine the conferences in detail showing how the alliance began and how it changed from one conference to the next. The alliance between the United States and Great Britain was, for the most part, a long-distance one. Following the Arcadia Conference, the Combined Chiefs of Staff worked together in Washington, D.C., but the major decisions of the war had to be made in the presence of the two leaders and this required face-to-face conferences. This manuscript will look at the day-

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932–1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, 470.

to-day events of the conferences and interpret and assess the impact of the discussions, especially the disagreements, between the military chiefs and between the two leaders. At the beginning of the alliance, the British delegates were of the opinion that militarily they were the senior military partner. They had been fighting in the war for over eighteen months. I will show how the partnership evolved into one of American dominance and yet remained an alliance strong enough and long enough to defeat the fascist military alliance.

The United States formed out of English colonies founded in the seventeenth century, and shared a common language and heritage with the mother country. These English colonies fought a long war against Great Britain beginning in 1775 and a shorter one beginning in 1812. In spite of those two wars, these two great nations remained strong reciprocal trading partners. Trade was their predominant link in the nineteenth century, although in the 1830s, 1840s, 1860s, and 1890s, trade was not sufficient to maintain harmony, and the United States and Great Britain narrowly avoided going to war over various political and geographic issues. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Great Britain acknowledged that the United States had become a leading industrial nation and a strong participant in international relations. During the First World War, the British and the French anticipated that newly arrived U.S. forces would be incorporated in with the war-weary Anglo-French military. The U.S. military viewed this alliance differently and chose to fight as an associated power, independent

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<sup>4</sup> Some examples of these scholarly works are Warren F. Kimball's *Forged in War*, David Stone's *War Summits: The Meetings that Shaped World War II and the Postwar World*, and Mark A. Stoler's *Allies and Adversaries*.



of direct Anglo-French command. Commercial rivalry and economic arguments during the inter-war years, particularly the U.S. refusal to adhere strictly to the gold standard, caused an even greater rift between the United States and Great Britain.<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Neutrality Acts, passed between 1935 and 1937, ensured that the United States could not be counted on to join an Anglo-French alliance if war broke out in Europe. This desire for neutrality began to change with German conquests and victories beginning in 1938. Fear of the growing Fascist strength in Europe caused some Americans to move away from neutrality. Lend-Lease, which began in 1940, was a signal that the United States, while not yet willing to go to war, saw a Nazi victory as a threat to its own national security. It was at this time that Roosevelt and Churchill began corresponding on a regular basis.

Beneath the surface of trade and political interaction, a working alliance between Great Britain and the United States had been established even prior to the United States entering the Second World War. Military representatives from both sides established a global war plan, ABC1, in 1940. This provided the thesis for the agreement of Churchill and Roosevelt at their first formal meeting held in Argentia Bay, Newfoundland, Canada, in August 1941. At this conference, Roosevelt agreed with Churchill that in the event of a two-front war (Germany and Japan), Nazi Germany must be defeated first.

The alliance and the friendship endured in spite of forces that at times could easily have pulled the two leaders apart to the point of dissolving the union. Both

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<sup>5</sup> Mark A. Stoler, *Allies in War: Britain and America Against the Axis Powers, 1940–1945*. New York:

Churchill and Roosevelt were surrounded by strong men such as General George C. Marshall, Admiral Ernest J. King, Anthony Eden, and General Alan Brooke. As they had in the First World War, British military leaders saw the entrance of the Americans into the war as a welcome addition to *their* war effort. The war effort, they assumed, would continue just as the British military chiefs envisioned. The Americans, however, had vastly different ideas on how to defeat the Germans while taking some of the burden from the hard-fighting Soviet Army in the east. Pearl Harbor was, thus, a double-edged sword for the British. It brought the Americans into the war, yet the British always feared that the war in the Pacific would become the primary focus of the U.S. military.

Following this introductory chapter, I will explain how the British delegation came to the first conference determined to fight the war their way. The American participants, still reeling from the attack on Pearl Harbor, reacted to a public cry for retaliation against the Japanese. Roosevelt held firm to the Europe-first pledge, but the British came well-organized with a plan that ran counter to American visions of military strategy. Churchill and his military chiefs wanted to “close the ring” around Fascist-held Europe while the American military leaders wanted a strategic thrust against the heart of the German army in Western Europe. The wartime alliance was so new that until the United States was militarily ready, a defensive stance would have to be maintained by their joint forces. Roosevelt knew that American integration must be rapid, however, and that allowed the British military representatives to present their

plans for what the Americans would ultimately call pin-prick warfare, diversionary attacks on the periphery of Europe. The American military chiefs feared that this method of fighting would result in the two Allied armies becoming bogged down and wasting valuable resources. The British, however, were dominating the fighting at that point and the Americans could do little but agree with British ideas while building up U.S. military strength.

Yet even in the infancy of the alliance, the United States began to demonstrate its desire to dominate. The Combined Chiefs of Staff (representatives of the military forces from the United States and Great Britain) were headquartered, at American insistence, in Washington, D.C. Roosevelt made it clear to Churchill that the United States was not always going to acquiesce to British decisions regarding governments-in-exile, many of which were temporarily housed in London. Similarly, Churchill made it clear to Roosevelt that the British did not hold the Chinese, led by Chiang Kai-shek, in the same apparently high regard as the Americans. While not clear to the military planners at the time, the Arcadia Conference also highlighted a fundamental difference in military war planning. Churchill was a leader very much involved in the day-to-day operations of the military. Roosevelt proved more willing to let his military chiefs carry on their work independent of his personal supervision. Churchill wrote in his diary that, fundamentally, the Americans were simply different. The Americans, he wrote, looked

at the big picture and took control at the beginning. The British had more of a wait-and-see attitude.<sup>6</sup>

By June of 1942, the war in Europe and Asia created the need for another conference. Hitler controlled all of western Europe and had sent forces to North Africa to aid the Italians in their quest to control that region. He had three army groups fighting against the Soviet Army from Leningrad in the north to the Caspian and Black Seas in the south. The Japanese were continuing their conquest of major regions of the western Pacific. The next chapter will focus on the American military chiefs' strong desire for a cross-channel invasion. For the British, a conference was necessary to reiterate what Churchill and his military staff believed the U.S. role should be in the war effort: maintain a defensive stance in the Pacific Theater and support the British in Europe. The British desired an Allied attack in North Africa. The American military chiefs, however, recognized that supporting the British plans ("diversions" as Marshall called them) would delay their efforts to carry out a massive attack on the German Army in the west. Roosevelt and Churchill became referees between their military staffs and sought a way to best use American resources. In the Pacific, the American military responded to the Pearl Harbor attack by building up military resources and this theater of war became increasingly dominated by the Americans. As this was occurring, Churchill seemed embarrassed when Australia and New Zealand made clear they would depend on the U.S. military, not the British, for protection against the Japanese. The sharing of

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<sup>6</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Grand Alliance*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950, 673.

atomic secrets also became an increasingly important topic as news reached the Allies that the Germans were well on their way toward developing some new type of weapon. While both allies were interested in atomic research (and arguably the British were further ahead in their work on an atomic weapon), the Americans quickly dominated the work for logistical reasons. And as the Americans began working in earnest on the Manhattan Project, those in charge began to question British requests for information sharing. British anger over being excluded from this information resulted in copious messages between the two leaders and the issue would not be formally resolved until 1943.

In the fourth chapter I analyze the third conference of the war, the Trident Conference, held in Washington, D.C. in 1943. This conference clearly illustrates the divisiveness and differing ideologies of the military chiefs. Roosevelt and his military advisors had acquiesced to Operation TORCH, the Allied invasion of North Africa, but in truth it was the only choice they had. They did, however, take over much of the planning for the invasion and made it predominantly American. The American military refused to be ancillary to British plans. With TORCH over, Churchill argued for continued Mediterranean operations with Italy as the next target. His rationale was that the buildup for the cross-channel invasion was not yet ready and military operations needed to continue. Both the Chinese under Chiang Kai-shek, and French leader Charles de Gaulle continued to pull at the fabric of this alliance. Roosevelt and the Americans continued to support the idea that China could be a major fighting ally, an idea Churchill did not share. The British continued to support de Gaulle even as he

gained strength in his quest to become de facto leader of the French government in exile. The Trident Conference ended harmoniously, as all conferences did, but the “honeymoon” was definitely over. The American military chiefs were firmly set in a cross-channel invasion and their insidious threats of a greater concentration in the Pacific loomed large for the British.

Transatlantic divisiveness precipitated the need for another face-to-face meeting, and in Chapter Five I analyze the meeting in Quebec City, Canada, in August 1943, that resulted in the final plans for the cross-channel invasion. Prior to the conference, Roosevelt and his military chiefs had even discussed the possibility of conducting the operation without the British. While not militarily feasible, the idea of conducting a cross-channel invasion alone shows the considerable determination of the Americans. The British came to the conference intending to argue for continued operations in the Mediterranean. The overthrow of Mussolini in July helped solidify plans to attack Italy and use it as a base from which to attack Germany from the soft “under-belly” of Europe. The American military advisors perceived Italy only as a useful tool. Strategic areas could be taken and used for the war effort. The British saw Italy as a major prize, with the Germans tying up large portions of its army to keep it out of Allied hands. For the Pacific Theater, Admiral King asked for more Allied resources and prodded the British to reopen the Burma Road, which had fallen to the Japanese in 1942. The Americans wished to use it to help support the Chinese. The British were reluctant to become involved in any operation that would not prove to be a guaranteed success. The British, in fact, used OVERLORD as an excuse not to improve resources in the Pacific.

This seemed ironic in light of their desire to continue peripheral operations in Europe, possibly at the expense of OVERLORD. Churchill made clear, however, that the British were firmly behind OVERLORD, although the American military chiefs would leave Quadrant unconvinced.

Churchill and Roosevelt met alone for the last time in September 1944, once again in Quebec City. OVERLORD began on June 6, 1944, and Roosevelt and his military chiefs were content to maintain the military status quo. But by now the British had taken a definite back seat to military planning and wished to regain a status of equality in the military operations of the war. Operation TORCH had an American commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, and had proceeded with American military dominance. While a strong Allied effort, OVERLORD was also commanded by an American (Eisenhower). The Americans controlled the bulk of the fighting in the Pacific and they were firmly in control of the creation of the atomic bomb. The American military chiefs refused to become involved in any additional peripheral operations, such as in the Balkans, the Levant, and Norway. They focused on attacking Germany from the west. The British had little choice but to go along with this plan. Their military and industrial might was spent and any increased effort would have to come from the Americans. Churchill's goal at the conference, code-name Octagon (Churchill chose the names of the conferences and many of the military operations), was to ensure American continuation of the Lend-Lease Program. With the success of the OVERLORD landings, it also became necessary to begin discussions of postwar Europe. Germany would be divided into regions, but the actual control of Germany

needed to be established. The U.S. secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, presented a plan to de-industrialize Germany, turning it into a large agricultural or pastoral nation unable ever again to develop a large war-making machine. The British argued against this, recognizing that a non-industrial Germany would not be a strong trading partner. Roosevelt and his staff generally backed the Morgenthau Plan, but ultimately, after the conference, recognized it as too Draconian. The Morgenthau Plan would provide subsistence-level food for a starving Germany, but it would not rebuild a Germany strong enough to become a viable trading partner. Regarding the Pacific Theater, Churchill came to the conference with a plan to recover Britain's status as an equal partner in the alliance. As soon as the European Theater of war permitted, he would transfer the British Main Naval Fleet to the Pacific to fight side-by-side with the Americans. The American military chiefs, particularly Admiral King, did not totally embrace the idea, suggesting that the British were proposing this for ulterior motives. King saw this as an example of British political show.

Roosevelt and Churchill were able to create a union that was ultimately successful in its primary goal—to defeat the fascist alliance. Their friendship and desire for success helped them rise above the disagreements and distrust that were so often evident in the face-to-face meetings of the military chiefs. Ironically, it was the face-to-face meetings of these two leaders that ensured the unity of the war effort. The war summits described in this manuscript took place over a period of three years and during that time the character of the alliance changed. The British no longer had to fight alone, but by the end of 1944 the Americans had become the dominant partner.



## CHAPTER 2

### WASHINGTON TAKES COMMAND: ARCADIA, THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE (DECEMBER 22, 1941 UNTIL JANUARY 14, 1942)

The Arcadia Conference is best viewed as a three-week period when the Allies came together to review the overwhelming issues they faced. The beginning of the conference held great promise for the British, who would no longer have to face the fight alone. For the Americans it was an important opportunity. Winston S. Churchill, prime minister of Great Britain, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, president of the United States, would use this first wartime conference to continue getting to know one another and to understand one another's strengths and foibles. Both men had health issues and yet kept schedules that would have exhausted even healthy men. Strong men, such as Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, surrounded both of the leaders, each with their own ideas regarding the alliance and how to conduct the war effort. At the Argentia Conference in August 1940, Churchill and Roosevelt had insisted they would not act as "umpires between quarreling generals and admirals."<sup>1</sup> Both leaders intended to continue that premise into the Arcadia Conference although the quarrels, while not major, would still surface. The Arcadia Conference did not reveal many of the underlying suspicions and apprehensions that would plague future conferences and would become a detriment to the alliance. The British came to Washington in December 1941, intent on presenting their plan for

fighting the war and explaining how the Americans fit into that plan. By the time they left, the British had taken a back seat to what would increasingly become a U.S. dominated alliance.

On December 9, 1941, Churchill sent a telegram to Roosevelt suggesting a conference to discuss war plans. In this telegram, Churchill revealed his relief at finding the United States “in the same boat” with Great Britain, and later recorded in his diary that he had gone “to bed and slept the sleep of the saved and thankful.”<sup>2</sup> After receiving the required approval of the king to leave the country at such a critical moment, Churchill made arrangements to go to Washington where he planned to stay for at least three weeks. Parliament approved a declaration of war against Japan on December 9 and within hours the Japanese were attacking the Royal Navy in the Pacific, quickly sinking the battleship *Prince of Wales* and the battle cruiser *Repulse*. Churchill learned the news on the morning of December 10 and expressed horror, recognizing that “over all this vast expanse of waters Japan was supreme, and we everywhere weak and naked.”<sup>3</sup>

Churchill set out for the United States aboard the *Duke of York* with an entourage that included Lord William Beaverbrook, British minister of supply; Admiral Alfred Pound, first sea lord; Air Marshal Charles Portal, chief of the Air Staff; and Field Marshal John Dill, head of the British Joint Staff Mission at Washington. With little to do on board during the seven days’ journey, Churchill spent most of his time working

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<sup>1</sup> Warren F. Kimball, *Forged in War*, New York: William and Morrow Co., 1997, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 608.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 620.

on an agenda for the meeting so that, as he told Brigadier Leslie C. Hollis, the secretary to the British Delegation, “the whole scope of the war can be discussed.”<sup>4</sup> His mood was optimistic, yet realistic, as he made plans to present the British version of how the war should now be fought. He talked about the German expulsion from Libya, for example, yet acknowledged as early as midvoyage that “no relief is possible for Hong Kong.”<sup>5</sup> By the time Churchill arrived in Washington on December 22, 1941, the list of topics he planned to discuss at the conference (hereafter referred to as Arcadia) had grown substantially.

The new partnership of the British Commonwealth and the United States brought renewed hope to many, yet also revealed a whole new set of problems. What had once seemed minor worries for the British now became major issues that had to be addressed in collaboration with the Americans. An example of this was the role of Portugal in light of a possible alliance between Germany and Spain. While a formal alliance never developed during the war, there was, for the greater part of the war, a fear that Portugal’s larger and more militaristic neighbor would swallow Portugal. And the loss of Spanish neutrality to a German alliance would be devastating to any Allied presence in the Mediterranean, including British-held Gibraltar. The loss of Portugal would be an equally devastating blow given its position at the entrance to the Mediterranean and the position of its Atlantic islands, particularly the Azores. The Atlantic islands were a constant worry for the Allies because of their mid-Atlantic

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<sup>4</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Washington, 1941–1942, and Casablanca, 1943*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968, 21.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

position and their proximity to both the northwest African coast and South America. Another example of the change this new alliance created was the role that the Pacific War would play in overall war objectives. The attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7 had created a desire in most Americans for immediate revenge against the Japanese, possibly upsetting Roosevelt's promise at the Argentia Conference that the primary focus of the war would be Europe first. British war plans had consistently been focused on fighting Germany while maintaining a defensive stance in the Pacific. Considering American emotions, that might prove difficult to continue as an alliance priority.

The partnership also created an entirely new war apparatus that other allies wished to join. The Dutch government-in-exile, for example, watched every movement of the American-British alliance to make sure that its voice would be heard in regard to the vast Dutch presence in the Pacific. The Polish government-in-Exile, in similar circumstances, also wished to participate in the planning for the European Theater of war. China, Vichy France, Charles de Gaulle and the French Resistance, the Soviet Union, Ireland, Greenland, Iceland, control of North Africa, and South America all were topics that would become a major focus of the alliance. For Roosevelt and Churchill, it was as if the entire family decided to join the newlyweds on their honeymoon.

Historians Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell wrote about the overall American position regarding the scope of specific plans for war. They pointed out, in fact, that there were few explicit plans, and most of those concerned a possible war with Japan. Even after a series of conferences the United States held with the British in 1940

and 1941, by the time of the Arcadia Conference only the British had specific plans for defeating the Germans with American help: closing the ring around Germany by encircling it geographically; freeing the local population to encourage their participation in subversive activities; and launching an eventual massive assault on Germany.<sup>6</sup> The Americans, while agreeing to the massive assault on Germany, were reluctant to dilute manpower resources to participate in what they considered subsidiary theaters. For the Americans, the most contentious issue and divisive factor of the Alliance for the entire war was the British propensity for peripheral actions to complete the first part of their plan—closing the ring around Germany. American discontent with this distraction from the overriding aim to defeat Germany led to a stalemate in discussions at future conferences that almost threatened the alliance.<sup>7</sup>

But the fact remained that the Americans were not yet prepared for war. It quickly became clear that the United States opted for a defensive stance until plans could be developed and many operations, such as in North Africa, seen as so crucial to the British, were viewed skeptically by the Americans. Prior to December 7, for example, U.S. military planners had already made plans, in the event of war, to take Dakar, a port on the northwest coast of Africa. The port, its nearness to the Cape Verde Islands, and its relative proximity to South America made it a desirable acquisition for all belligerents. The U.S. War Department's General Staff disagreed with the strategic importance of Dakar, however, and an even stronger rebuttal to any American activity

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<sup>6</sup> Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell, *U.S. Army in World War II: Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1941–1942*, Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953, 100.

<sup>7</sup> Dallek, *FDR and American Foreign Policy*, 414.

in North Africa came from Major General Stanley Embick, a senior advisor to General George C. Marshall. Embick stated that the British were interested in the Mediterranean and North Africa not only for military reasons but for political ones as well, and that any American participation there would be a disaster. Moreover, the American army was not yet prepared for any major operations.<sup>8</sup> Roosevelt believed strongly that Hitler's strategists perceived Brazil as the primary target in the Western Hemisphere because of its lengthy and unfortified coastline, and its proximity to Africa.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the British Admiralty had reported to the United States on May 24, 1940, that the Germans were planning an expedition to Brazil. Roosevelt had then asked military planners to create a plan to counteract any such movement. The plan, code-named POT OF GOLD, would have entailed American occupation of most Brazilian ports and an estimated deployment of over 10,000 American troops. The plan was never implemented because it would have meant moving portions of the U.S. Fleet from the Pacific and because the United States Army did not have 10,000 trained men to spare. Most important, Brazil would have reacted negatively towards the United States at the very time it was struggling to repair its reputation with all Latin American countries. All of this highlights the fact that American military and government leaders did not have concrete war plans nor even specific agreement about what should be planned.

When the conference began, Churchill made clear that it was vital to concentrate on North Africa. His goal was to convince French military leaders there to join the Allies before the Germans gained strength both politically and militarily in that

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<sup>8</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 104.

region. Roosevelt was willing to study Churchill's proposal and requested a rough draft that would outline U.S. requirements. Underlying his request was the knowledge that if he was going to adhere to his Europe-first emphasis, as he had agreed to at Arcadia, the American public, given their quest for revenge following the Pearl Harbor attack, would want to see some results somewhere. Roosevelt was the commander in chief of the U.S. military, but he was, first and foremost, a politician. One thing that Churchill quickly learned about this alliance was that Roosevelt made decisions based on what he thought was good for the war effort. Those decisions, however, were constantly scrutinized for their political impact on a public that could vote Roosevelt out of office before the next election cycle.

The immediate difficulty in proceeding with any North Africa campaign involved the shipping of U.S. troops. If American troops were sent to Ireland and Iceland to relieve both British and U.S. troops for deployment elsewhere, this would decrease the number of troops available for the North African campaign. By the beginning of the conference, U.S. troops were being sent to relieve 4,500 Marines already stationed in Iceland and Admiral Ernest J. King, commander in chief of the United States Fleet, pointed out that these Marines were one of the few groups of U.S. troops trained in landing operations.<sup>10</sup> This points out just how ill-prepared the United States was for war. On January 1, 1942, Roosevelt and Churchill made the decision to

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<sup>9</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 122.

<sup>10</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 109.

proceed with the Iceland deployments while reserving the option of halting them if a North Africa campaign was implemented.<sup>11</sup>

Transport issues would have a profound effect on both operations. Negotiations earlier in 1941 had already established that large numbers of troops, albeit untrained, would be sent to Northern Ireland to replace seasoned British troops that could be shipped to the Middle and Far East. While southern Ireland was seldom discussed because of its unique status as a neutral member of the British Dominion, during the conference Roosevelt ventured that it might be motivated to join the war and “swing into action along with the rest of us.”<sup>12</sup> Great Britain’s relationship with the Irish Republic was complicated. In his memoirs, Anthony Eden, British foreign secretary, wrote that the Irish Republic had declared its neutrality and yet had asked for arms at reduced cost. Moreover, it was willing to let its citizens serve in the British military. Eden remarked that this seemed inconsistent with neutrality, yet this complicated relationship continued through the war. It was particularly galling, however, for the British navy to have to convoy supply ships to southern Ireland, while the Irish government closed the ports to all “military” use.<sup>13</sup> Churchill viewed sending American troops to Northern Ireland as a critical move, one that required immediate action. He believed that it would signal that America had truly entered the war with a Europe-first attitude and believed that the U.S. presence would even act as a deterrent to a possible

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<sup>11</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 251.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>13</sup> Anthony Eden, *The Reckoning: The Memoirs of Anthony Eden*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965, 80.



German invasion of the British Isles.<sup>14</sup> By January 12 Churchill would shift his focus on Ireland, however. Events that had transpired in the Far East changed his mind and he stated that “he put the Far East requirements ahead of Ireland.”<sup>15</sup>

While the primary focus of the conference was to determine joint war strategy, it was also necessary to create a plan for material distribution that would take care of each side’s military needs. This first attempt to collaborate immediately resulted in conflict. It would not simply be a matter of the top military figures joining hands, forces, and equipment and waging war against the Axis Powers. As he noted in his diary, Churchill brought strategy papers with him that outlined how the British believed the war should be fought in partnership with the United States. One point on which both sides did agree was that the focus of the fighting should first and foremost be Europe.<sup>16</sup> This had been decided upon at the Argentia meeting attended by Churchill and Roosevelt. The problem was that the American Chiefs of Staff had their own strong opinions, many of which were in direct opposition to the British proposals. The British wanted North Africa to be the first joint campaign with a view to crushing German General Erwin Rommel’s army, allowing the British and Americans to gain control of the Mediterranean. The British constantly looked at the larger picture, seeing North Africa and the Mediterranean, but also the Levant, the Suez Canal, the oil production of the Middle Eastern Region, and the Balkans. It would quickly become apparent at the beginning of Arcadia that General Marshall saw the North Africa campaign as an

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<sup>14</sup> As initially envisioned, 21,400 American troops would be sent to Northern Ireland as part of what was called Operation Magnet.

<sup>15</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 193.

<sup>16</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 99.

attempt by the British to avoid a direct assault on the European continent, concentrating instead on peripheral operations directly linked to British interests. Marshall's reluctance to acquiesce to the planning for an Allied operation in North Africa (which would be code-named GYMNAST) ultimately resulted in the beginning of U.S. plans for a cross-channel invasion, which Marshall would present to the British in the spring of 1942.<sup>17</sup>

One of the most pressing issues of the conference was to coordinate Allied command in the Pacific Theater, further cementing previous discussions held by British and American military planners. These earlier discussions led to the creation of the ABDA Command, comprised of the Australians, British, Dutch, and Americans. Of greatest importance in these early discussions at Arcadia was the line of communication that needed to be established from the ABDA commanders to the appropriate military chiefs in both Washington and London. At Arcadia, Roosevelt, Churchill, and the military chiefs made the decision to create one line directly to Washington, D.C. A committee called the Combined Chiefs of Staff, based in Washington, would make decisions based on input from the United States Joint Chiefs of the military and the British Chiefs of Staff in London. All decisions of the committee would be presented to both countries' leaders. These Combined Chiefs of Staff would be senior American and British officers who would remain in Washington following the conference and for the duration of the war. This decision was a compromise from an earlier attempt to create a Supreme War Council whose mission, according to Secretary of State Cordell Hull,

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<sup>17</sup> Leonard Mosley, *Marshall: Hero for Our Times*, New York: Hearst Books, 1982, 212.

“would be to supervise and coordinate the general conduct of the war and to provide for its successful prosecution.”<sup>18</sup> The Supreme War Council, much broader in scope than the resulting Combined Chiefs of Staff, would have included political representation. While the British agreed to a Combined Chiefs of Staff premise, they argued at the conference for a similar organization in London, easily accessible to them. When Roosevelt pointed out two committees would jeopardize strategic coordination, Churchill agreed to a one-month trial. Ultimately, the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington became the primary and only committee for logistical and military coordination.<sup>19</sup> In his memoirs, Churchill made an interesting comment, albeit in hindsight, on the success of that committee: “It may well be thought by future historians that the most valuable and lasting result of our first Washington Conference—‘Arcadia,’ as it was code-named—was the setting up of the now famous ‘Combined Chiefs of Staff Committee.’ ”<sup>20</sup> Since the Soviet Union was not represented on this committee, precise communication, as Churchill pointed out, would not be an issue. Still, he did indicate that colloquialisms occasionally created problems. One such incident occurred when the British requested to “table” an urgent report that they had written for the committee to read. For the Americans, that meant not dealing with the issue and setting it aside; for the British, however, it meant immediately dealing with the issue. An interesting argument broke out before both sides realized what the other actually intended.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, vol. 2, New York: Macmillan Co., 1948, 1116.

<sup>19</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 130.

<sup>20</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 687.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 688.

The Arcadia meetings included both formal and informal sessions. Many of the informal meetings took place between Roosevelt and Churchill in the White House, where the two men met with very few advisors. No formal notes were ever made at these meetings, however there are references to some of the discussions in Churchill's papers, Harry Hopkins's papers (Hopkins was an informal advisor to the president who lived in the White House as a guest of the Roosevelts), and other sources. These meetings were an opportunity for the two leaders to get to know each other as allies and to become friends. Both men drank, particularly Churchill, and these meetings often became social gatherings where they could relate both political and personal events of their lives. As Harry Hopkins related in his memoirs, "the conversations that went on from early morning until late at night covered not only the entire world, but a very large part of its history. Churchill was one of the few people to whom Roosevelt cared to listen, and vice versa."<sup>22</sup> These one-on-one meetings were also a place to have discussions relevant to the war effort with little outside interference. Roosevelt and Churchill did not always attend all the formal meetings, but those that involved specific war plans would be reported to the two leaders for their approval. The British and American Chiefs of Staff met to work on joint military plans twelve times during the conference without the two leaders.

The first formal meeting of the Arcadia Conference took place on Monday, December 22, 1941, at the White House. Roosevelt and Churchill were joined by Hull,

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<sup>22</sup> Robert E. Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins*, vol. 1, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1948, 446.

Hopkins, Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, British Ambassador to the United States Lord Edward Halifax, and Minister of Supply Lord William “Max” Beaverbrook. The discussion focused on the necessity of controlling North Africa and the Atlantic islands off the coast of northwest Africa. While this appeared to be a relatively uncomplicated discussion, it actually encompassed a myriad of topics relevant to the entire war effort in Europe. Taking control of North Africa was not simply a matter of occupying territory. The success of that venture ensured a base of Allied operations that could strike anywhere in the Mediterranean and could protect both the Suez Canal and the Levant region. An even bigger question raised in the North Africa discussion was what Vichy France might do in that region, particularly now that the Americans were allied with the British. Vichy France controlled all of the former French holdings in North Africa, with holdings that included a sizeable army and navy, both French and African. The Germans, of course, were attempting to coerce Vichy France into turning over their military assets to them, particularly with an eye on the two French battleships, *Jean Bart* and *Richelieu*, for use in North Africa. What role Spain and Portugal would play as neutral countries was an important topic of discussion, as both could be used by Germany as a transit to effectively control the northern portion of the Mediterranean. If Spain agreed to German transit, it would be difficult for the British to defend Gibraltar from the north. At the tip of the Iberian Peninsula, Gibraltar was a key to Mediterranean transit.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Spain had ceded Gibraltar to Great Britain in 1713 as a result of the Treaty of Utrecht following Queen Anne’s War or the War of the Spanish Succession.

Certainly the Soviet Union would stand to benefit in their struggle against the German Army if the North African operation siphoned off German resources fighting in the Soviet Union. Allied control of North Africa would also mean safer shipping in that region, not only to Europe but also to the Southern Pacific region via the Suez Canal. It also meant that the United States finally would be directly participating in the war effort. Roosevelt wanted U.S. troops to be involved somewhere and quickly. He also knew, however, that the U.S. military was not yet prepared for any major troop movement into combat zones. To offset that deficiency he suggested at this meeting that U.S. troops continue to train in areas where British troops could be relieved, such as in Ireland. These troops could, in turn, be easily shipped to North Africa.

On December 22, while this meeting was taking place, U.S. Army Air Corps Commander Lieutenant-General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, British Air Marshal Charles Portal, and Royal Air Force Deputy Chief of the British Air Staff Air Marshal Arthur T. Harris conducted their own meeting, most likely in the Federal Reserve Building. The discussion focused first on the Pacific Theater where protecting Singapore and the Philippines was of prime importance. They also discussed ways to strike at Japan offensively while, in fact, holding a defensive stance throughout much of the Pacific Theater. This would have the obvious result of demoralizing the Japanese population while placating much of an American population eager for revenge. One way to strike at Japan from an accessible base would be to operate from air bases in Vladivostok in the far eastern Soviet Union, but this would require Stalin's agreement at a time when the Soviet Union was not at war with the Japanese. While Roosevelt remained a

proponent of the plan to use Soviet bases, the U.S. military took more concrete steps by planning for heavy bombers to operate out of Siberia. The British consistently dismissed the likelihood of a Soviet agreement to allow this based on a report by British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden. Eden made it clear that Stalin had no desire to give the Japanese any reason to declare war on the Soviet Union. At that point in the war, and for many months to come, the Soviet Union was busy throwing all its might against the German Armies in the West. Eden met with Stalin in mid-December in Moscow and later wrote in his memoirs that Stalin did acknowledge the necessity of future Soviet involvement in the Pacific War by volunteering that “the antagonism between Russia and Japan could only be settled by force.”<sup>24</sup>

Roosevelt, Churchill, Hopkins, and H. Freeman Matthews, chargé d'affaires of the American Embassy in London, met the next day, December 23, at the White House. Matthews would be leaving soon for London, and Roosevelt and Churchill wanted his advice on how to relay a message to Maxime Weygand, the head of the Free French Forces in North Africa, with whom the Allies were planning a joint military campaign in that region. They wanted Weygand to rally the Free French Forces and join the fight. The Vichy government had already recalled Weygand to France by the time of the conference and he had, in fact, retired. When he was approached by the United States in January 1942, officials proposed that he should go back to North Africa where, with full U.S. support, he would assume full military command of the French forces.<sup>25</sup> As Matthews had prophesied at the December 23 meeting, however, Weygand refused to

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<sup>24</sup> Eden, *Reckoning*, 342.

act on his own and related the U.S. proposal to “the Marshal,” Phillipe (Henri) Petain, head of Vichy France. For the time being, French support in North Africa remained in question.

The meeting at the White House that afternoon was the first session held with the two leaders and their military advisers. Roosevelt, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, Hopkins, and the top American military advisers were present. With Churchill was Beaverbrook and other British military advisers. Roosevelt began by summarizing the discussion that he and Churchill had previously held regarding American defense of the North Atlantic air and shipping lanes, American bombers in England, the Azores, American troops in the Near East, and the proximity of far northwest Africa to Brazil.<sup>26</sup> Forces in Iceland and Greenland would be maintained to protect the North Atlantic region. Roosevelt then reviewed military matters in the southwest Pacific, including the need to hold Singapore and build up defenses in Australia to help protect that region, particularly the Philippines. Other topics concerning the Pacific Theater included arrangements for using China as a base from which to attack Japan and the presumption that the Soviet Union would not declare war on Japan.<sup>27</sup>

Roosevelt told the attendees that U.S. officials were drawing up a draft of Allied intentions and it would be presented later. Ultimately, this document became known as the Declaration of United Nations and would become one of the successes of the

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<sup>25</sup>William D. Leahy, *I Was There*, New York: McGraw Hill, 1950, 75.

<sup>26</sup>*FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 69.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.



Arcadia Conference that the leaders were able to share with the public.<sup>28</sup> Roosevelt expected everyone to sign a joint declaration of Allied unity. When the Soviet ambassador to the United States, Maxim Maximovich Litvinov, was first presented with a rough draft of the declaration at a meeting held on December 27, Roosevelt expressed a wish to include some type of reference to religious freedom.<sup>29</sup> Litvinov suggested the phrase “freedom of conscience” instead, knowing the Soviet government would object to any religious reference. According to historian Robert Dallek, Churchill was amused by this suggestion since Litvinov “lived in ‘evident fear and trembling’ of Stalin.” Even more amusing to Churchill was the fact that this incident gave Roosevelt an opportunity to lecture Litvinov, presumably in private meetings, on the need for religious toleration. Hellfire and damnation were topics used by Roosevelt to convince the Soviet ambassador of his personal moral and mortal need for religion.<sup>30</sup>

That same afternoon Churchill and Roosevelt met with Latin American representatives, Chinese Foreign Minister T. V. Soong, and British Dominion representatives, including Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada. They were all told that a draft of the United Nations declaration would be given to them. The final draft based its principles on the Atlantic Charter, which resulted from the Argentinia meeting in August 1940. The Atlantic Charter specifically denied territorial

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<sup>28</sup> The words United Nations were used for the first time on January 1, 1942. Roosevelt proposed them as an alternative to words such as allies and associated powers, which he argued did not encompass the scope of the document.

<sup>29</sup> As the representative of an Allied nation, Litvinov had a tendency to play one major power against the other. On January 6, 1942, he met with Hopkins and indicated his attitude regarding Churchill. Litvinov said that Churchill was a great prime minister during war, but would be of little use after the war. He also stated that Roosevelt was, and would remain, the dominant figure in the United States/British partnership.

<sup>30</sup> Dallek, *FDR and American Foreign Policy*, 319.

aggrandizement was an object of the war. The document promised respect for self-government, equal access to trade, and improved trade conditions for all countries of the world. Included also were freedom of the sea, freedom from aggression, and an end to aggression.<sup>31</sup> All of these principles were incorporated into the Declaration of United Nations, which also included the need to “defend life, liberty, independence, and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights” in a world which was witnessing savagery and brutality.<sup>32</sup> The first pledge of the declaration stated that the signatories would use all their powers, military and economic, to defeat the Tripartite Pact (Italy, Germany, and Japan). The second pledge reiterated that the signatories would not make a separate peace with any of the tripartite countries. On January 1, 1942, the document was signed first by Roosevelt, Churchill, Litvinov, and Soong, and then was circulated for the signatures of twenty-two other nations.<sup>33</sup>

On Thursday, December 25 the military heads of state met again. An interesting perspective began to emerge regarding control of military functions “on the ground.” While discussing the increasingly deteriorating defense of the Philippines, the Arcadia discussions also evidenced their fear of the Japanese overrunning military bases in the Philippines (and the Pacific, generally). While most American bombers had already been moved to Australia, some remaining pursuit planes were still at risk. General Arnold observed that those in command on the ground could be counted on to “do the

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<sup>31</sup> Theodore A. Wilson, *The First Summit: Roosevelt and Churchill at Placentia Bay*, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1991, 174.

<sup>32</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 377.

<sup>33</sup> Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua,

right thing.”<sup>34</sup> Portal responded that they (the military chiefs) should decide where to send these planes, possibly to Singapore rather than Australia. This view was based on his belief that a commander on the spot would find it difficult to make a definitive decision based on probable lack of knowledge on what was going on elsewhere within the Pacific Theater.<sup>35</sup> This disagreement illuminates the different management styles of the two commanders in chief. Churchill made many of the military decisions that Roosevelt delegated to his subordinates. And many of those American decisions were made by commanders operating in the war zones.

Soon after this meeting, Marshall, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Harold R. Stark, King, and Arnold went to the White House to meet with Roosevelt, Stimson, Knox, and the ever-present Hopkins. This meeting highlights one of the most persistent problems in understanding Roosevelt’s administrative decisions. Many meetings were not recorded and Roosevelt did not document them—certainly not as well as Churchill documented many of his meetings. The military men were there to discuss the notes that had been taken at a December 24 meeting between Roosevelt and Churchill. Brigadier General Leslie Hollis, who acted as a secretary to the British Delegation, took notes and then distributed them to the British and American military chiefs. The notes included the comment that:

The President stated that the news from the Philippines indicated that there was little likelihood that the land and air reinforcements now on their way from the U.S.A. via Australia could arrive at their destination. His view was

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Norway, Panama, Poland, South Africa, and Yugoslavia were all signatories to the document after the four major powers.

<sup>34</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 92.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

that these reinforcements should be utilized in whatever manner might best serve the joint cause in the Far East and in agreement with the Prime Minister he expressed the desire that the United States and British Chiefs of Staff should meet the following day to consider what measures should be taken to give effect to his wishes.<sup>36</sup>

When read by the American military commanders Arnold; General Dwight D. Eisenhower, member of the War Plans Division; and Marshall; there was an immediate negative reaction, for it seemed to suggest that the president was selling out reinforcements for MacArthur. The Philippines was already a lost cause, so to speak, so why waste manpower and equipment?<sup>37</sup> Roosevelt indicated that he had not meant any such thing. For the military men, this incident served as evidence that Roosevelt impetuously discussed military tactics.

The next meeting of the military Chiefs of Staff was held on December 26. Roosevelt and Churchill were not present. The topic was the North Africa campaign. In this discussion, one of the most critical situations to face the joint military effort for the duration of the war was spelled out by Assistant Naval Chief of Staff Richmond Turner: there never seemed to be enough shipping capability, even with 1,200 merchant ships available at the beginning of the war. A constant theme of the Allied discussion was that when transports were pulled to do duty elsewhere or destroyed by the enemy, this caused delay or cancellation of other plans. The Africa campaign deliberations also opened up to discussion two other situations having both military and diplomatic ramifications—the question of the loyalty of the French forces in North Africa to Vichy

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 95.

France or to the Free French Forces and Germany's anticipated invasion of Spain. The military chiefs speculated on whether the Spanish government would allow the Germans free transit to the Mediterranean coast or whether Hitler would move his forces through the Iberian Peninsula uninvited.<sup>38</sup> The British constantly worried about the military facility at Gibraltar and Allied control of the Mediterranean. If the Germans attacked and acquired Gibraltar, sea passage through the Strait of Gibraltar would become totally blocked. Churchill recognized that British and U.S. relations with Spain were tenuous. Neither had supported Generalissimo Francisco Franco in his Civil War against the Republic in 1936—Germany and Italy had, however, with more than \$125 million in arms, men, and money.<sup>39</sup> By April 1, 1939, Franco had solidified his control over Spain. On November 23, 1940, Churchill wrote to Roosevelt regarding serious economic troubles in Spain. He suggested that the United States offer to help Spain financially in order to ensure future Spanish neutrality. By 1941, according to Churchill, Hitler was pressing Franco to enter the war on the side of the Axis powers.<sup>40</sup> Hitler's justification, of course, was Germany's support of Franco's Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War. In February 1941, Hitler suggested that Spanish troops equipped with German military goods take Gibraltar. Franco resisted the entreaty by what Churchill referred to as "subtlety and trickery and blandishments of all kinds."<sup>41</sup>

Roosevelt, Vice-President Henry Wallace, Hopkins, Director General of the Office of Production Management William S. Knudsen, Director of the Materials

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>39</sup> William L. Shirer, *The Nightmare Years: 1930–1940*, Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1984, 264.

<sup>40</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Their Finest Hour*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950, 524.

Division William L. Batt, and Beaverbrook held a meeting later on December 26 to discuss supplies. Beaverbrook was frank in his remarks regarding industrial output.<sup>42</sup> He did not mince words in a letter he sent to Roosevelt the next day and to Wallace on December 30. Beaverbrook called the projected combined output of both countries in 1942 inadequate. He underscored the greater British output of aircraft production with fewer raw materials and a smaller population compared to that of the United States, with its abundance of both.<sup>43</sup> Roosevelt reminded Beaverbrook that the United States had been in the war only two weeks at that point. To further illustrate British incredulity at the seeming snail's pace of the United States' reaction to the war effort, Churchill himself made an observation in the next meeting stating, "he could not understand why, when the [United States] was able to move 2,000,000 men to Europe in World War I, that we couldn't move approximately the same number now."<sup>44</sup> The taunts continued when Churchill seemed to express his admiration for what the Japanese had by that point accomplished at Luzon in the Philippines, concerned that the United States would waste too much power in defending the Philippine Islands. Beaverbrook maligned U.S. intelligence regarding Axis military and industrial strength.<sup>45</sup> The British had acquired specific information on Axis strength from Stalin. The Americans were still in the process of compiling information to add to war plans created in 1940 based on

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 529.

<sup>42</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 328.

<sup>43</sup> A later meeting with Roosevelt, Churchill, and their shipping advisers elicited a sharp remark from Churchill on the British attitude towards American sharing of merchant ships when Roosevelt stated that production of American merchant ships had "reached the bottom of the barrel." Churchill responded with "you can scrape the barrel."

<sup>44</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 104.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

assumptions that were no longer valid. The Soviet Union was not at war with the Axis nor had Great Britain been attacked on land.

For Beaverbrook and the Americans, the most contentious moments of the conference regarded war material allocations. Both Hopkins and Beaverbrook had already agreed that a civilian board comprised of one American and one British representative would work together to advise on production and allocation. Because the British already had reached maximum output, future allocation questions could only mean increased American output. Although there was a definite need for this board, there was immediate reluctance on the part of Churchill and Roosevelt. The British did not want to give up any more power to the Americans and Roosevelt was reluctant to give that much power to just one individual.<sup>46</sup> An even stronger argument arose when Marshall concluded that the plan was a way for the British to continue to control what was once a solo war effort, and both he and Hopkins also feared that civilian control of war material could seriously jeopardize military strategy.<sup>47</sup> Strategy, Marshall pointed out, was often determined by available men and material. At the final meeting of the Arcadia Conference, Marshall, who was not known to make idle threats, even threatened to resign if the British/American Materials Board (it would officially be called the Munitions Assignment Board) was not subordinated to the Combined Chiefs of Staff.<sup>48</sup> If there was going to be a Board, as most officials ultimately agreed there should be, it would become a subcommittee of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, which

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<sup>46</sup> Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History*, New York: Enigma Books, 2001, 455.

<sup>47</sup> Sherwood, *White House Papers*, vol. 1, 484.

<sup>48</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 203.

could discard or change any of its recommendations. Hopkins became the head of the Board and it did become a subcommittee of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Churchill and Beaverbrook acquiesced to all of this, but out of deference to what they had given up, they asked that this arrangement be tried for one month to ensure widespread agreement.<sup>49</sup>

On December 26, Roosevelt and Churchill met with their military advisors to discuss shipping and the Far East. A key discussion was unity of command in the Pacific Theater. While the joint war plans (Rainbow) had been activated on December 7, there still were operational decisions to be made. Churchill made it clear in this meeting that he did not like the idea of a single Far East commander. The Pacific Theater was much too large and “scattered.”<sup>50</sup> No decision was reached at this meeting, however an opportunity to convince Churchill of the necessity of unity of command occurred when Beaverbrook urged Hopkins to “work on” Churchill to get him to change his mind.<sup>51</sup> Hopkins arranged a meeting between Marshall and Churchill for the next day. Churchill clung to his doubts, in spite of the additional gesture by the Americans to make a British officer, General Archibald Percival Wavell, the single commander.<sup>52</sup> The aging Wavell was a veteran of the Boer War, the First World War, and in July 1939, he received the Middle East command, which he had helped create. In spite of losing confidence in Wavell and, in essence, firing him from that command, Churchill had transferred Wavell to India in the summer of 1941 as commander in chief

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<sup>49</sup> Sherwood, *White House Papers*, vol. 1, 485.

<sup>50</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 103.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>52</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 674.



of British military forces there. While Churchill wrote that he was flattered by the American choice of a British commander, he also personally saw the futility of that position. He wrote, “it seemed to me that the theatre in which he would act would soon be overrun and the forces which could be placed at his disposal would be destroyed by the Japanese onslaught. I found that the British Chiefs of Staff, when apprised, had the same reaction.”<sup>53</sup> General Marshall believed that Churchill’s reluctance was based on British reverence for the navy above all other military branches. Unity of command would dilute the power of the navy, the jewel of the British military.<sup>54</sup> In a telegram on December 29 to Lord Privy Seal Clement Attlee, Churchill reiterated that Wavell would almost certainly “have to bear a load of defeat in a scene of confusion.”<sup>55</sup> Churchill’s reluctance was also based on the differing ideologies emerging on military war planning. Perhaps one of the most telling of his recollections of the differences between the English and Americans can be derived from the following:

In the military as in the commercial or production spheres the American mind runs naturally to broad, sweeping, logical conclusions on the largest scale. It is on these that they build their practical thought and action. They feel that once the foundation has been planned on true and comprehensive lines all other stages will follow naturally and almost inevitably. The British mind does not work quite in this way. We do not think that logic and clear-cut principles are necessarily the sole keys to what ought to be done in swiftly changing and indefinable situations.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 673.

<sup>54</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 110.

<sup>55</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 677.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 673.

The British mindset involved seeing how events unfolded and reacting to that rather than dominating events from the beginning. The Americans, Churchill implied, had a tendency to take over a situation and control it from the outset, rather than waiting to see how events transpired. The command given to Wavell, however, should not be construed as one of the loftiest military positions in Allied history. Wavell had little control over the movement of ground forces, could not interfere with local fighting organizations, could not move supplies from one region to support another, or control internal communications. He did have authority over air forces and some naval operations in that region.

Churchill did finally agree to unity of command in the Pacific over the objections of his own military chiefs. This command included, after a great deal of discussion, Malaya, Burma, the Philippine Islands, and Australia. U.S. subordinates to Wavell would be General George Brett as air officer and Navy Admiral Thomas Hart. After all the discussion, however, Wavell's command did not last long. Before any ABDA organization could be established in the vast region, Japanese air power followed by ground troops left the ABDA unable to resist. As ABDA disintegrated, American control of the Pacific began to emerge. What Roosevelt had suggested during Arcadia would come to fruition with General Douglas MacArthur acting as commander of the Southwest Pacific Area. Headquartered in Australia following the fall of the Philippines, MacArthur also became responsible for the defense of New Zealand and Australia.<sup>57</sup> Washington established a Pacific War Council, and while Churchill wanted

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<sup>57</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 134.

a similar council set up in London, it never materialized. This was yet another example of the power residing in Washington. Roosevelt did learn two things about Churchill during the Wavell discussion: the British like to have a formal proposal on such major matters and did not respond well to impromptu or random American suggestions. Second is that Churchill could be convinced, for the sake of the alliance, to go against the wishes of his military chiefs, even berating them for their lack of open-mindedness.<sup>58</sup>

In the midst of the Arcadia Conference, a French crisis interrupted the discussions. Two tiny islands, St. Pierre and Miquelon, only twenty miles off the southern coast of Newfoundland and held by Vichy France, began broadcasting from a powerful radio station located there. Americans feared that this obnoxious radio station, as Churchill called it, might begin to broadcast signals to German submarines in the Atlantic.<sup>59</sup> General de Gaulle, commander of the Free French Forces in Europe, told Churchill in early December that he wanted to take over the islands militarily. Churchill saw little wrong with this idea but encountered American hostility.<sup>60</sup> The United States at this time was still attempting to keep open discussions with Vichy France, and Hull concluded that any movement against the island should come from Canada. This was based on Hull's reaffirmation of American and Canadian discussions that had already determined that Canada would supervise the radio station.<sup>61</sup> In early December, Churchill spoke to de Gaulle, who agreed to refrain from interference and then

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<sup>58</sup> Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The War President 1940–1943*, New York: Random House, 2000, 384.

<sup>59</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1128.

<sup>60</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 666.

<sup>61</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1129.

immediately ordered Admiral Emile Muselier to invade the islands, which he did on December 19. The Free French Navy took the islands and was warmly welcomed by the predominantly French populace. In November, Muselier had met in Ottawa with Canadian government officials regarding the islands. He discussed de Gaulle's plans and the Canadian government refused to give Muselier permission to carry them out. By December 15, de Gaulle had British approval but not Canadian or American. When de Gaulle ordered Muselier to land on the islands, in spite of Canadian and American disapproval, Muselier complied but later accused de Gaulle of having acted as a dictator, and he eventually broke with de Gaulle. In his memoirs de Gaulle states that Muselier had been convinced by others that de Gaulle was leaning toward Fascism. Not wanting to be a part of that, Muselier broke with the Free French Forces National Committee and indicated that he would keep "the supreme command of the naval forces for himself," something that de Gaulle would not allow.<sup>62</sup>

Secretary Hull's position illuminates the dissonance between British and American views on the role of the Free French and, particularly, on de Gaulle's leadership. On December 31, Hull wrote a memo to the President stating that "our British friends seem to believe that the body of the entire people of France is strongly behind de Gaulle, whereas according to all of my information and that of my associates, some 95 percent of the entire French people are anti-Hitler whereas more than 95 percent of this latter number are not de Gaullists and would not follow him."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Charles de Gaulle, *The Complete War Memoirs of Charles de Gaulle*, New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 1998, 258.

<sup>63</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 382.

According to Hull, Roosevelt was embarrassed by what de Gaulle had done. In a message sent only days before to Petain, Roosevelt stated that the United States would give “full recognition to the agreement by our two Governments involving the maintenance of the status quo of the French possessions in the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>64</sup> An additional concern for the Americans was that Admiral William Leahy, at that point U.S. ambassador to Vichy, had cabled Hull that Admiral Jean Darlan, commander in chief of the Armed Forces of Vichy France, had been told by the Germans that they saw de Gaulle’s move into St. Pierre and Miquelon as a threat that raised the specter of future takeovers. For that reason, the Germans felt justified moving further into French North Africa to prevent similar actions. Churchill later admitted that both he and the British Foreign Office had acquiesced to de Gaulle when he first proposed “liberating” the islands.<sup>65</sup> In a meeting that took place between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Hull on December 28, Hull described how he bluntly stated his opinion of de Gaulle and asked Churchill to induce him to withdraw his troops from the two islands. Churchill refused, suggesting that would hurt the British relations with the Free French.<sup>66</sup> De Gaulle was a constant irritant to the alliance yet never damaged it. The evidence suggests, however, that Roosevelt resented Churchill’s support of de Gaulle, a man he felt “manifested egotism, a love of personal power, and a willingness to achieve [his] ends by forceful means...an enemy of democracy.”<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1130.

<sup>65</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 666.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 667.

<sup>67</sup> Davis, *FDR*, 379.

Hull was further annoyed following a speech Churchill gave to the Canadian parliament on December 30. Churchill's reminiscences of that speech certainly differed from Hull's. Churchill lambasted the Vichy government for not going to North Africa where the Free French Forces were plentiful.<sup>68</sup> Hull saw the speech as "a violent diatribe," which made the United States look like it did not support the Free French.<sup>69</sup> Hull pleaded with Churchill to say a few words later to ameliorate the situation, but Churchill refused. After weeks of heated discussion the matter faded in importance and became, as Churchill referred to it, one of the many annoyances.<sup>70</sup>

During the Arcadia Conference Hull asked Churchill to try to curtail de Gaulle's group in London from broadcasting and writing inflammatory attacks on the United States. Hull pointed out to Churchill that since they were broadcast from England, it appeared that the British concurred with the remarks. Churchill doubted that he had the legal means to censor de Gaulle's group. Surprisingly, Hull reminded Churchill that British money was being used to fund de Gaulle's headquarters in London and, therefore, a threat to suspend those funds might prove effective.<sup>71</sup>

While the majority of discussions at Arcadia focused on the European Theater, the Pacific did receive some attention. In the Philippines, Luzon was attacked on the ground on December 10, 1941, threatening the entire region. On December 11, the Japanese invaded Guam. Wake Island fell after a valiant struggle by a handful of Marines on December 23 and Hong Kong surrendered on December 25. When Wavell

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<sup>68</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 678.

<sup>69</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1133.

<sup>70</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 667.

<sup>71</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1133.

became supreme commander of the ABDA area, that left the question of other theaters not included under his command, such as China, Burma, and Thailand (which had already been attacked). Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was named supreme commander of those theaters during the Arcadia Conference.

American sympathy was very strong for the Chinese and the hardships they had endured under Japanese occupation. Harry Hopkins related in his diary that when Roosevelt gave speeches to Congress, applause erupted when British or Soviet allies were mentioned, but the loudest and warmest reaction came upon the mention of China.<sup>72</sup> Sir Llewellyn Woodward of the British Foreign Office confirmed the attitude held by most British officials. The Chinese, he stated, were hoarding supplies received from America prior to December 1941 in order to safeguard their own position against Mao Tse-Tung's Communist insurrection. Money and supplies, he said, were not being used to fight the Japanese. Fighting the Japanese would be left, in their estimation, to the British and the Americans.<sup>73</sup> The British were reluctant to discuss major military matters with Chiang Kai-shek, fearing that the Japanese could easily acquire such secrets. Chiang Kai-shek resented this lack of confidence on the part of Britain and also resented the British military's reluctance to share resources. The United States, however, supported and encouraged the Chinese. Unlike the British, the Americans predicted a unified China following the war, led by Chiang Kai-shek and his National People's Party, the Kuomintang.

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<sup>72</sup> Sherwood, *White House Papers*, vol. 1, 471.

<sup>73</sup> E. L. Woodward, *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*, London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1962, 419.

Chiang Kai-shek's complaints about British refusal to share military information, constant requests for additional material, and the sometimes corrupt use of that material was not just a frustration for those at the highest British levels. When General Wavell and his U.S. Army Deputy Major General G. H. Brett visited Chiang at Chungking during the Arcadia Conference, Chiang complained to Roosevelt about certain aspects of the visit and Roosevelt, in turn, complained to Churchill. Churchill felt compelled to reproach Wavell in late January 1942 not only for his December visit but also for Wavell's refusal to use some of the aid to help defend the Burma Road, China's primary Lend-Lease supply conduit. Churchill reminded Wavell that American opinion had to be weighed when dealing with Chiang, saying that "the President, who is a great admirer of yours, seemed a bit dunched at Chiang Kai-shek's discouragement after your interview with him." Churchill reiterated the emotions of the Americans when he concluded, "if I can epitomize in one word the lesson I learned in the United States it was *China*."<sup>74</sup>

Churchill himself was not a good example of one who embraced the Chinese. His earlier attitude toward the Japanese occupation of China was that it kept the Japanese out of other areas and that the Chinese should do everything in their power to keep them there. The British also did not endear themselves to the Chinese by seizing Lend-Lease goods in Rangoon, Burma, on December 19, 1941, which had been destined for China. The British excused the action by describing the imminent Japanese

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<sup>74</sup> Prime Minister Churchill to General Wavell, personal telegram, 23 January 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/88, Cambridge: Churchill College.



threat to the region.<sup>75</sup> The British frustration with General Chiang Kai-shek continued throughout the war. A particularly volatile period came in February 1942 when Chiang Kai-shek visited India with the express purpose of viewing the colonial situation there. Roosevelt had broached the subject of Indian independence with Churchill during the Arcadia Conference and had received a short, abrupt reaction. This incident discouraged further discussion for a time.

By this point, the Arcadia Conference was essentially over. The remaining few meetings simply reiterated whatever had already been discussed and determined what information should be announced to the public. Ultimately, the Arcadia Conference focused on plans to deal with the Axis Powers in Europe. The Allies would maintain a defensive stance in the Pacific Theater. The Combined Chiefs of Staff was operating as one unit in Washington and would direct the strategy of the war effort with the acquiescence of their respective chiefs. The conference did succeed in creating an alliance that would fight the war with an emphasis on Europe first. The conference also succeeded in allowing the two leaders an opportunity to get to know one another better, both as leaders of nations at war and as friends. What the conference did *not* do was resolve issues that would fester between the two allies and only grow larger as the war continued, simmering beneath the unified stance of the two men at the top. Disagreements over India, China, de Gaulle and the Free French Forces, Vichy France,

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<sup>75</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 272.

and the differing ideas on how to defeat the Axis would all eventually threaten the alliance at all levels.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ALLIANCE IN WASHINGTON: THE SECOND WASHINGTON CONFERENCE (JUNE 19, 1942 UNTIL JUNE 25, 1942)

Roosevelt and Churchill met for a Second Washington Conference beginning on June 19, 1942. By that time both men believed it necessary to determine specifically what the next major Allied offensive would be in the Europe-first Theater—an offensive that would include both British and American troops. The Americans were eager to allow the Soviet Union its desired second front and to refrain from giving in to British diversionary plans. The British were reluctant to agree to any cross-channel invasion. This reluctance was tempered, however, by the fear that the Americans would see any move away from a cross-channel invasion as an opening to focus on the war in the Pacific. A meeting needed to be held to iron out, definitively, the next step.

Between January 1942 and the next face-to-face conference Roosevelt and Churchill held in June, the war in Asia continued on a downward spiral. Hong Kong fell to the Japanese on December 25, 1941, followed by Singapore on February 15, 1942. The fall of Singapore, while not a total shock, was devastating in its scope and effects—80,000 Indian, Australian, and British troops became prisoners of war. In March, General Douglas MacArthur, commander of American forces in the Philippines, and Philippines President Manuel Quezon were forced to flee Manila. MacArthur

established his headquarters in Australia where he became Supreme Commander of the Southwest Pacific Area (SWPA) on April 18, 1942.

In Europe the Germans continued to dominate and by late spring were gearing up for their next warm weather attack against the Soviets. German submarines continued their deadly attacks on one of the most critical elements of the Allied coalition—shipping. In North Africa the British were now facing ever-increasing numbers of German troops, and the loss of Cairo and access to the Suez Canal were uppermost in the minds of the British Chiefs of Staff. The Suez Canal was a critical transit point not only for the Middle Eastern regions but as a shorter route to the Indian Ocean as well.

On January 7, 1942, Churchill wrote a long memo to Roosevelt outlining the agreements, as he saw them, that had been reached during the Arcadia Conference. This document provides an accurate synopsis of the discussions from December 1941 through January 1942, but of even greater value is the tone of the message. While Churchill acknowledges that the United States is finally at war against the three Axis Powers, as he begins to list the points brought out at the conference he magnifies the plight of the British, the position of the British military, and what the British need to do in the future. He implies the future U.S. role seems to be that of support for what the British have already determined and what the British intend for the future. American divisions sent to Ireland, for example, would be rotated out for tours in England and Scotland. He refers to this plan as being of interest to the troops much as one would describe a sight-seeing tour to a prospective traveler: “It is further suggested that, in the

absence of other more urgent calls, American divisions beyond those already under orders may be sent into the United Kingdom where they can if need be perfect their training.”<sup>1</sup> The memo focuses predominantly on Europe and the Middle East. Churchill covers six pages of notes on these areas but gives only two pages to the war against Japan. That portion begins, “It is generally agreed that the defeat of Germany entailing a collapse will leave Japan exposed to overwhelming force, whereas the defeat of Japan would not by any means bring the world war to an end.”<sup>2</sup> Churchill implicitly but clearly urges that the Americans will continue their Europe-first stance. His interpretation of the events of the conference certainly implies that the British Empire is the dominant partner and the American allies are welcome and necessary, yet subordinate to British needs.

During the spring of 1942, shipping continued to be a predominant topic of discussion, and all strategic military plans worked out by the alliance had to take the availability of shipping into account. On March 17, 1942, Churchill sent a telegram to Roosevelt with a “wish list” of ships for the British: two heavy cruisers, four destroyers, and one fast carrier. These ships, he stated, would then be under British jurisdiction.<sup>3</sup> In April the British suggested to Roosevelt curtailing scheduled shipments of supplies to the Soviet Union because of the success of German attacks on the supply convoys. The British were particularly concerned with the loss of their merchant ships. On April 26 the president sent Churchill a message to consider. American supplies, he insisted, must

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<sup>1</sup> Warren F. Kimball, *Alliance Emerging: October 1933 – November 1942*, vol. 1, of *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984, 317.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 321.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 416.

get to the Russians. Churchill must have seen that the position of the Americans was becoming more forceful. Moreover, on April 28, when Churchill asked Roosevelt “for a token force of American troops to participate in the invasion of northern Madagascar,”<sup>4</sup> Roosevelt simply ignored the request.<sup>5</sup> A further sign that the Americans were beginning to focus on the buildup of their own military, even at the expense of supplying the British, occurred in April of 1942, when General Hap Arnold encouraged the president to inform Churchill that “satisfying the British would be to cut by more than one half the projected expansion of American air forces.”<sup>6</sup> American needs were about to supersede those of the British. Other events in the spring of 1942 showed signs of the evolving relationship in the British and American alliance.

Once the United States declared war and the discussion of the Arcadia Conference became public, some of Great Britain’s Dominion members began to question several of the Allied proposals. On January 12, 1942, Prime Minister of New Zealand Peter Fraser sent a telegram to Churchill in which he questioned the military strategy of dividing the Pacific Theater into ABDA (which did not include New Zealand), with the rest of the Pacific under American command and the Indian Ocean under British command. The people of New Zealand, he intimated, resented not being associated with the conduct of affairs in any of those commands.<sup>7</sup> At the same time,

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<sup>4</sup> Madagascar was controlled by the French, and Great Britain wanted to ensure that the Germans or the Japanese did not make a move on this large island so critical to the defense of the Indian Ocean.

<sup>5</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950, 230. Roosevelt did not want to anger the French Vichy government with whom the United States was still trying to maintain good relations.

<sup>6</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 201.

<sup>7</sup> Prime Minister Peter Fraser to the Dominion Office, London, telegram, 12 January 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/68, Cambridge: Churchill College.

Prime Minister of Australia John Curtin expressed concern that Australian troops were being used in the Levant and other regions while Australia was in peril of a Japanese attack.<sup>8</sup> Curtin's problems with Churchill were becoming well publicized. On December 27, 1941, while Churchill was still in Washington at the Arcadia Conference, Curtin told the press, "The Australian Government therefore regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the Democracies' fighting plan. Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links with the United Kingdom."<sup>9</sup> By February 1942, Roosevelt was complaining to Churchill of this strained relationship. The president sent several messages to Curtin and copied Churchill, suggesting that additional American help in reinforcing Australia would depend on Australia's continued support of the war effort in other Pacific regions; in other words, he required a quid pro quo. Churchill attempted to downplay Curtin's public display of disaffection by responding to Roosevelt that Australian party politics were playing a role in this and that hostility toward Great Britain was at that moment politically expedient.<sup>10</sup> It looked good politically to stand up for what was best for Australia; the Empire would have to take care of itself. When three divisions of Australian soldiers were released from the Middle East to return to Australia, members of the Pacific War Council in Washington asked the Australian government for permission to divert one of them to Burma. The members phrased it as a temporary

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<sup>8</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt, telegram no. 56, 23 March 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/72, Cambridge: Churchill College.

diversion, and still Curtin refused.<sup>11</sup> This prompted a rejoinder from Roosevelt that Field Marshall Dill relayed to Churchill. In its refusal, the Australian government had bypassed the British government and dealt directly with the Americans.<sup>12</sup> While Churchill had been embarrassed by Curtin's remarks to the press in December 1941 and even thought about responding directly to the Australian people, bypassing their government, he allowed himself time to cool off and reflect on the Australian position.<sup>13</sup> The Australian people honestly believed that they were in danger of an imminent attack by the Japanese, particularly following the fall of Singapore. This time, however, Churchill made it quite clear that he was disgusted with Curtin's attitude. On February 25, Churchill sent a message to the governor of Burma stating, "We have made every appeal, reinforced by President, but Australian Government absolutely refuses. Fight on."<sup>14</sup> Churchill and Roosevelt did not discuss this again until March 22. Roosevelt sent Churchill a letter in which he discussed the "basic relationship of Great Britain to Australia." He went on to discuss what appeared to be a "rather strained relationship between Australia and the United Kingdom at this critical time." Roosevelt intimated that the relationship needed to be improved for the benefit of the war effort. Churchill once again responded that this animosity was politically driven, and implied that the Australian people were not fully in support of this attitude.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941-1942*, 130.

<sup>12</sup> John Dill (Joint Staff Washington) to Prime Minister Churchill, telegram, 23 February 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/70, Cambridge: Churchill College.

<sup>13</sup> Raymond A. Callahan, *Churchill: Retreat from Empire*, Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1984, 177.

<sup>14</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 166.

<sup>15</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 428.



In the spring of 1942, events in India did not help the British war effort either. Anti-British feelings throughout most of India had been exacerbated by events in Burma, Singapore, and Hong Kong. At Churchill's request, Sir Richard Cripps, a member of the War Cabinet, arrived in India at the end of March 1942 to negotiate with Nationalist leaders Mahatma Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah in an effort to keep India loyal to the Allied war effort. Both Gandhi and Jinnah had made it quite clear to the general public that they were not interested in supporting the British war effort without extracting some promises from the British regarding independence for India. Cripps delivered a document from the British government stating "that the British Government undertook solemnly to grant full independence to India if demanded by a Constituent Assembly after the war."<sup>16</sup> Cripps reported to Churchill on April 1, 1942, that there was "an impression of incompetence [on the part of the British] which is indeed alarming."<sup>17</sup> Cripps suggested that many Indians were skeptical about the ability of the British to protect India, insofar as they had been unable to do so in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Burma. In a press release issued on May 10, 1942, the pacifist Gandhi wrote that "the presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. Their withdrawal would remove the bait."<sup>18</sup> In April the Indian Congress refused to accept the British declaration and Cripps's trip to India was considered a failure. In his memoirs, Churchill stated that he expected that outcome and had encouraged Cripps not to be disappointed by the result. It must have been galling, however, when Churchill

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<sup>16</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 214.

<sup>17</sup> Sir Richard Cripps to Prime Minister Churchill, telegram re: India, 1 April 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/73, Cambridge: Churchill College.

<sup>18</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 221.

received a telegram from Roosevelt asking that Cripps try again to create an agreement with the Indian government, even offering suggestions to Churchill on how the British should handle the situation. Roosevelt suggested the British divide India into separate sovereignties much as the original thirteen colonies, with the ultimate goal of creating a permanent unified government.<sup>19</sup> While disclaiming any desire to be brought into the India situation, “It is, strictly speaking, none of my business,” Roosevelt did little to prevent other parties from getting involved, such as his own aides and General and Madame Chiang Kai-shek. In March 1942, President Roosevelt sent Louis Johnson, Assistant Secretary of War, to India, ostensibly as a U.S. commissioner in Delhi, but actually as his personal representative. Without specific instructions from the president, Johnson pushed the British so hard to give in to Indian Nationalist demands that the British attributed some of the failure of Cripps’s mission to him.<sup>20</sup> In responding to Roosevelt’s suggestion on how to “deal with” India, Churchill said that the president was applying an eighteenth-century fix on a twentieth-century problem. His memoirs emphatically stated that appeasing public opinion in the United States could not be a factor in how the British Empire dealt with India.<sup>21</sup> In his memoirs Harry Hopkins wrote, “It is probable that the only part of that cable with which Churchill agreed was Roosevelt’s admission that it is ‘none of my business.’ ”<sup>22</sup>

In February 1942, General Chiang Kai-shek announced to the press that he was

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<sup>19</sup> President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill, telegram, 11 March 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/71, Cambridge: Churchill College.

<sup>20</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 501.

<sup>21</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 219.

<sup>22</sup> Sherwood, *White House Papers*, vol. 1, 516.

going to visit India to discuss Burma and the Burma Road situation with British officials. He also stated his intent to meet with Gandhi and Indian Congressman Jawaharlal Nehru. Churchill sent him a carefully worded telegram reminding Chiang that these men were “in a state at least of passive disobedience to the King-Emperor,” and that Chiang’s meeting with them might be misconstrued by all of Asia as a support of Nehru’s and Gandhi’s continuing reluctance to fully support the Allied war effort.<sup>23</sup> In his memoirs, Churchill wrote that the generalissimo “deferred to my wishes, and, helped by the tact of the Viceroy [of India] the ill-timed visit passed off without doing any harm.”<sup>24</sup> At that time Churchill was not aware that Chiang Kai-shek had created a relationship with the two Indian men that resulted in letters and cables being exchanged during the war. The United States knew about many of these through letters and cables that Madame Chiang Kai-shek often sent to Lauchlin Currie, administrative assistant to the president. While the Chiangs often exasperated Roosevelt during the war, he believed that it was necessary to cultivate their friendship. There was always the fear that another Chinese ruler might make a separate peace with the Japanese.<sup>25</sup>

In the spring of 1942, Roosevelt also found himself in the center of disagreements between the Chinese and British over Burma. In a series of memos written to the president in January, Currie described the worsening condition in Burma. British forces, he said in January, numbered 30,000 to 35,000, but most of those were Burmese and they did not have adequate equipment to fight the estimated 80,000

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<sup>23</sup> Churchill to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, telegram, 2 February 1942, T.172/2, Churchill Archives.

<sup>24</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 207.

<sup>25</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 236.

Japanese massing at the borders.<sup>26</sup> While the Chinese resented the British for refusing to use Chinese troops to aid in the defense of Burma, this grievance was not their only one. Currie followed up on January 24 with another memo relating additional complaints, including British confiscations of some shipments intended for the Chinese, British closing of the Burma railroad to all but troop transports, lack of British financial aid, and the overall fear of Burma being overrun by the Japanese.<sup>27</sup>

Neither the British nor the Americans had a great deal of faith in the Chinese ability to fight in Burma, or even in China for that matter. In April, General Joseph W. Stilwell, Chief of the Joint Staff under Chiang Kai-shek and commander of U.S. forces in the China-Burma-India Theater (USAF CBI), sent two messages to the War Department that record his frustrations with the Chinese leadership. His blatant, “they let me down completely by chickenhearted imitation of an attack,” was followed by “have been unable to report recently due to constant running around in attempt to egg them on to positive action.”<sup>28</sup> On the same day the latter message was sent, Madame Chiang Kai-shek sent Lauchlin Currie a cable expressing disgust over Burma receiving additional planes for protection while China was getting none. She suggested also that India was receiving planes even before the Chinese. Further complaints questioned British contributions to the Allied cause and, in an almost gleeful note, ended with the news that the British Army in Burma had just lost the Magwe oil fields to the

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<sup>26</sup> Lauchlin Currie to President Roosevelt, memo, 16 January 1942, Library of Congress.

<sup>27</sup> Lauchlin Currie to President Roosevelt, memo, 24 January 1942, Library of Congress.

<sup>28</sup> Stilwell to Secretary of War and Chief of Staff, cable, 1 April 1942, Library of Congress; Stilwell to Adjutant General, cable, 17 April 1942, Library of Congress.

Japanese.<sup>29</sup> On April 29, Stilwell cabled the president that the Chinese were refusing to work under any British commander. Stilwell, at least, still had Chinese support. On May 6, Madame Chiang Kai-shek sent yet another message to Currie accusing the British of inefficiency and negligence that were hampering Stilwell's efforts.<sup>30</sup>

Challenged by a full agenda—the rapidly deteriorating situation in Asia, a need for alternative plans in the event of a Soviet collapse, clarification of plans for a cross-channel invasion, and the need to determine future North African campaigns—both leaders agreed to a “quick trip” to meet one another in June 1942. The Second Washington Conference was of shorter duration than the first and began at Hyde Park at Roosevelt's New York home. Churchill arrived there on June 19, 1942, and the conference continued after he and Roosevelt took a train to Washington on June 21. At Hyde Park no notes were taken; however one can infer from later discussions and letters that the two leaders talked about the possibility of a cross-channel invasion and the sharing of atomic secrets. The cross-channel discussions can be surmised from a note that Churchill later sent to Roosevelt. This note emphatically stated that any cross-channel attack in 1942 was out of the question, at least from the British perspective. But Churchill was interested in knowing what the Americans might have planned and, more important, if they had truly thought out every last detail. Churchill did not think so because he wrote that “no responsible British military authority has so far been able to make a plan for September 1942 [obviously a date which had earlier been suggested]

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<sup>29</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: China, 1942*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968, 578.

<sup>30</sup> Madame Chiang Kai-shek to Lauchlin Currie, cable, 6 May 1942, Library of Congress.

which had any chance of success unless the Germans become utterly demoralized, of which there is no likelihood.”<sup>31</sup>

On June 20, Churchill and Roosevelt, along with Hopkins, met to discuss the sharing of atomic secrets. This was a fairly new topic for both men and, in fact, they were armed with few facts. Churchill had first learned of atomic possibilities in August 1939 from his friend and scientific adviser, Frederick Lindemann, Lord Cherwell.<sup>32</sup> Roosevelt had learned of the atom bomb from a letter read to him in October 1939 by Alexander Sachs, an economist and member of the Petroleum Industry War Council. Sachs had been given the letter by Albert Einstein, the German-born physicist, and Leo Szilárd, the Hungarian-born nuclear physicist. In 1940, Szilárd and Enrico Fermi, an Italian-born physicist, were charged by the American government to produce an atomic bomb. Churchill and Roosevelt had, therefore, learned of atomic possibilities at about the same time and both countries had already begun the process of developing a bomb. Churchill came to Washington in 1942 believing that the British were far ahead of the Americans in creating some type of atomic weapon. It was a frightening thought to him that the Germans also were working hard to create something using the “heavy water” that they had all aggressively pursued. At the same time the British thought they were in the driver’s seat on research in the Allied camp, Churchill also recognized that development was, for Britain, a difficult problem. Britain was too easy a target for German bombs and that made the distant United States or Canada more viable

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<sup>31</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 515.

<sup>32</sup> By the 1950s, Lindemann was head of the British nuclear program.

alternatives for establishing what, in Churchill's words, would be "conspicuous factories."<sup>33</sup> Churchill commented on the financial aspect of this enormous venture and seemed relieved when Roosevelt agreed that the United States would house the development project. In view of the ongoing wartime expenses, the British would probably have had a difficult time on their own with the \$2 billion price tag for the creation of atomic weaponry. Historian Warren Kimball believes that the British learned the hard way that they would soon be shut out of future involvement. When the agreement was made at Hyde Park to join efforts and the specifics were not put in writing, "that allowed the Americans in charge of the project to be, or pretend to be, ignorant of the sharing policy."<sup>34</sup>

Once the Manhattan Project began in the United States, American scientists, money, and equipment dominated. Project advisors began recommending to the president that development knowledge be given to the British only on a restricted basis. The Americans were now gauging what could be shared with the British on a need-to-know basis for the war effort only.<sup>35</sup> Churchill strongly believed that it was the progress of British scientists that had moved Roosevelt to push U.S. development, and therefore Churchill was reluctant to acquiesce to American dominance. In 1940, Lindemann endeavored to have a British plant built because he argued that whoever built the first working plant would be able to dominate the entire process. He feared that if the Americans built the bomb, the British would be at their mercy.<sup>36</sup> And it was not just

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<sup>33</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 380.

<sup>34</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 146.

<sup>35</sup> Dallek, *FDR and American Foreign Policy*, 416.

<sup>36</sup> Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986, 372.

wartime knowledge that the British wanted. They wanted to make sure they would be on an equal footing with the Americans for postwar atomic use.<sup>37</sup> The issue of sharing atomic secrets was not resolved at this conference; the discussion would continue in earnest at the Trident Conference in Washington in May 1943.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff met first in Washington on June 19, 1942. In addition to the Chiefs of Staff were General Alan Brooke, chief of the British Imperial General Staff, and Major General Hastings Lionel Ismay, member of the British War Cabinet. Also present were Air Marshal Douglas Evill, head of the Royal Air Force delegation in Washington, and Major General Gordon Macready, British representative on the Combined Chiefs of Staff and a member of the British Joint Staff Mission at Washington. Of primary importance at this was meeting was a question that could not be answered. Would the Soviets hold out against the Germans? If they did not, a domino effect of events might unfold, requiring a massive shift of personnel and equipment, initially to protect the oil fields of the Middle East. Soviet resistance would also determine the allotment of forces and supplies for a North Africa campaign and a cross-channel attack. If the Soviets did not hold, the Germans would certainly release many of their troops now fighting in the East to concentrate on the Western Front, making a cross-channel attack difficult, if not impossible. If the Soviets held and plans for the cross-channel attack were to proceed, some form of command structure needed to be agreed upon.

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<sup>37</sup> Dallek, *FDR and American Foreign Policy*, 416.



General George Marshall's fear that the British had come to the conference with "new proposals for diversions," as Secretary of War Stimson's diary later related, seemed to be laid to rest when a meeting was held with six of the top military commanders. Marshall and Field Marshal John Dill presided over an informal meeting that included General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Brigadier General Walter Bedell Smith who was Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Brooke, and Ismay. They all agreed that the cross-channel invasion and other possible attack points in Western Europe would be their primary focus and that any North Africa campaign would be undertaken only "in case of necessity or if an exceptionally favorable opportunity presented itself."<sup>38</sup> They reiterated this agreement the following day when the Combined Chiefs of Staff met to discuss the cross-channel invasion in more detail. On June 20 the focus was on the timing for BOLERO, the buildup in England for the cross-channel invasion. Admiral Ernest J. King brought up a key point when he stated that there were now nine fronts on which the Allies were fighting, and any talk of GYMNAST (the joint Allied attack in North Africa) should be shelved in favor of discussing BOLERO. His point was that the fighting in the Pacific Theater would have to make concessions for the sake of BOLERO, so nothing else should be allowed to interfere.<sup>39</sup> General Marshall's attitude was that BOLERO should proceed regardless of what was happening on the Eastern Front, if nothing else than for the protection of Britain. No definitive agreement was reached at this meeting. Yet General Brooke made the British position clear when he

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<sup>38</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 428.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

compared an imminent cross-channel attack to a “sacrifice” operation.<sup>40</sup> The British military leaders saw great value in BOLERO, but did not see a cross-channel attack happening successfully in 1942.

On June 21, Churchill and Roosevelt held their first meeting in Washington. Present also were Marshall, Brooke, Ismay, and Hopkins. Future strategy comprised the agenda, however that was tabled for a time when news arrived that Tobruk, in North Africa, had fallen to the Germans. British troops, totaling 33,000, were taken captive by a much smaller German force under the “Desert Fox,” General Erwin Rommel. For Churchill and the two British generals with him this was bitter, demoralizing, and indeed disgraceful news, as Churchill recorded in his memoirs.<sup>41</sup> While a low point militarily for the British, the North African campaign proved to be a high point in the British-American relationship. Roosevelt immediately asked what the Americans could do to help and Churchill responded with a request for Sherman tanks. The British had begun the Battle of Gazala (Tobruk) with over 900 tanks, but now 550 of them had been destroyed. Marshall hesitated when hearing of the request because the United States had just produced the much-needed tanks and sent them to their armored division homes. But even Marshall recognized the British plight and 370 tanks were sent to the Suez Canal.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, one of the ships carrying those tanks was sunk by a German submarine. In his memoirs, Ismay writes about the friendship and mutual understanding of Roosevelt and Churchill and how it translated into an immediate offer of help. He

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 431.

<sup>41</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 383.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

does relate, however, that had the request gone through channels instead of straight from the White House, the tanks would probably never have been sent. He commented that the reaction probably would have been, “We are sorry that we cannot do anything at the moment. The only available Shermans have just been issued to our own troops.”<sup>43</sup> As evidenced from Marshall’s initial reaction, Ismay was probably correct.

Marshall proved to be very unhappy about the turn of events in North Africa because he understood it would probably shift the focus of the meetings. The general believed that the British had come to Washington to talk about the need for additional landing craft and about tactics to be employed in the cross-channel attack, which had been validated at earlier meetings of the military leaders. In a memorandum Marshall wrote to the President on June 23, he stated that “a large venture in the Middle East would make a decisive American contribution to the campaign in Western Europe out of the question. Therefore, I am opposed to such a project.”<sup>44</sup> Marshall always maintained that any North Africa campaign would be a poor substitute for a cross-channel attack and that if GYMNAST was launched, BOLERO would be delayed by months, if not years. When the Joint Chiefs all agreed early at the conference that the buildup of BOLERO was vital to the probable exclusion of other ventures, including GYMNAST, Marshall concluded that the overall American war plan of concentrating on the cross-channel invasion would prevail. In short, the timing of Tobruk’s fall could not have been worse for Marshall.

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<sup>43</sup> General Lord Ismay, *The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay*, New York: Viking Press, 1960, 256.

<sup>44</sup> Larry L. Bland, ed., “The Right Man for the Job,” *The Papers of George Catlett Marshall*, vol. 3, December 7, 1941 – May 31, 1943, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991, 249.

When the meeting continued, however, they all nevertheless agreed that the buildup to BOLERO would continue to be the primary focus with GYMNAST as the most acceptable alternative. Late on the night of June 23, however, the discussion began to take a different turn. Because of deteriorating conditions in the Middle East, Roosevelt suddenly suggested that American troops should be sent to help out in the region between Alexandria and Teheran.<sup>45</sup> Everyone agreed to study how to manage this, particularly considering the lack of shipping. Even so, Stimson, who had consistently written in his diaries about his fears of British talk of “dispersion,” was probably just as surprised as everyone else at the vehemence of Marshall’s reaction to Roosevelt’s suggestion. Marshall became so upset at this sudden reversal that he left the room and did not return that night.<sup>46</sup>

The meeting held the next day, including the two heads of state, plus Stimson, Frank Knox, and Hopkins, continued this discussion. The only official record comes from Stimson’s notes; he reiterated that sending a division of American troops to the Middle East would be a diversion from BOLERO. He also recounted the widely held American view that the shortage of shipping, carrier, and adequate air cover over North Africa would hinder success. It was one thing, he pointed out, to send half-trained American troops to work beside well-trained troops. It was another to send those same American troops to be a key element in the defense of North Africa. Stimson believed he was under personal attack because Churchill told him that no member of the British

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<sup>45</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 436.

<sup>46</sup> Henry L. Stimson and McGeorge Bundy, *On Active Service in Peace and War*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947, 424.

staff believed that BOLERO was a possibility for 1942, therefore there could be few reasons to prevent sending a few American troops immediately to North Africa. Stimson pointed out the agreement for BOLERO had been finalized with a 1943 date, and not 1942. He also used one of the most famous of the American arguments at this point when the British urged diversions that would take away from the BOLERO buildup. Stimson reminded everyone that even the British would have to agree that increasing the American presence for that buildup was vital in light of two well-known facts: the British had sent so many troops to the Middle East that Great Britain had, in fact, been “skinned;” and on that day in June no one knew if the Soviet Union was going to be able to hold out against the Germans.<sup>47</sup> If the Soviet Union fell, the Germans could immediately move their troops to the Western Front, probably even bolstering their numbers in North Africa as well. They could also do the same in the Balkans, with an eye on the Persian oil fields.

Following this meeting, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Hopkins met with Foreign Minister T. V. Soong of China. Soong was in Washington at that point specifically to appeal for additional assistance such as air support and to ask for help in resecuring Burma. By the spring of 1942, Burma had been overrun by the Japanese and the Chinese were pushing for an Allied campaign to retake Burma in order to open up a land route to China. Air shipments over the Himalayas were proving to be inadequate for Chinese needs.

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<sup>47</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941–1942*, Washington, DC, 438.

On June 25, Roosevelt and Churchill met with King Peter II of Yugoslavia and his foreign minister Momčilo Ninčić. According to notes taken by Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle, the king and his minister were annoyed by Churchill's caustic remarks regarding the king in a message of 1941.<sup>48</sup> Churchill had sent a message to the British minister in Yugoslavia asking why the king and his government wanted help leaving Yugoslavia ahead of a German offensive. Rather than flee their country, he preferred they hide in the mountains and work with partisans in defending the country.<sup>49</sup> When Yugoslavia fell to the Germans in April 1941, the king and his government were evacuated with British help, going to Greece and then, eventually, on to England. In June 1941, Peter established his Yugoslavian government-in-exile, simultaneously continuing his education at Cambridge University; he later joined the Royal Air Force. Churchill seemed to vent his frustrations regarding the burden of supporting the large numbers of governments-in-exile during the war when he told Peter, "You are beginning to tire out your friends."<sup>50</sup> Whether it was the result of this remark or other events, Peter and Ninčić made it clear later that they hoped the United States, under Roosevelt's leadership, would take command of the European postwar political and military matters. In his notes Berle said that the king and his minister considered Churchill to have "no general view of politics and the political situation."<sup>51</sup>

On June 25 the Combined Chiefs of Staff, along with the British visitors to the conference, held a meeting to discuss the American offer of reinforcements to North

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 444.

<sup>49</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 223.

<sup>50</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 445.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

Africa. A new member of the Combined Chiefs of Staff also attended this meeting—British Admiral Andrew Cunningham. Later on Cunningham would become Eisenhower's naval Chief in Command of the North African landings. While Marshall seemed to have accepted the inevitability of American troops eventually fighting in North Africa, he nevertheless made it clear that BOLERO was still foremost on his agenda. While the final agreement gave the British additional air support, the only ground support they received (other than for the air support maintenance) came from the U.S. Second Armored Division.

The Pacific Theater was finally discussed in earnest at a meeting of the Pacific War Council on June 25. Roosevelt had suggested, and Churchill had agreed, that the operations in this region would fall to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, East Indies, and China. Canada was also invited because of the large number of Canadian troops being used in that region and because of the proximity of Canada to the Aleutian Islands, some of which the Japanese held. By the time of this meeting, the Pacific Theater had been very neatly divided into three separate areas. The British commanded the Indian region; MacArthur was in command of the South West Pacific region; and Admiral Chester Nimitz became commander of the Central Pacific region, with headquarters at Pearl Harbor. The Central Pacific region was primarily a naval operation throughout most of the war. Two major naval battles had occurred in the Pacific Theater since the last conference and they were to have a major impact on how the Japanese conducted their war effort. The first event was the Battle of the Coral Sea on May 7 and 8, 1942. This was the second part of the Japanese operational plan

following Pearl Harbor. The Japanese planned to take Port Moresby in New Guinea in order to have a base from which to attack northeastern Australia. While the United States lost one aircraft carrier, a destroyer, and some smaller ships, two of Japan's big aircraft carriers were damaged. Because of this damage they were unable to take part in the next event, the attack on the Midway Atoll beginning on June 4 and lasting until June 7. The Americans were able to defend Midway while destroying four of Japan's fleet carriers. From that point on, the American Pacific fleet and the Japanese fleet would be of equal strength.

This Second Washington Conference did not produce any major changes in strategy. All the participants agreed that American forces needed to be used in a European campaign, presumably in 1942. It would not, however, be in a cross-channel invasion, which would take months to assemble unless "a sound and sensible plan can be contrived." Plans for GYMNAST would proceed and American forces for this operation would not be taken from BOLERO units already committed.<sup>52</sup> This conference achieved little tactically that changed the scope or direction of the war. For Churchill, however, the outcome of the conference was a relief. He came to the conference fearing a possible American shift to a "Pacific first" strategy and left knowing that that was not on the horizon.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington 1941-1942*, Washington, DC, 478.

<sup>53</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 150.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE ALLIANCE UNRAVELS: TRIDENT, THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE (MAY 12, 1943 UNTIL MAY 25, 1943)

In May 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Washington to discuss the continuing war effort. It had been eleven months since their last face-to-face meeting and a great deal had happened in the interim. On November 8, 1942, 84,000 U.S. troops and 23,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers landed in western North Africa. Their primary landing sites were Casablanca and Rabat in Morocco, and Oran and Algiers in Algeria. The goal of the Allied military chiefs was to take and hold the western portion of North Africa. They would march east to surround the Germans and Italians controlling Tunisia, and then continue east to box in German General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps fighting the British in Egypt. Faced first with defeating French troops in North Africa who were loyal to the Vichy Government, the Allies were not successful in controlling all of North Africa until the middle of May, just as the Trident Conference was beginning.

On the Eastern Front, the Battle of Leningrad (which began when Hitler's Army Group North attacked the city in September 1941) continued to rage. Hitler's Army Group Center advanced towards Moscow in October of 1941 and quickly learned that it was not equipped for the harsh Russian winter. The Battle for Moscow continued beyond the dates of the Trident Conference. Hitler's worst defeat during this period

came when he sent his Sixth Army, under General Friedrich Paulus, to attack Stalingrad in September of 1942. By February 1943, the Soviet Army had surrounded and destroyed the entire army group. In spite of that massive loss, by May of 1943 the Germans continued to hold a line from Leningrad in the north to the Black Sea in the south. The Russian Army outnumbered the German Army by two to one and it had five tanks and guns to every German one. Hitler, however, remained optimistic, claiming superiority in leadership and tactics in front of several of his generals. But Hitler was no longer celebrating victories before they occurred, as he had done at the commencement of the Battle of Stalingrad.

In the Pacific the war had changed dramatically. Suffering massive naval losses at the Battle of Midway in June of 1942, the Japanese turned their focus on taking and holding major islands in the Pacific. The Japanese intent was to use these bases to control the air ways and sea lanes of the Pacific. From March of 1942 until November of 1943, they focused heavily on taking all of New Guinea (with its proximity to Australia) and the Solomon Islands, including Guadalcanal. This would give them control of the vast Solomon Sea. On the Asian mainland the Allies were just beginning to plan attacks on Japanese-controlled countries such as Burma.

The Second Washington Conference had ended with an agreement to build up troops and supplies for an eventual cross-channel invasion (this buildup was called BOLERO). The American military chiefs, in fact, preferred Operation SLEDGEHAMMER, a modified version of BOLERO, but the British continued to demonstrate reluctance, questioning its chances for success. Churchill wrote to

Roosevelt on July 8, 1942, “It may therefore be said that premature action in 1942 while probably ending in disaster would decisively injure the prospect of well organized large scale action in 1943.”<sup>1</sup>

Both Roosevelt and Churchill had agreed that American ground forces needed to be actively involved in some way in 1942. For Roosevelt, this objective became so important that he wrote a memo on July 24, 1942, to his close advisor Harry Hopkins, his Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, and the commander of the United States Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, indicating that since BOLERO could not take place in 1942, American troops should be utilized elsewhere in the European Theater. Roosevelt dismissed JUPITER, an attack on northern Norway. Churchill had mentioned JUPITER numerous times, but had never been able to generate any military enthusiasm or support. Roosevelt also dismissed military operations in the Persian Gulf. All of this meant that GYMNAST, the Allied attack on North Africa, was the only remaining alternative, and Roosevelt intended it to be a predominantly American venture.<sup>2</sup>

Churchill understood the pressure on Roosevelt to shift the focus of American fighting to the Pacific, so while he pushed for GYMNAST he also continued to bring up the need for BOLERO. In the meantime, Churchill engaged in attempts to delay BOLERO in favor of other operations. Churchill’s telegram to Roosevelt on July 14, 1942, explained that Germany’s naval attacks would create a ripple effect of destruction. If the Germans sank British battleships, food supplies would be affected

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<sup>1</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 520.

<sup>2</sup> Roosevelt to Harry Hopkins, General George Marshall and Admiral Ernest King, memo, 24 July 1942, Library of Congress.

and the war effort would be crippled. Above all, he intimated, the great convoys of American troops across the ocean would be prevented from sailing, and the building up of a really strong second front in 1943 would be rendered impossible.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin continued to urge a cross-channel invasion in order to relieve the Soviet Army. As German troops pushed towards Stalingrad in the summer of 1942, Stalin insisted that the Allies live up to their “promise” of a second front. Churchill wanted to remind Stalin that no firm promise had been made, but Roosevelt suggested being more sympathetic to Stalin since the Soviet Union, unlike the British Isles, had actually been invaded. Churchill took on the mission of informing Stalin face-to-face and told him that there would be no second front in 1942. In his diaries, Churchill explained the irony of his mission of going to Moscow as an ally. “I pondered on my mission to this sullen, sinister Bolshevik State I had once tried so hard to strangle at its birth, and which, until Hitler appeared, I had regarded as the mortal foe of civilized freedom.”<sup>4</sup>

While Churchill was on his trip to Moscow in August 1942, a crisis erupted in India when British colonial officials arrested Indian National Leaders Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other members of the Congress Party, for civil disobedience. Once again Chiang Kai-shek sent telegrams of protest to Roosevelt who then passed them on to Churchill. Churchill indicated to Roosevelt that Chiang’s information regarding India was often incorrect and he made it clear that he resented Chiang’s interference. Roosevelt tempered his response to Chiang fearing that Chiang, if left

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<sup>3</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 530.

unchecked, might initiate even more trouble with nationalist elements in India. Roosevelt continued to play the role of peacemaker.<sup>5</sup> In a veiled threat to Chiang, Churchill wrote in a telegram to Roosevelt on August 14, “It occurred to me you could remind Chiang that Gandhi was prepared to negotiate with Japan on the basis of a free passage for Japanese troops through India in [the hopes] of their joining hands with Hitler.”<sup>6</sup> As he had been on various other occasions throughout the wartime alliance, Churchill was unhappy with any outside interference in Britain’s relationship with India.

By August 1942 the plans for TORCH, the Allied invasion of North Africa, were well under way. The Combined Chiefs of Staff debated tactical issues and increasingly it became an American show in that they provided the largest number of troops and supplies. This was important to Roosevelt with upcoming congressional elections. As related by historian Arthur Funk, “From this point of view the operation had to be successful and had to be clearly American. The president could not risk having the United States, in its first commitment to battle, appear as ancillary to a British plan which possessed only 50 percent chance of success.”<sup>7</sup> Roosevelt also increasingly worked for heavy American involvement because of French forces in North Africa. With Britain supporting de Gaulle’s Free French Government, United States military advisors feared that French forces, ostensibly controlled by the Vichy

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<sup>4</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 475.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 508.

<sup>6</sup> Prime Minister Churchill to President Roosevelt, telegram, 14 August 1942, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/79, Cambridge: Churchill College.

<sup>7</sup> Arthur L. Funk, *The Politics of Torch: The Allied Landings at the Algiers Putsch 1942*, Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1974, 95.

government, might fight British forces. While Churchill understood this possibility, he resented the American desire to publicly extend the illusion of American dominance in the operation to the Spanish and Portuguese governments. Both men had agreed Spain and Portugal should be informed of the upcoming operation if only to allay their fears for conditions in the Mediterranean. Churchill wrote to Roosevelt in a memo on October 26, "I am satisfied that it is important to inform both the Spanish and Portuguese Governments of British participation, if only to remove any suspicions about the object of our own concentrations at Gibraltar."<sup>8</sup> Roosevelt agreed, but also wrote, "I hope you will stress the fact that the expedition is under American command."<sup>9</sup> The American press release following the landing also made clear that the operation was American, with the *assistance* of the British navy and air forces.<sup>10</sup> It became increasingly apparent to Churchill that TORCH was to be an American show. W. Averell Harriman, U.S. diplomat, visited Churchill during the weeks prior to the onset of TORCH and later sent a cable to Roosevelt regarding his visits. The prime minister, he wrote, "understands fully that he is to play second fiddle in all scores and then only as you direct."<sup>11</sup>

With TORCH under way by November 1942, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff began to plan what the American forces would do next. General Marshall complained again of peripheral operations in the Mediterranean, which he saw as delaying BOLERO. Roosevelt did not want to lose the momentum of American fighting in the

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<sup>8</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Emerging*, 640.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 642.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 641.

European Theater. At the same time, Admiral King wanted to increase U.S. forces in the Pacific. And as the Japanese threat loomed closer to Australia and New Zealand, those governments asked for the return of their troops, then fighting in North Africa. The United States became increasingly caught in a contest of wills between Great Britain and its two dominions, particularly the combative relationship between Prime Minister John Curtin of Australia, and Churchill. Churchill was embarrassed by what he saw as the petulance of these members of the British Empire and their apparent lack of willingness to cooperate fully with whatever Churchill mandated. But even Churchill recognized that he did not have the legal authority to demand that Australian and New Zealander troops be kept in North Africa, so he asked Roosevelt to intervene. Roosevelt did send a letter to Curtin and Prime Minister Peter Fraser of New Zealand, to suggest that since more American troops had been ordered to protect their countries from possible Japanese attack, would it not then be agreeable to keep their respective troops in the Mediterranean? Following Curtin's insistence, however, Australian and New Zealander troops returned home.

When Operation TORCH finally began, Roosevelt hoped that the diplomacy the United States continued to conduct with Vichy France would encourage French military forces in North Africa to cooperate and not fire on an Allied invasion of North Africa. Fearing that de Gaulle might leak information about the invasion to French forces in North Africa, Roosevelt suggested to Churchill that de Gaulle not be told of the military

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<sup>11</sup> Averell W. Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin: 1941–1946*, New York: Random House, 1975, 172.

plans until the invasion had already begun.<sup>12</sup> When General Eisenhower, the commanding officer of TORCH, negotiated terms with French Admiral Jean Darlan, the commanding officer of all Vichy forces, there was a major uproar. Darlan had agreed that French forces in North Africa would cooperate with the Allies and he would have political control of all French military forces outside of France. The British saw Darlan as a “Quisling,” a traitor. Churchill wrote Roosevelt that “I hold no brief for Admiral Darlan. But it is necessary for the House [of Commons] to realize that the Government and to a large extent the people of the United States do not feel that same way about Darlan as we do. He has not betrayed them. He has not vilified them.”<sup>13</sup> Roosevelt backed up Eisenhower’s decision to negotiate with Darlan, however, recognizing, as Eisenhower did, the military expediency of the move.<sup>14</sup> While Roosevelt saw Darlan’s appointment as commander temporary, Robert Murphy, Roosevelt’s representative and General Eisenhower’s political advisor in North Africa, would eventually argue that Darlan could pull French forces together and work well with the Allies. Murphy spent a great deal of time with Darlan from the time of the TORCH invasion up until Darlan’s assassination on December 24, 1942. While Murphy acknowledged that Darlan’s first priority was protecting France and its interests, he maintained it also greatly contributed to the Allied cause.<sup>15</sup> Darlan controlled several regions of North Africa where French officials and French troops agreed to a cease-fire. On hearing of Darlan’s death,

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<sup>12</sup> Dallek, *FDR and American Foreign Policy*, 363.

<sup>13</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 639.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph P. Hobbs, *Dear General: Eisenhower’s Wartime Letters to Marshall*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, 80.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Murphy, *Diplomat Among Warriors: The Unique World of a Foreign Service Expert*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1964, 141.



Murphy wrote, “Darlan had contributed as much as any Frenchman to the success of a highly speculative military and diplomatic venture.”<sup>16</sup>

In the Pacific Theater, the Chinese demand that the Allies reopen the Burma Road continued to cause conflict. The Chinese were quite willing to lend military troops to aid in an attack from the east but were waiting for word from the Allies that the campaign had begun. Historian Warren Kimball suggested that it became a battle of will between the British and the Chinese. “Chiang was unwilling to support limited action in northern Burma which would serve only to protect the British in India, and Britain had little interest in a risky campaign which would merely reopen the supply route to Chiang’s forces.”<sup>17</sup> In early January 1943, Roosevelt sent Churchill a telegram outlining Chiang’s frustrations with the British. Churchill responded that TORCH needs had trumped those of any Burma operation. He then ended the note with the somewhat cynical remark, “We had hoped that General Stilwell would have been able to make these problems clear to the Generalissimo.”<sup>18</sup>

Between the Washington Conference of June 1942 and the next Washington Conference in May 1943, the two leaders met at Casablanca, Morocco. Casablanca did little to change the direction of the war and questions remained that would increasingly cause disagreements between the two allies in the months ahead. Operation HUSKY, an attack on the island of Sicily, found approval as the next move in the Mediterranean, but only after total success had been achieved in North Africa. General Marshall and

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>17</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 110.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 117.

Admiral King constantly pushed for more fighting forces in the Pacific, yet Marshall would not give up on the need to continue preparation for ROUNDUP.

By April 1943, the British and Americans agreed to begin planning for Operation HUSKY. That was not enough for Churchill. With the success of TORCH almost complete (Tunisia was the last Axis-held territory to fall to the Allies in May), Churchill pressed for increased Mediterranean operations, including an attack on Italy or on the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea, near Turkey. Marshall's reluctance to agree to any more operations in the Mediterranean caused Roosevelt to begin to waver on the idea. He would agree to a concrete date for HUSKY, but beyond that there was only one thing on which he was clear: he wanted any occupation of Italian territory to be one that looked predominantly American. In a telegram to Churchill on April 4, 1943, Roosevelt wrote, "In view of the friendly feeling toward America entertained by a great number of the citizens of Italy and in consideration of the large number of citizens of the United States who are of Italian descent, it is my opinion that our military problem will be made less difficult by giving to the Allied Military Government as much of an American character as is practicable."<sup>19</sup> As befits a true alliance, British General Harold Alexander became Supreme Commander of the military forces in Operation HUSKY under Eisenhower. On April 15, 1943, Churchill made clear in a telegram he wrote to Roosevelt that he wanted a British officer to become military governor once victory was achieved. Roosevelt did not acknowledge that request and the question of political control of Italy remained an open one.

After Darlan's assassination in December 1942, General Henri Giraud became the French Civil and Military Chief in North Africa. De Gaulle attempted to meet with Giraud several times in late December 1942 and early January 1943. Giraud was evasive about meeting with de Gaulle and later explained to him that he had had little choice. He implied that the Americans controlled his actions. The two men did meet at the Casablanca Conference held in Anfa, Morocco, in January 1943. Giraud told de Gaulle of his plans to be the Supreme Commander of all French military forces outside of France and de Gaulle would be his General of the Army. In a chapter of his memoirs entitled "Comedy," de Gaulle wrote, "Thus America and England, appointing themselves arbiters of the interests of the French people, were dealing with General Giraud only, and he, under pretext of not playing politics, accepted their authority."<sup>20</sup> At Casablanca, de Gaulle told Giraud that *he* wanted to establish a wartime French government at Algiers and that Giraud would become head of the army.<sup>21</sup> After Casablanca, de Gaulle saw that the Americans and British acted as though Giraud was the one true French leader of French forces outside of France. By the time de Gaulle left Casablanca he had agreed to work with Giraud only in hopes of eventually changing Giraud's mind about the chain of command. But as months passed, that did not happen. Indeed, he seldom saw Giraud. In the meantime, de Gaulle continued to complain openly about the heavy hand of the Americans on Giraud. His feelings about Roosevelt are evident from his memoirs: "But from the moment America entered the war,

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<sup>19</sup> President Roosevelt to Prime Minister Churchill, telegram, 4 April 1943, in *Chartwell Papers*, CHAR 20/110, Cambridge: Churchill College.

<sup>20</sup> De Gaulle, *Complete War Memoirs*, 396.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 395.

Roosevelt meant the peace to be an American peace, convinced that he must be the one to dictate its structure, that the states which had been overrun should recognize him as its savior and its arbiter.”<sup>22</sup> Roosevelt wrote a memo to Churchill on May 8 revealing his true feelings about de Gaulle and also getting in a barbed comment about the British support of de Gaulle. “I am sorry, but it seems to me the conduct of the BRIDE continues to be more and more aggravated. His course and attitude is well nigh intolerable.”<sup>23</sup> Roosevelt then complained about the disturbances that de Gaulle’s government was creating in North Africa. “Unfortunately, too many people are catching on to the fact that these disturbances are being financed in whole or in part by British Government funds.”<sup>24</sup>

In May 1942, in spite of his doctors’ admonitions, once again Churchill went to Washington. In his diaries he wrote that the doctors were concerned about his flying at high altitudes so soon after recovering from pneumonia, so he traveled to America aboard the *Queen Mary*. Harry Hopkins stated in his diary that Churchill asked for the meetings because “he was disturbed by certain differences of opinion relative to future operations which seemed to exist beneath the surface.”<sup>25</sup> Smoldering beneath this surface were other issues such as the advisability of establishing bases on Portuguese-held islands, differences of opinion on the quality of Chinese fighting forces, and a topic that was much discussed in the spring of 1943 but not yet resolved, the sharing of

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 392.

<sup>23</sup> At Casablanca, Roosevelt had talked about bringing the Bride (De Gaulle) and Bridegroom (Giraud) together, hoping, of course, that the marriage would work. It did not!

<sup>24</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 209.

<sup>25</sup> Robert E. Sherwood, *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins, January 1942 – July 1945*, vol. 2, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1948, 723.

atomic secrets. For Churchill, the most important decision at this conference would be, “What should we do with our victory? Were its fruits to be gathered only in the Tunisian tip, or should we drive Italy out of the war and bring Turkey in on our side? These were fateful questions which could only be answered by a personal conference with the President.”<sup>26</sup>

One other topic that had the most potential for acrimony involved support for Chinese forces under Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. In his diary, Hopkins wrote about the commander of U.S. forces in the China-Burma-India Theater, General Joseph Stilwell’s “hatred of the ‘Limeys’ ” and belief that Roosevelt’s Europe-first stance had been influenced by Churchill. Hopkins suggested that this attitude highlights a paradox on the British side by a commander who described Churchill’s obvious subservience to Roosevelt because of lack of support for British forces in Italy.<sup>27</sup> There is also irony in Stilwell’s attitude towards Churchill because he and the prime minister shared a common disposition towards Chinese military capability. Churchill stated that “the President and his circle still cherished exaggerated ideas of the military power which China could exert if given sufficient arms and equipment.”<sup>28</sup>

At the very first meeting of the conference, held on May 12, 1943, Churchill railed at length regarding the difficulty of following through on Operation ANAKIM, the liberation of Burma. Attacking the Japanese in the jungle was, for Churchill, like attacking a shark in the water.<sup>29</sup> Any attack that did not include sea power or a surprise

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<sup>26</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 782.

<sup>27</sup> Hopkins, *White House Papers*, vol. 2, 726.

<sup>28</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 785.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 786.

attack should be reconsidered.<sup>30</sup> Adding to this British reluctance over ANAKIM, Roosevelt had to deal with divisiveness within the American command based in China. Major General Claire Chennault, former Flying Tiger, now commander of the Fourteenth U.S. Air Force in China, disagreed with Stilwell that available resources should be used primarily for ground operations. Chennault so opposed the idea that he took his argument directly to Roosevelt, saying that adequate air power would be more effective against the Japanese.<sup>31</sup> Chennault found support from Chiang Kai-shek, and the president defended Chennault's position by stating at the first meeting of the conference that increased air power would accomplish several objectives—most important of which would be to harass Japanese shipping. Stilwell, Churchill, and the American War Department all disagreed from a tactical standpoint.<sup>32</sup> While it would take time, Roosevelt's strong desire to go along with anything the generalissimo wanted would eventually wane. By the end of 1943, Roosevelt's attitude had begun to change because of Chennault's failure to hold off Japanese ground offenses. Stilwell's successes and the "Chinese insistence on making the Americans literally pay to fight in China" by their exorbitant loan requests all contributed to a harsher set of demands by Roosevelt.<sup>33</sup> Churchill noted at this time that the Americans "feared unduly the imminence of a Chinese collapse."<sup>34</sup> While the British certainly would not have wanted

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<sup>30</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970, 28.

<sup>31</sup> Charles F. Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *The United States Army in World War II: China-Burma-India Theater; Stilwell's Command Problems*, Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1956, 5.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 327.

<sup>34</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 788.

this to happen, Stimson's diary suggests that it was due to the long-standing mutual lack of regard between the Chinese and British, "to both of whom any failure of the other was a source of racial satisfaction."<sup>35</sup>

The one topic that would most divide the military chiefs, however, and would threaten to filibuster all of the proceedings of the conference was post-HUSKY military operations. Churchill believed strongly that the Mediterranean and ultimately Italy should be the next focus. While his diary indicates that the attendees of the first meeting were in complete agreement, in fact Roosevelt and his top military advisors were not.<sup>36</sup> Roosevelt said in the meeting that "he had always shrunk from putting large armies in Italy."<sup>37</sup> His rationale was that a massive landing in Italy, once Sicily was taken, might result in too much attrition. Attrition, in this sense, meant casualties. While an Allied victory in Italy was anticipated, if attrition was too devastating, the result might be a psychological victory for the Germans. They, in turn, would be able to release German troops fighting in Italy to concentrate more heavily on the increasingly stubborn Soviet Union. In his discussion of the Trident Conference, historian Maurice Matloff stated that this conference, even more than the previous ones, elucidated the divisive lines between agreement and disagreement.<sup>38</sup> Employing the troops now available from the North African campaign was one area of disagreement. Roosevelt asked the meeting attendees why *all* of Italy needed to be taken; would it not suffice to simply take the toe

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<sup>35</sup> Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, 529.

<sup>36</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 784.

<sup>37</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 30.

<sup>38</sup> Maurice Matloff, *United States Army in World War II, the War Department, Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare: 1943–1944*, Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1959, 127.

and heel section and use that as a base from which to launch air raids on German-held territory to the north? This was an indication of what Chief of the British General Staff Sir Alan Brooke called the president's lack of ability to grasp strategy.<sup>39</sup> Roosevelt was also concerned about the ramifications of an occupation of Italy. Would this require a full-scale responsibility towards the Italian population, which was in desperate need of "reconstitution"? Churchill later replied that an Italian government, in concert with the Allies, should take charge of that. This was Churchill's subtle way of saying, once again, that he wanted a British military governor in charge of working with the Italian government to reconstitute Italy.

This first meeting concluded with a discussion of securing bases in the Azores, islands long held by the Portuguese. Roosevelt and Churchill desired a diplomatic occupation of the islands but both were agreeable to a military one if necessary. This indicated a reversal by Roosevelt since, according to historian Warren Kimball writing on the alliance of Roosevelt and Churchill, he had taken a "pessimistic tone" towards a British occupation of the Azores in 1941 because of the imperialistic overtone of such a move.<sup>40</sup> The desire to create bases from which to wage antisubmarine warfare had obviously eliminated any idealistic notion Roosevelt had. Critical in this discussion, however, was the recognition by all present that once the Azores were occupied, Portugal would have to be protected from German retaliation. Because of an old alliance with the Portuguese, Britain would assume the primary role in the ensuing

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<sup>39</sup> Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman, eds., *War Diaries, 1939–1945: Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, 402.

<sup>40</sup> Kimball, *Forged in War*, 84.



discussions with Antonio de Oliveira Salazar, premier and virtual dictator of Portugal since 1932. The alliance had supposedly been brought to the attention of the State Department in early 1943 when Counselor of Legation George F. Kennan, at Lisbon, sent a dispatch to Washington outlining how this ancient treaty might benefit the Allies.<sup>41</sup> Eventually Churchill was to use the original wording of the treaty of 1373 to invoke a “friends to friends” discussion on working out an agreement for Allied forces to establish bases in the Azores.<sup>42</sup> As friendly as the discussions might be, a relationship seemed a risky venture for the Portuguese.<sup>43</sup>

When this meeting concluded, there remained vast differences of opinion regarding the next move in the European campaign. For Roosevelt and Marshall, anything that detracted from the buildup of forces and equipment for ROUNDUP (the cross-channel invasion) needed to be scrutinized for its overall value. While all agreed that the military campaign would not take place until the spring of 1944 at the earliest, the British feared that available troops were not being mobilized for interim operations, and they wanted those operations to take place in the Mediterranean. Alan Brooke feared that there was too much “latitude for the diversion of force to the Pacific.”<sup>44</sup> In his diary entry for May 13, 1943, Alan Brooke even wrote that he was thoroughly

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<sup>41</sup> George F. Kennan, *Memoirs: 1925–1950*, Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1967, 144.

<sup>42</sup> Francis L. Loewenheim, Harold D. Langley, and Manfred Jonas, eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill: Their Secret Wartime Correspondence*, New York: Saturday Review Press/E. P. Dutton and Co., 1975, 416.

<sup>43</sup> The Germans did not react to this as expected since they were made aware of the treaty. They did react, however, to American forces being on the islands. Salazar eventually was willing to overlook this as long as the American military units were commanded by a British officer and all of the bases were, in fact, British.

<sup>44</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *War Diaries*, 403.

depressed about the possibility that the British and the Americans would have met in Washington and accomplished nothing.

On Thursday, May 13, the Combined Chiefs of Staff met to discuss the entire war effort—operations in the Mediterranean, Western Europe, the China situation, Burma, and the entire Pacific fighting realm. This meeting was like a dance where ideas were presented, elaborated on, and disagreements tentatively aired. While the Americans presented ideas that involved heavy air operations to constantly harass the Germans and Italians (such as air attacks on the Ploesti fields and attacks on the Italian fleet), the British countered with proposals of their own. Air Marshal Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff, asked why the Allies should not bomb the Ploesti oil fields from Italian air bases once Italy was occupied, so as to ensure complete success.<sup>45</sup> Alan Brooke talked about the actual ground occupation of Italy and the forces required to manage that task. He also stated that the Allied-instigated collapse of Italy would actually help a cross-channel attack. This could be attributed to the Germans pulling troops from France or the Soviet Union to help counter the Allied invasion in Italy.<sup>46</sup> Marshall was so concerned with the direction of the discussion that he even asked the British if their focus had shifted to the Mediterranean Theater as the way to end the war. They continued to deny that charge while maintaining that the occupation of Italy would not eliminate a cross-channel invasion.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 40.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

That afternoon, Churchill and U.S. Secretary of State Cordell Hull met at the White House to discuss a variety of subjects including de Gaulle and the Soviet Union. In his memoirs, Hull gives himself credit, rather prophetically, for telling Churchill that he thought the Soviet Union would enter the Pacific war only when victory looked imminent.<sup>48</sup> This came in reply to Churchill's statement that the Soviet Union had every intention of fighting the Japanese at some point.

De Gaulle himself became a particularly interesting topic of conversation during this conference. A few weeks after these meetings, Roosevelt summed up his feelings in a letter to Churchill: "The war is so urgent and our military operations so serious and fraught with danger that we cannot have them menaced any longer by de Gaulle."<sup>49</sup> American opinion concluded that the British were backing de Gaulle to the exclusion of other French representation. Churchill was very pointed in his memoirs regarding Roosevelt's constant exhibition of documents with accusatory statements about de Gaulle.<sup>50</sup> In this dossier by the State Department and the American Secret Service, de Gaulle's profile seemed to be that of a man attempting to represent himself as the de facto French government, albeit in absentia. In the aforementioned meeting between Hull and Churchill, Hull reiterated all this and insinuated nicely that British money was supporting de Gaulle's campaign while, in fact, the United States was loaning a great deal of money to the British.<sup>51</sup> While Churchill acknowledged this, he countered that de Gaulle was not easy to get along with, but was a necessity because of his symbolism of

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<sup>48</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1249.

<sup>49</sup> Loewenheim, Langley, and Jonas, eds., *Roosevelt and Churchill*, 345.

<sup>50</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 801.

<sup>51</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 50.

the French Resistance. Too much United States support for Henri Giraud, de Gaulle's nemesis, in the attempt to control all exiled French forces, would be unacceptable to the British. Hull's response was arguably harsh: "The one big point in the situation...that should appeal to both our Governments alike is that if this de Gaulle matter is allowed to go forward as it has been, it will undoubtedly bring about serious friction between our two governments."<sup>52</sup> At this point the de Gaulle issue still was not resolved.

On Friday, May 14, the Combined Chiefs of Staff met once again to discuss global strategy. The opening statement by Alan Brooke did not bode well for the day's discussion. The official proceedings reveal that "the British Chiefs of Staff had examined the views of the U.S. Chiefs of Staff on the Global Strategy of the War. There were certain points with which they were not in entire agreement."<sup>53</sup> Alan Brooke's diary entry was a little more succinct, simply stating that they did not agree with any of it.<sup>54</sup> The first point on which the British disagreed was an extension of the war in the Pacific Theater that might detract from the Europe-first policy. The second point was the continuing American focus on putting all of the Allied eggs into the basket of a cross-channel attack. The British reiterated their desire to have ROUNDUP, but only when conditions were right, meaning only with continued Allied bombardment of Germany.<sup>55</sup> Also, to the British, badgering the German Army in other European operations would help force a withdrawal of troops from the Russian Front. The British did not want to just support the Soviet Union and keep them in the war; they wanted to

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<sup>52</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1218.

<sup>53</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 52.

<sup>54</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *Memoirs*, 43.

<sup>55</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 53.

see Soviet victories. The United States, significantly, did not want to “militate [sic] against the attainment of the overall objectives” by giving too much to the Soviets.<sup>56</sup>

At this point in the meeting the British asked to look at specific plans beginning with operations in Burma. British General Wavell presented his ideas on why it would be so difficult to reestablish the Burma Road by exposing the weaknesses of several possible attack scenarios. His conclusion was that the best hope to get supplies to the Chinese was to build more airfields in northern India, particularly the province of Assam, and increase Chennault’s air forces. General Stilwell disagreed with a great deal of what Wavell said, and even contradicted some of Wavell’s optimistic statistics on what the air route was already supplying to the Chinese. Wavell’s initial figure of 6,000 tons per month, according to Stilwell, should have been stated as about 3,400 tons in a *good* month.<sup>57</sup> Stilwell repeated that the Chinese needed to see a concrete effort to open a land route, if only to bolster their morale. He even stated that “there were certain pro-Japanese elements in China that were taking advantage of an increasing feeling in the minds of some Chinese that no material help could be made available.”<sup>58</sup> Marshall then reminded everyone present that the U.S. Chiefs of Staff considered maintaining China in the war effort as one of its most strategic and critical endeavors.

That afternoon, the Chiefs of Staff met at the White House with Churchill and Roosevelt. The topic was the India-Burma-China Theater. The president reiterated the need to do more than just give China minimum supplies.<sup>59</sup> Churchill countered with the

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 229.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 63

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 67.

difficulties of creating a land route, even saying that he did “not see how operations in the swamps of Burma would help the Chinese.”<sup>60</sup> The afternoon meeting was beginning to look like a repeat of the one held that morning, only with the additional presence of the two leaders. When Stilwell reminded the group of what canceling ANAKIM would do to Chinese morale, Churchill responded that placating the Chinese did not justify a foolish operation. Stilwell had probably angered the Prime Minister by stating that “the Chinese were suspicious of the British, and it would be necessary for the British to prove to them that they were in earnest.”<sup>61</sup> Alan Brooke’s diary summed up the results of the meeting by calling it “a tangled mass of confusion.” His thinking was probably colored by his regard of Stilwell, whose nickname, “Vinegar Joe,” Alan Brooke thought most appropriate. But it was Stilwell’s lack of regard for the British that most rankled Alan Brooke, who stated that Stilwell’s hatred of anything British had done a great deal of damage to the war effort.<sup>62</sup>

On May 15 the Chiefs of Staff met once again, this time without their two leaders since Churchill and Roosevelt had gone to Shangri-La (today called Camp David) for the weekend. This meeting of the Chiefs of Staff was unproductive and rancorous. Working out an agenda was hampered by the perceived importance of the topics. The Americans had plans for which should be discussed first, regardless of when the events might take place. Admiral King wanted a definite date set for ROUNDUP in the spring of 1944. Alan Brooke did not want to make that a priority until further

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 68

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>62</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *Memoirs*, 404.

Mediterranean operations were decided upon.<sup>63</sup> One compromise was reached at this point: both sides would present plans at the Monday meeting outlining their proposals and the feasibility of those operations.

On Monday, May 17, the Combined Chiefs met in the morning to once again discuss global strategy. Because of the presence of two invited Chinese guests, Dr. T. V. Soong and General Shih-Ming Chu, the meeting began with a discussion of the China supply situation. Chu was the military attaché at the Chinese Embassy in Washington. Dr. T. V. Soong was a member of one of China's most powerful families. One of his sisters had married Dr. Sun Yat-sen and another had married Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Soong was Harvard and Columbia University educated and, at the time of this meeting, the Chinese foreign minister. Dr. Soong spoke first, summarizing China's present state, with the Japanese controlling most of the coast and major cities. He then reminded the attendees of what had been "promised" at Casablanca (Operation ANAKIM—the reopening of the Burma Road).<sup>64</sup> As previously agreed, many of the supplies coming by air were going to Chennault's air forces because it was anticipated that there would be concurrent successes against the Japanese. That had not yet happened and, in fact, the Japanese controlled more territory than they had prior to the air buildup. Dr. Soong pointed out that the Casablanca plan for ANAKIM had included Chinese troops to be used from the east, advancing west into Burma. They were ready for the proposed operation and the Chinese leaders wanted to know when it was going to happen. After Soong and Chu left, the discussion shifted to other topics. It was

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<sup>63</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 84.

obvious to the Combined Chiefs that the Burma operation was going to fit into its proper place in the global strategy conundrum and would, therefore, have to wait its turn.<sup>65</sup> For Alan Brooke it was another disappointing day that led nowhere. He saw Admiral King as one of the American roadblocks to compromise with his “desire to find every loophole he possibly can to divert troops to the Pacific.”<sup>66</sup>

On Tuesday, May 18, the Chiefs of Staff met to discuss their respective war plans. General Marshall immediately indicated his confusion over the British proposal, which he saw as contradicting itself. It suggested first that ROUNDUP in the spring of 1944 was impossible but, after certain Mediterranean operations, it could be implemented by April of 1944. Alan Brooke explained that the British believed a successful Mediterranean operation would draw off German troops from Western and Eastern Europe, and thus create the conditions for a successful ROUNDUP. Marshall understood, but wanted more time to study the figures. He believed the British assessment of what would be needed for a successful Mediterranean operation to be too low. He called the British estimates too sanguine. The crucial sticking point for this entire debate, aside from the ever-present problem of shipping, was the availability of landing craft.<sup>67</sup> The British had submitted figures for ROUNDUP that the U.S. planners knew to be unrealistic. The Americans had not finished their plan, prompting Alan Brooke to write in his diary that the entire meeting accomplished nothing. It is

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<sup>64</sup> Matloff, *Strategic Planning 1943–1944*, 127.

<sup>65</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *Memoirs*, 405.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 405.

<sup>67</sup> Matloff, *Strategic Planning 1943–1944*, 132.



noteworthy that his vexation revealed itself with three exclamation points following that statement, an ever-increasing occurrence as the conference continued.<sup>68</sup>

The Chiefs of Staff meeting on May 19 began ominously with both sides criticizing the other's plan. Still, by the end of the day an agreement of sorts was reached and a new way of ironing out disagreements had begun. In his diary Churchill called the events up to that point a "serious crisis of opinions," which resulted finally in an agreement to invade Sicily.<sup>69</sup> What it took, though, was Marshall requesting an "off the recording meeting" consisting only of the Chiefs of Staff and a secretary. All of the attending aides, which sometimes numbered as many as thirty per Allied group, were excluded. So what Churchill and Roosevelt, who had requested an update on the progress of the military meetings, heard that evening, was that a land operation in Burma was still being discussed, ROUNDUP's date was now set for early May 1944, and, after HUSKY, new operations in the Mediterranean would be carried out to exploit the successes of HUSKY.

On Thursday, May 20, the Chiefs of Staff met to hash out a final agreement on Burma. The Americans favored some kind of ground operation both to bolster Chinese morale and to protect the air routes. The British disagreed and wanted to rely solely on increasing air tonnage. It was going to take another "off the recording" meeting to resolve this disagreement. According to the official proceedings of the conference, nothing was helped by public comments made by an American senator who complained about the large numbers of British soldiers in India who seemed unable to participate in

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<sup>68</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *Memoirs*, 405.

the Burma operation.<sup>70</sup> At the May 20 meeting of the Pacific War Council, Churchill commented on the senator's remarks and reiterated that the key to doing battle in the jungle was to understand the logistics and overcome the accompanying hazards. Churchill was implying that unless one understood what the battlefield was like, one should not question the tactics of the commanders. But it was not just some Americans questioning the British fighting capability in Asia. When Churchill talked about his concern over Chinese troops massing at the border of Tibet, T. V. Soong retorted that Tibet already belonged to the Chinese and, furthermore, "how can the Englishmen, who were so feeble in their conduct of the war in Malaya, fight such magnificent battles as they have fought in Africa?"<sup>71</sup> Roosevelt was forced to intervene in this exchange. The perceived failure of the British forces in Malaya and Burma were a big blow to the prestige of the British, and Secretary of War Stimson wrote that even the British were undecided on how best to repair this perception. Some of the British military commanders were cautious while others felt that British efforts in that region needed speed and some more "punch," as Roosevelt related to Stimson.<sup>72</sup>

On May 21, Roosevelt, Churchill, and the Combined Chiefs met and the two leaders were presented with a draft of the plans the military chiefs had so painstakingly worked out. There were general agreements until the Chiefs scrutinized the bombing of the Ploesti oil fields in Romania. Air Marshal Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff, questioned what this operation would do to pre-HUSKY operations. Once again the

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<sup>69</sup> Churchill, *Hinge of Fate*, 801.

<sup>70</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 137.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>72</sup> Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, 533.

British were concentrating on a Mediterranean operation to the possible exclusion of others. Marshall and Roosevelt both responded that bombing Ploesti would be a massive blow to the Germans and, even more important, divert German resources from the Russian front.<sup>73</sup>

At an American-British luncheon meeting held on May 22, Churchill and British Ambassador to the United States, Lord Edward Halifax, were joined at the British Embassy by Vice President Henry A. Wallace, Stimson, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, Sumner Welles, and Senator Tom Connally of Texas, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The primary topic of discussion was the proposed unified association, an actual United Nations organization. There was general agreement that there would be a Supreme World Council comprised of the major powers: the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union. The United States pressed to include China. The other member nations who joined would form Regional Councils: the European Council, the Council for the Americas, and the Council for the Pacific. The organization would have a joint military force.<sup>74</sup>

By the time of the next meeting, a general agreement finally had been ironed out over future Burma plans, when it soon began to unravel. On May 21, Roosevelt and Churchill had been presented with these objectives: increase air operations to and from China and conduct operations in Burma to accelerate supply movements into China. But when Stimson and Churchill met at the British Embassy on May 22, Stimson expressed his disapproval of these plans. He bluntly remarked that the British commanders in that

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<sup>73</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, Washington, DC, 159.

region were inept. He also disagreed with Roosevelt's heavy reliance on Chennault's promises to control Japanese movements by increased air attacks alone.

By the meeting on May 24 the Chiefs of Staff had agreed to the buildup of forces for ROUNDUP, as long as it did not interfere with SICKLE, the plan to increase bombing raids on Germany. After the whole British global strategic idea had been discussed, Admiral William Leahy created the first wrinkle when he clarified that any new development in the Pacific that was considered a major threat might precipitate a change in the Europe-first policy. Leahy argued that the British seemed to be consistently ignoring developments in the Pacific in order to protect the Europe-first policy. Portal denied this allegation, but it remained an ongoing dark cloud in the alliance. Marshall attempted to defuse that contentious idea by suggesting that surplus troops could possibly be used in the Southwest Pacific, even reminding those assembled that American public opinion would not withstand many more major blows in the Pacific. He then emphasized that if Russia fell to the Germans, a Pacific-first strategy might become necessary.<sup>75</sup>

While there is no official record of the discussions during a luncheon meeting held on May 24 between Roosevelt and Churchill, it is probable that the topic was the atomic bomb project, as related by the other attendees. Vice President Wallace, who was a member of the Manhattan Project Committee, Hopkins, and Lord Cherwell (Frederick Alexander Lindemann) attended. While there are no notes on this meeting, a follow-up meeting took place the next day attended by Hopkins, Lord Cherwell, and

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 168.

Vandevan Bush, director of the Office of Scientific Research and Development. Bush was a key player in the Manhattan Project. The meeting on May 25 was held so that Cherwell could express his concern over the lack of sharing of atomic secrets as had originally been agreed upon. Lord Cherwell was constantly bringing up the issue with Roosevelt, indicating that the United States was not fulfilling its agreement to include the British on all aspects of the development of the atomic bomb. At this meeting, Bush reminded Cherwell of the sensitivity of the information and questioned the British motives for wanting additional information. Cherwell agreed on the sensitivity issue, but indicated that the British were interested in atomic weaponry for military purposes and not strictly for commercial purposes as the Americans were implying. Cherwell said that if the United States did not share the information, “[the British] might feel impelled to alter the plans and go into manufacturing themselves, to the disadvantage of the balance of the war effort.”<sup>76</sup> By the end of the meeting, Cherwell did not receive nor hear the answers he wanted. On the evening of May 25, however, Roosevelt and Churchill, at their very last informal meeting, did agree to a resumption of the sharing of atomic knowledge. Subsequent memos and letters bear that out.<sup>77</sup>

The Chiefs of Staff met with Churchill and Roosevelt on May 24 to discuss the inclusion of Free French Forces in ROUNDUP and whether this idea should be relayed to Generals de Gaulle and Giraud.<sup>78</sup> The two generals were scheduled to meet at the end of May and Churchill and Roosevelt anticipated that their meeting would be

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 192.

contentious. An even greater fear was that their divisiveness would create discord between the two allies. The most important agreement was the decision to plan different operations post-HUSKY. General Marshall stated that no final decision should be made until HUSKY proved to be a success. It seemed the best decision since everyone at the table had a different idea on what should happen next and the impact it would have. The final meeting of the conference did go one step further, however, when it was decided that Churchill and Marshall would go to North Africa and discuss post-HUSKY operations. Until then no decision should be made.<sup>79</sup>

Like earlier meetings, the Trident Conference ended on a harmonious note. Yet underlying the conclusions and final agreements, there was a far different feeling than had characterized the first two Washington conferences. The “honeymoon” was definitely over. Both allies realized that every single decision would have to be painstakingly debated. The harmony, so evident at Arcadia, was no longer apparent. For the British military chiefs, every suggestion was going to have to get past General Marshall and his constant and increasing desire to enlarge the Pacific operation. For the American military chiefs, the constant British suggestions of peripheral operations had come to be exasperating. The continued delay of the cross-channel invasion loomed as a dark cloud over the alliance.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 205.

## CHAPTER 5

### OVERLORD WITHOUT THE BRITISH? QUADRANT, THE FIRST QUEBEC CONFERENCE (AUGUST 12, 1943 UNTIL AUGUST 24, 1943)

In August 1944 Churchill and Roosevelt met, once again, to discuss war plans in the beautiful setting of Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. The military chiefs and their staffs completely took over a large hotel, the Château Frontenac, on the St. Lawrence River. In the late 1800s, in an effort to lure wealthy travelers who would, of course, use their railroad to get to Quebec City, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company had built the Frontenac. This chateau-style hotel is situated on top of Cap Diamond, high above the St. Lawrence River, giving the guests a grand view of several miles of river. President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill kept their headquarters at the Citadel on the Plains of Abraham. The Plains of Abraham was famously the site of two major battles of the French and Indian War. In 1759 the British defeated the French there and took control of Quebec City. The French attempted to take the city back in 1760 and failed. The Citadel is an old fortress high above the city, near the Plains of Abraham, that looks out over the St. Lawrence to the south of the Frontenac and serves as the official residence of the governor general of Canada. The cooler weather of Quebec City was a far more idyllic setting than Washington, D.C. in the throes of August heat.

The overriding priority for the Americans at the Quebec Conference of August 1943 was BOLERO, the buildup of Allied forces leading to Operation OVERLORD,

the cross-channel invasion. Formal plans for Operation OVERLORD had been completed in July 1943 by a Combined Planning Staff. This staff, formally called Chief of Staff to Supreme Allied Commander (COSSAC), was headed by Lt. General Sir Frederick Morgan. The OVERLORD plan had been submitted to the Chiefs of Staff in Washington by COSSAC just prior to the Quadrant Conference. The target date for OVERLORD was set for May 1, 1944. While these plans were being drawn, however, events in the Mediterranean would lead to British insistence on additional operations in that region. The successful invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943 ultimately led to a decision to invade Italy, and events in Italy in July were making this more likely. Mussolini resigned his leadership of the Italian government on July 24, 1943, at the insistence of his Grand Council, and was replaced by another Council member, Marshal Pietro Badoglio. Mussolini was placed under arrest until rescued by the Germans a few months later. He was taken to the northern part of Italy where, with German help, he created a new Fascist state. It was a republic that was little more than a puppet state of the Nazi regime. Word began to filter out of Italy that the Italian government under Badoglio now wanted to negotiate peace terms. While both the British and the Americans agreed on an offensive against Italy following the capitulation of Sicily, the agreement did not specify the ultimate goal. The question remained of how much of Italy the Allies would actually endeavor to take. The Quadrant Conference was going to have to resolve that issue—one that had not only military ramifications, but logistical and political ones as well.



Other topics discussed during this extended conference at Quebec included the Pacific war and specific timetables for the defeat of Japan, leadership in the Southeast Pacific in areas currently held by the Japanese, the British establishment of bases in the Azores, and recognition of the French Committee of National Liberation. And, after months of prodding on the part of the British, Roosevelt and Churchill had formally agreed to the sharing of atomic secrets.

Churchill first suggested a meeting shortly after the previous one in Washington ended, not only because of planning issues, but probably because he wanted to continue to prove that he was an equal partner in the alliance. Churchill knew Roosevelt was working on a plan to meet with Stalin, a bilateral meeting that would not include the British. Churchill did not think he could realistically demand that the meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin not take place, even given the strength of his friendship and alliance with Roosevelt. But Churchill did work hard to convince Roosevelt that a three-power meeting was much more desirable. In a telegram he sent to Roosevelt on June 25, 1943, Churchill indicated that a meeting between just Roosevelt and Stalin would appear as if they were specifically excluding the British. It was not Roosevelt's intent to exclude the British per se; he simply wanted the opportunity to meet one-on-one with Stalin. Curiously, Churchill did not consider that his bilateral meeting with Stalin in Moscow in 1942 might be viewed in the same light. In that meeting, Churchill was on a mission to deliver a specific message that there would not be a second front in Western Europe in 1942. A meeting between Roosevelt and Stalin, as Churchill saw it, would belittle the British position as a world power and create doubts regarding Great Britain's

imperial strength following the war. In a telegram he sent to Roosevelt on June 25, Churchill wrote:

You must excuse me expressing myself with all the frankness that our friendship and the gravity of the issue warrant. I do not underrate the use that enemy propaganda would make of a meeting between the heads of Soviet Russia and the United States at this juncture with the British Commonwealth and Empire excluded. It would be serious and vexatious, and many would be bewildered and alarmed thereby. My journey to Moscow with Averell in August 1942 was on altogether a lower level, and at a stage in the war when we had only to explain why no second front. Nevertheless, whatever you decide, I shall sustain to the best of my ability here.<sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt later wrote to reassure Churchill that the meeting had not been set up to intentionally exclude the British, but that he felt a one-on-one conversation with Stalin would get Stalin to speak more candidly about certain topics. Those might include Stalin's plans for Asia following the end of the European war and what his exact plans for Eastern Europe were. Roosevelt told Churchill that it was Stalin's idea that they meet alone, but that was not true. The bilateral meeting had always been Roosevelt's idea.

In the three short months between the third Washington Conference and the first Quebec Conference, it had become apparent to the U.S. military and, at times, to Roosevelt, that the Americans and British had increasingly divergent war plans. In a memorandum to the American Joint Staff Planners on August 9, 1943, the United States Joint War Plans Committee drew contrasts between British and U.S. goals in the Pacific. The memo pointed out that the British goal in the Pacific was to recapture the

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<sup>1</sup> Warren F. Kimball, *Alliance Forged: November 1942 – February 1944*, vol. 2, of *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984, 278.

two major cities of its eastern empire (Hong Kong and Singapore) and then use whatever resources were left to continue the fight against the Japanese. The memo also stated that this goal would be pursued only after the defeat of Germany, and the British might actually begin demobilization prior to complete victory over Japan. The British attitude about China also hampered the Allied effort. The United States wanted to keep China in the war as an ally and the British seemed determined to fight without them. The British had certainly made it clear that they did not see China as an effective military ally.<sup>2</sup>

In July 1943, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson visited Churchill in England and was surprised by the emphasis Churchill placed on what Stimson called “Mediterranean diversions.” According to Stimson, Churchill constantly threw out arguments against OVERLORD.<sup>3</sup> Churchill’s focus, he said, was on the Mediterranean and particularly on Italy. Churchill expressed confidence that Roosevelt agreed with the necessity of continuing on into Italy, following the success of the Sicily operation, and he also believed that General Dwight D. Eisenhower, commander of U.S. forces in Europe, concurred. Churchill based this assumption on Eisenhower’s military expertise and on the fact that attacking Italy was an obvious military move. After leaving England, Stimson visited Eisenhower in North Africa and found that the American general seemed even more skeptical. In a letter Eisenhower wrote to his superior, General George C. Marshall, Eisenhower expressed his fear that the bombing of Rome

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<sup>2</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec 1943*, Washington, DC, 432.

<sup>3</sup> Stimson and Bundy, *On Active Service*, 433.

scheduled for July 20 might have an unintended effect on Italian morale.<sup>4</sup> Eisenhower feared a situation similar to what had occurred when the German Luftwaffe began bombing London and other major English cities in 1940. The English population, rather than becoming demoralized, became even angrier at the enemy. Eisenhower was skeptical that Italy would collapse with the onset of an Allied invasion. He feared that the Germans would begin pouring in large numbers of troops to prevent the Allies from using Italy as the springboard from which to attack Germany. Churchill was not wrong when he wrote that Eisenhower was willing to attack Italy; but Eisenhower's idea in early July was to capture air bases on the coast of Italy and do nothing beyond that which would hamper the efforts of BOLERO.

In the summer of 1943, Roosevelt and the American Chiefs of Staff began moving forward with BOLERO while constantly deflecting British concerns that diversions would ultimately work just as well as a second front. Stimson referred to the British diversions as "pinprick warfare" that would prolong the war and certainly would not provide Stalin the real second front he had so long desired. At a meeting held on August 10, 1943, Roosevelt, Secretary Stimson, Admiral Ernest J. King, General Hap Arnold, General George C. Marshall, Admiral William Leahy, and Brigadier General J. R. Deane who was secretary of the Joint Chiefs, attended a meeting at the White House. Some of the discussions would certainly have shocked the British if they had learned of them. Stimson first brought up the issue of the Balkans. He stated that Churchill did not want to send troops to the Balkans but was willing to send supplies. Churchill's Foreign

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<sup>4</sup> Hobbs, *Dear General*, 118.

Secretary Anthony Eden, however, was more interested in a direct attack in the Balkan region in order to ensure British postwar influence. The British feared a postwar Balkan region controlled by the Soviets. In one of his more naïve statements, Roosevelt indicated that he did not foresee any postwar Soviet interest in that region. It was a curious argument to make since one of his most respected advisors had written him otherwise. In July 1943, Averell Harriman, U.S. diplomat and Lend-Lease administrative liaison between the United States and the Soviet Union, wrote a letter to Roosevelt in which he pointed out that Churchill believed Stalin wanted a second front in Western Europe in order to keep the Allies out of the Balkan region.<sup>5</sup> It was then that Admiral King asked about the British attitude towards OVERLORD, and with their constant push toward the peripheral operations, whether it might not be better to just drop the whole idea of OVERLORD. Roosevelt boasted, “We can, if necessary, carry out the project ourselves.”<sup>6</sup> Roosevelt then said he was sure the British would allow that. One thing was clear to all of the men at that meeting: even if the British did join the Americans in the cross-channel invasion, they insisted upon an American commander. Stimson had written in an earlier memo to Roosevelt that the British did not have the energy for, nor the faith in, a successful outcome. This pessimism necessitated an energetic and driven American commander. While these men pondered both the idea of a cross-channel invasion without England and the need for an American commander, events in Italy would continue to change the overall picture.

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<sup>5</sup> Averell Harriman to President Roosevelt, letter, 5 July 1943, Library of Congress.

<sup>6</sup> Meeting between President Roosevelt and the Chiefs of Staff, minutes, 10 August 1943, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

When General Pietro Badoglio became head of the government and commander of the Italian Army, the Allies immediately began to discuss the ramifications of this event. Chief among their discussions was the necessity for an unconditional surrender, the status of Rome as an open city, and consideration of what the Germans would do, with or without a formal Italian surrender. Historian Warren Kimball has written that the British were immediately willing to discuss surrender terms with Badoglio's government, with the codicil that the Italians had to be willing to fight the Germans. The Americans, however, were concerned that with Badoglio working so closely with the king of Italy, any surrender by the Italian government without the capitulation of Italian troops would lead to continued fighting. It might also lead to a reemergence of the Italian monarchy.<sup>7</sup> In his memoirs, Churchill wrote that he had been willing to negotiate with any Italian government and he made clear in several telegrams to Roosevelt between July 29 and the Quebec Conference in August, that he wanted the two allied governments involved in the negotiations with the Italian government. He did not want General Eisenhower to do so as the commanding military officer in that region. Churchill had been very unhappy with the results of Eisenhower's negotiations with Darlan in North Africa and he feared that the Allied general in the field in Italy would once again become involved in diplomatic matters, a situation that was anathema to Churchill. Churchill always demanded that political matters be left to the politicians and military matters left to the generals. He himself, of course, could be an exception to that rule.

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<sup>7</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 348.

In the meantime, Badoglio's government was pushing the Allies to accept Rome as an open city. An open city is one that is not occupied or defended by military forces and that is not allowed to be bombed under international law. Roosevelt was surely aware of the political ramifications of bombing Rome and the possibility of damage to the Eternal City surrounding the Vatican. There were many Catholics in America and any destruction of the Vatican not directly related to the war effort might be poorly received. In his wartime memoirs, Eisenhower later wrote that while the American military was cognizant of these emotions, the Germans were as well. The Germans might use this American reticence toward bombing Rome to enhance their communication and transportation facilities in and around the city.<sup>8</sup> Churchill, for his part, recognized that the British civilian population would have little empathy with Rome's request for open city status based on what the cities of England had endured under German bombardment. On August 4, 1943, Churchill wrote Roosevelt a telegram with a scathing denunciation of acknowledging Rome as an open city. Aside from the usual military hindrances of working around an open city, he also brought up two additional points: First, the Russians would see this acceptance as an acknowledgement of surrender, thus ignoring the Allied demand for unconditional surrender. Second, the Allies had been listening in on Italian conversations with the Germans. In those conversations, Italy did not sound like a country getting ready to capitulate to the

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<sup>8</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe: A Personal Account of World War II*, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1948, 169.

American and British Allied forces.<sup>9</sup> As long as Italy did not formally surrender, Eisenhower recommended bombing Italian railroad yards, communication facilities, and airports. Badoglio's government unilaterally declared Rome an open city on August 14, 1943. The Allies continued to push for unconditional surrender, yet the Italian government continued to resist until Allied forces landed in Italy. Churchill's attitude continued to be that Italy must fight the Germans immediately to prove its willingness to surrender.

On August 14, 1943, the proceedings of the conference began in Quebec City, attended by the Combined Chiefs of Staff. This first meeting reiterated many previous agreements and was followed by a synopsis of events transpiring in the European Theater. The success of Operation POINTBLANK, the daylight bombing over Germany, was discussed first. As successful as it had been up to that point, the attendees all knew how critical this bombing operation was for the preparation of OVERLORD. The first hint at disagreement came when Sir Alan Brooke, who was giving the synopsis, suggested that POINTBLANK could be enhanced in the future with bombing runs originating from an Allied-controlled northern Italy. This was a British insinuation that the suggested attack on Italy would become a protracted operation involving large amounts of men and material. Sardinia and Corsica, they agreed, would be attacked as part of the Italian "package" since the Chiefs hoped that if Italy surrendered, few Germans would remain on those islands. These islands would become vital only if an attack on southern France became a reality. The British had

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<sup>9</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 378.



come to the conference knowing that the Americans placed a different value on continued Mediterranean operations than had they. In a telegram sent from the British Chiefs of Staff office in Washington to the War Department in London on August 7, 1943, Brigadier Leslie Hollis, a senior assistant secretary in the British War Cabinet, warned about the difficulties the British would face at the Quadrant meeting. The American military chiefs, he said, took exception to the British concentration on Italy and believed that the British were renegeing on agreements made at Trident. In the same telegram he warned that the U.S. military chiefs would be raising the issue of Burma and the obvious British lack of interest in regaining that territory. Admiral King's position at Quadrant would be "impregnable" and any suggestion of pulling from the Pacific to aid in the European Theater would meet his unqualified resistance, and probably that of General Marshall.<sup>10</sup>

Meeting again that afternoon, the Combined Chiefs moved the discussion to the Pacific. Admiral King, who had so often decried the lack of attention to the Pacific Theater, began the synopsis. Here King made his oft-repeated remark that the lack of "means" available for the fighting in the Pacific was unfair. He pointed out that if five percent of all the resources of the Allies were added to the Pacific's fifteen percent, it would make their forces one-third greater in strength while actually decreasing that of the European Theater by only six percent.<sup>11</sup> For King, it was all about the Pacific. He also requested that plans be drawn up immediately for troop deployment from the

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<sup>10</sup> Brigadier Hollis, Joint Staff Mission Washington to War Cabinet office London, 7 August 1943, S.E.C. File 105, P.R.O. Kew, England.

European Theater to the Pacific Theater once Germany fell. General Marshall and General Arnold were far more interested in the immediate fighting against Japan and concluded that everything hinged on reestablishing the Burma Road. Opening the Burma Road meant additional supplies for the Chinese, safe transport of gasoline to American air crews, and most importantly, the ability to strike closer to the Japanese mainland. The key issue proved to be how much of Burma really needed to be taken from the Japanese in order to aid the Chinese. The British continued to push for increased air support to the Chinese, constantly throwing up objections to retaking any of Burma until after Germany had fallen. The Americans pushed to retake all of Burma in order to push through China from the west with an eye towards establishing an Allied port on the eastern Chinese coast. The American military chiefs also feared that by not supporting the reopening of the Burma Road, the Chinese would conclude that the Allies were leaving them to fight the Japanese alone and not giving the Chinese situation the attention it deserved. The Americans also suspected that the reluctance on the part of the British was due to their constant denunciation of Chinese fighting capability.<sup>12</sup>

Rome was the primary topic when the Combined Chiefs of Staff met on Sunday, August 15, to discuss the European Theater. On August 14, Rome was declared an open city by the Italian government; the discussion on Sunday centered on the continued bombing of Rome and whether the Allied governments would acknowledge the open

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<sup>11</sup> Ernest J. King and Walter Muir Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record*, London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1953, 275.

<sup>12</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 236.

status of the city. From a strictly military viewpoint, it was feared that accepting the open status would hamper any future operations in the city once it was taken by the Allies. That would include the use of communication and transportation facilities for military use. While the British leaned towards continued bombardment of the city, the Americans disagreed on the issue. The final decision arrived at was that no decision would be made until further discussion with Churchill and Roosevelt.

Next, Sir Alan Brooke spoke for the British Chiefs of Staff on the preparations for OVERLORD. His words seemed to belie those of Churchill in his July discussions with Secretary of War Stimson. OVERLORD, Brooke said, would be the major offensive of 1944 and any of the Italian operations would complement the ultimate goal of a second European front. What was brewing, however, was a disagreement on what would actually help OVERLORD. In his diaries, Sir Alan Brooke made clear that taking the northern part of Italy, as well as the southern, was necessary to making OVERLORD a success. Bombing Germany from northwestern Italian airfields would be critical to that operation's success. Marshall disagreed that success in OVERLORD was contingent upon success in northern Italy. This convinced Brooke that Marshall "did not even begin to understand a strategic problem."<sup>13</sup> Sir Alan Brooke's attitude may have been influenced by his having earlier been handed one of the greatest disappointments of his career. Churchill informed Brooke that Marshall would command the cross-channel invasion. Later in his memoirs Churchill claimed that it had been his idea to have an American commander and that, when so informed, Brooke took

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the news with the dignified British stiff upper lip.<sup>14</sup> So in this meeting of the Combined Chiefs, Brooke continued to sense that he was dealing with an unmovable wall of American opinion. Marshall was incapable, in Brooke's eyes, of seeing grand strategy and, to add to Brooke's frustration, Admiral King wanted to focus exclusively on the Pacific Theater.

As this meeting was taking place in Quebec City, Badoglio's Italian government sent two emissaries to Madrid to meet with the British ambassador to Spain, Sir Samuel Hoare. The two emissaries, General Giuseppe Castellano and Signor Franco Montanari of the Italian Foreign Service, related Italy's dilemma. The Italian government concluded it could not surrender to the Allies until the Allies first landed in Italy. As this information was being transmitted to the conference attendees, General Eisenhower received a set of directives by the Combined Chiefs to be given to the two emissaries. The directives reiterated what had earlier been relayed to Badoglio's government. The United States, Britain, and their fighting allies would accept nothing less from the Italians than unconditional surrender and cessation of fighting by all Italian military forces.

As the meeting continued, the topic turned to the Pacific Theater. The Combined Chiefs all agreed that the Soviet Union would probably wait until the very last moment to declare war on Japan. The military planners decided, therefore, that they needed to be working on a future plan for the Pacific that could possibly include the necessity of a land attack on Japan. The American military chiefs hoped to defeat Japan

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<sup>13</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *War Diaries*, 442.

within twelve months of the fall of Germany. The British responded that they could not be tied to such a restrictive time line.<sup>15</sup> Ideological differences soon emerged with the British suggestion that operations in the Pacific be curtailed with an eye to improving resources for OVERLORD. Understandably, Admiral King responded negatively to that suggestion and General Marshall supported him. Significantly, only one week before, the American Joint Chiefs had speculated that the British were so obsessed with the peripheral operations of the war that they were no longer concentrating on OVERLORD. The British seemed to be using OVERLORD as an excuse to downplay future operations in the Pacific Theater. The British, in other words, were using OVERLORD when it was convenient and decrying the drain of men and material for its use when it was not convenient for their peripheral plans. When Roosevelt and Churchill became involved in this discussion at a later meeting, Churchill indicated that he wanted first to focus on taking Sumatra. Roosevelt backed his military chiefs by saying that he wanted to retake the Burma Road and establish a foothold in China from which to attack Japan. The British military chiefs consistently stated a desire to take a major role in the defeat of the Japanese, and yet to the American military chiefs did not seem to want to come up with specific dates nor help create specific plans to do so. Churchill's idea of retaking Sumatra looked vaguely like another one of his peripheral operations.

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<sup>14</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Closing the Ring*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951, 85.

<sup>15</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941-1942*, 232.

The Pacific Theater was once again the predominant topic when the Combined Chiefs met to discuss the Southeast Asia Command. In his diary, General Stilwell referred to this command as a Chinese puzzle. Interwoven into this puzzle were the new Viceroy of India, Percival Wavell; Wavell's replacement as Commander in Chief of British forces in India, Claude "the Auk" Auchinleck; Lord Louis Mountbatten; Chiang Kai-shek; Harold Alexander (the General who abandoned Burma to the Japanese in the first place); and General Joseph Stilwell.<sup>16</sup> This was a command largely over a region that was, at that point, in Japanese hands and included Thailand, Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, and Sumatra. If operations in Burma were to proceed with Chinese military help, a U.S. commander would have to be named. Chiang Kai-shek declared that the Chinese would not serve under a British commander. But if Stilwell was named as Deputy Supreme Commander, this would add to his function as Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek, his command of U.S. Army forces in the China-Burma-India Theater and as the Lend-Lease administrator to China. Ultimately, the Chinese puzzle became even more convoluted when Stilwell reported to Louis Mountbatten, who in October 1943 became Supreme Allied Commander Southeast Asia.

This meeting concluded with a discussion of Operation ALACRITY—the Allied use of the Azores. Initially planned as a base from which to wage antisubmarine warfare, the Azores were now also viewed by the Combined Chiefs as a stop on the air ferry route going from west to east. The Chiefs agreed that the British would establish the initial bases in the Azores and then slowly convince the Portuguese to allow

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<sup>16</sup> Theodore H. White, ed., *The Stilwell Papers, Joseph W. Stilwell*, New York: Da Capo Press, 1991, 218.

American use of those bases. The Portuguese continued to insist that any American presence might invite German intervention. While the Germans acknowledged the existence of the centuries-old British-Portuguese Treaty, any American presence in the Azores could be seen by them as an act of war.

The Combined Chiefs met for the first time with Roosevelt and Churchill on August 19. The two leaders were briefed on the discussions up to that point. Churchill commented that the British were leery of a cross-channel invasion if the Germans built up their strength in northern France. Any German strength beyond fifteen divisions would cause an alteration of plans. Hopkins replied that this attitude was too rigid and Churchill quickly jumped in to dispel the idea that the British were once again stalling on the implementation of OVERLORD. While this eliminated any suggestion that the British were not going to join in Operation OVERLORD, a lingering idea remained for the Americans that the British would continually present arguments that could cause further delays. The discussion immediately moved to the defeat of Japan, so while plans for OVERLORD proceeded, it became obvious that the British continued to inject war issues that deflected from a total adherence to OVERLORD. Churchill stated that he was ready to look at taking Sumatra back from the Japanese. Roosevelt countered that this was an unnecessary diversion and preferred instead to open up the Burma Road and attack Japan from China and from the Southeast. Averell Harriman later related in his diaries that this discussion continued on the next day at lunch and yet they still reached no agreement. Harriman saw this disagreement as similar to earlier ones of cross-

channel versus Mediterranean operations.<sup>17</sup> The U.S. military chiefs had been forced to give in on that decision, but Harriman knew that General Marshall was not going to back down from a cross-channel invasion in the spring of 1944.

When the Combined Chiefs met on August 20, their first topic concerned the defeat of Japan. While no specific agreements were reached, it became apparent to the Americans that the British military chiefs were not eager to adopt Churchill's idea of taking Sumatra. His idea was acknowledged and, while not disparaged, was viewed as a monumental task that might prove detrimental to more worthwhile goals. Both Sir Alan Brooke and Sir Charles Portal concurred that increased pressure from air attacks on Japan was vital, which meant focusing on the Burma Road.<sup>18</sup> Out of this discussion emerged questions about the Soviet Union. Soviet military successes against the Germans had made it clear that there would be no capitulation by the Soviets so the question arose as to what they would do next. Would the Soviets now force the German Army west, and how far would they go? And what would this mean for a postwar Europe?

If Stalin had been present at the conference it is possible that some of those questions could have been addressed. On August 20, Secretary of State Cordell Hull and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden met. Hull raised the issue regarding Stalin's absence. Stalin had been invited to meet with the two leaders at Quebec but turned down the invitation for military reasons. Hull remarked that his absence created the impression that Stalin was not welcome at the meetings. While both men knew that

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<sup>17</sup> Harriman and Abel, *Special Envoy*, 224.



was not true, they were interested in meeting with the Soviets to discuss postwar plans. In his memoirs, Hull wrote that Soviet postwar intentions were critical to understanding how the United Nations should even plan for peace.<sup>19</sup> Roosevelt had constantly urged a meeting with Stalin, feeling that he could communicate with Stalin more effectively than Churchill had in their Moscow meeting of 1942. Both Hull and Roosevelt held the opinion that at times Stalin did not want to meet directly with the other Allied leaders because he believed he would be up against a strong “Anglo-American line-up.”<sup>20</sup> Hull and Eden concluded that they needed to generate new ideas to work with the Soviets.

While there was agreement about working with the Soviets, major discord occurred regarding the French Committee of National Liberation. Here was a topic that would remain, according to Hull, an insurmountable obstacle throughout the conference. By May 1943, even Churchill was tiring of Charles de Gaulle’s arguments with Jean Darlan. In June, when Churchill brought in General Alphonse Georges to serve on the French National Committee with de Gaulle and Darlan, Churchill hoped de Gaulle would work more closely with the committee, rather than pushing his own agenda.<sup>21</sup> Churchill chose Georges as an additional member because General Georges had tried to stay aloof from the political and military intrigues of Vichy France and the early war years, and Churchill saw him as a neutral figure. Unfortunately, that made him easy for de Gaulle to manipulate. On June 4, 1943, Roosevelt sent Churchill a telegram reminding Churchill that the British and Americans were in charge in North

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<sup>18</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec 1943*, Washington, DC, 907.

<sup>19</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1247.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 1249.

Africa—not de Gaulle. Roosevelt made it clear in the telegram that he felt Churchill needed to eliminate the problem: “Best of luck in getting rid of our mutual headache.”<sup>22</sup> The French Committee of National Liberation wanted full recognition and wished to be treated as the de facto government of France playing an important role in the alliance. Eden’s stance was that the British were willing to go along with this for emotional reasons because, he insisted, de Gaulle, a leading member of the committee, had been Britain’s only friend in the first days of the war. Hull brought up American assistance, but in the end the disagreement was over the word “recognition.” The United States would not recognize a committee as the government of France, nor could they give the committee international status making it equal to the two allies. Eden then suggested that the United States and Britain might have to address the issue separately. Hull feared that would imply disagreement and that is where the discussion ended. On August 24, Roosevelt and Churchill met with Hull and Eden to discuss the formal recognition of the committee. The end result was that there would be no agreement. Roosevelt and Hull saw Eden’s intransigence as the stumbling block to agreement and both believed that Eden would change his mind within a few months. Eden, however, based his attitude on the geographic proximity of France to Britain and his desire to create a working relationship with postwar European allies. In his memoirs, Eden later made it clear that Great Britain needed to appear to be making its own choices.<sup>23</sup> The United States and Great Britain did, in fact, issue separate statements regarding the committee,

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<sup>21</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 227.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>23</sup> Eden, *Reckoning*, 461.

with Great Britain giving the committee the recognition it so desired. The United States did not officially recognize the committee as the de facto government of France, thus when the invasion of France began, de Gaulle chose to accept the British recognition, ignoring the United States' denial.

When Hull and Eden met the next day, they raised the issue of governments of liberated countries from a different perspective. Any future military operations would have to take into consideration the political situation of the country and any problems dealing with the civilian population. Eden suggested that it should become a British operation to deal with these issues because of England's proximity to the continent. While neither of them wanted to set up military governments in newly-liberated areas, they did agree that the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the two leaders would have to make the final determination. An even stickier discussion followed involving a topic that Hull had raised twice and Eden had deftly avoided, the issue of dependent peoples, meaning those living under dominion or colonial status. To Hull, this was a natural extension of the plan of the United Nations, the grandchild of Wilson's Fourteen Points and the child of the Atlantic Charter. For the Americans, it was a war aim. The British saw it as yet another example of American meddling in the British Empire. For Eden, any mention of the word independence became a sticking point and so the exchange ended.<sup>24</sup>

Discussions continued with plans regarding postwar Germany. While the final plans for a postwar Germany would not be agreed upon until the Quebec Conference of

1944 and the three-power conference of January 1945 at Yalta, each Allied victory raised the need for plans regarding postwar Germany. For the first time, questions about the possible dismemberment or even the complete destruction of Germany as an industrial nation were raised. Both Roosevelt and Churchill agreed that while some members of their governments liked the idea of dismemberment, neither of them believed it practical. In May 1943, Churchill had made clear that any war-making capability of Germany or Japan must be eliminated. To do that he proposed an association led by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. This World Council, as he called it, would include China, if the United States insisted, but he never saw China as being an equal partner. In the memorandum that summarized some of his postwar plans, Churchill described a postwar Europe. He visualized a unified Europe, called a "United States of Europe." Ironically, Churchill also called for the division of Germany. Prussia would have to be separated from the rest of Germany in order to remove any strong militaristic hold that region had historically exercised over the rest of Germany. Hull and Eden agreed that both of their governments would continue with postwar planning and that joint discussions would take place at a later date.

Roosevelt and Churchill held a meeting on August 22 at the Citadel attended by Hull; Eden; Hopkins; Sir Alexander Cadogan, permanent undersecretary to Eden; James Dunn, a U.S. State Department officer; and Ray Atherton, the U.S. minister to Canada. The first topic involved the agreement on putting a military government into effect in nations liberated by the Allies. As Hull later explained it, that meant that the Allies

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<sup>24</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec 1943*, Washington, DC, 927.

would support reconstituted refugee governments until such time as they could operate on their own. This led to the issue of the French Committee of National Liberation, a discussion which once again went nowhere. Roosevelt remained firm that recognizing this committee was tantamount to giving it the status of de facto government of France when the war was over. The meeting concluded with Roosevelt stating that he would write a statement on the issue that he thought the United States could present as its position on the topic.

Roosevelt and Churchill met with the Combined Chiefs of Staff on August 23 for the last combined meeting of leaders and their military chiefs. The first major topic of discussion was Operation OVERLORD. Churchill quickly reiterated that the British would be unwilling to consider OVERLORD if German strength was too great. If OVERLORD was not undertaken, Churchill said, than his favorite peripheral plan, Operation JUPITER, the attack on Norway, should be reconsidered. While no one commented on this particular idea, General Marshall was quick to point out that the number of divisions being used for the initial OVERLORD assault had actually increased. It was his way of indicating that OVERLORD would receive all the manpower it needed to ensure its successful execution.<sup>25</sup>

Churchill accepted this summation and the conference ended, seemingly with full agreement on that issue and others. For the Americans, the most important issue of the conference was resolved with the British agreement to continue plans for OVERLORD. As Sir Alan Brooke stated during the conference, OVERLORD would be

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the major offensive of 1944 and all other operations should be seen as complements towards that goal. But with the agreement to attack Italy and the unknown outcome of that venture, there was a great deal of room to redirect the fighting, at least from the British standpoint, if conditions demanded. The United Nations, Churchill said, should have “a second string to their bow” if complete success did not look possible for OVERLORD.<sup>26</sup>

The Quadrant Conference shows a turning point in the Allied relationship. The relationship between Roosevelt and Churchill did not change, but subtle differences were beginning to appear that would affect the equality of their alliance. It was the first conference where Roosevelt firmly stood behind his military chiefs of staff and their strong commitment to OVERLORD. This determination to carry out OVERLORD signaled Roosevelt’s desire to appease the Soviet Union and create a friendly working relationship with them in the postwar world. Churchill was more interested in controlling territory in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and the Middle East in order to negotiate with the Soviet Union on equal terms. While OVERLORD was finally accepted by the British at the Quadrant Conference, it was just one of the many compromises made. The American military chiefs continued to fear that the British would find ways to divert military resources into the “suction pump” of the Mediterranean.<sup>27</sup> But the tide was turning at this halfway mark of the war. American

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<sup>25</sup> *FRUS: Conferences at Washington and Quebec 1943*, Washington, DC, 943.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Matloff and Snell, *Strategic Planning 1941–1942*, 244.

military might was growing, both industrially and in terms of manpower, and Churchill knew it.

## CHAPTER 6

### LEND-LEASE STRAINS THE ALLIANCE: OCTAGON, THE SECOND QUEBEC CONFERENCE (SEPTEMBER 12, 1944 UNTIL SEPTEMBER 19, 1944)

When Roosevelt and Churchill met in Quebec City in September 1944, several issues had to be addressed, at least as far as the British were concerned. D-Day and its ongoing success changed the focus of the alliance to European postwar issues and to the continuing war in the Pacific. Roosevelt and the American military chiefs were content to maintain the successes of the current fighting, but Churchill wanted final agreements on other issues, such as continuing Lend-Lease once the war ended, the situation in postwar Germany, and the British presence in the Pacific Theater following the end of the European war.

By the beginning of the conference, the Allies had liberated Paris and were establishing an offensive line against the Germans that, in some areas, was only twenty miles from the German border. The U.S. Army Air Force controlled the European skies, and German cities were continually bombarded. The Soviet Union had pushed the German Army as far west as Poland, and Bulgaria and Romania had surrendered. The Soviet Union, no longer fighting for its survival, endeavored to accomplish Stalin's goal of controlling much of Eastern Europe. It appeared to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington that a race was looming to see which army would get to Berlin first. In the Pacific, the invasion of the Philippines was set. The U.S. Navy was regaining ground in



many areas and islands the Japanese once controlled were now falling to the American military.

Nine months had passed since the last conference of alliance leaders and over twelve months since Roosevelt and Churchill had met at Quebec City in August of 1943. Events in Italy dominated much of the communication between the two leaders in the fall of 1943 since most of the Allied fighting in Europe was occurring there. Churchill continued to hope that King Victor Emmanuel III and Pietro Badoglio would be able to create a working government that would be acceptable to Roosevelt as well as to the Italian people. But Churchill was particularly concerned with military operations. In a telegram to Roosevelt on October 23, Churchill complained vehemently about how the buildup to OVERLORD was having a negative impact on other operations. Two British Army divisions in Sicily were preparing to return to England, and he wrote, “thus they can play no part in the Italian battle to which they stood near, but will not come into action again for seven months and then only if certain hypothetical conditions are fulfilled which may very likely not be fulfilled.”<sup>1</sup> He complained that landing craft taken from the Mediterranean to be used for OVERLORD would “cripple Mediterranean operations without the said craft influencing events elsewhere for many months.”<sup>2</sup> Churchill was not backing out of what he had so reluctantly agreed to at Quadrant, but he certainly disliked the American military’s inflexibility. The American military chiefs were determined that OVERLORD was going to take place on May 1, 1944, and nothing was going to hinder that. On October

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<sup>1</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 556

24, Churchill sent Marshall a message suggesting an increased Allied buildup in Italy. Historian Warren Kimball has written that the American military perceived this as Churchill's attempt to drain resources from OVERLORD, thus creating a delay in its implementation. For the Americans, operations in Italy and OVERLORD demanded a certain amount of balancing. Increased operations in Italy would create a hardship on the western German line, thus contributing to the success of OVERLORD. But these operations also meant keeping Allied manpower and supplies earmarked for OVERLORD in Italy.<sup>3</sup> The American military chiefs determined that they were going to prevail on this issue.

They continued this argument as time drew near for the Cairo/Teheran Conferences that took place in late November of 1943. The Teheran Conference would be the first one attended by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. Roosevelt traveled aboard the USS *Iowa* to North Africa where he held meetings with his military Chiefs of Staff. They agreed that the United States would have to be cautious about any additional commitments to the Mediterranean and the British would be so informed.<sup>4</sup>

Churchill's frustration with the drain on resources in the Mediterranean continued into 1944. The Americans had prepared two groups of fighter aircraft to leave the Mediterranean for China (part of an operation agreed upon at the Cairo Conference). Churchill wrote to Roosevelt in February and expressed his distress, using alternately the buildup to OVERLORD and ANVIL and the Italian campaign as excuses to keep

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 556.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 562.

<sup>4</sup> Matloff, *Strategic Planning 1943–1944*, 338.

the eight squadrons where they were.<sup>5</sup> Churchill was never pleased to see China receive resources that he considered vital to the European fight.

The Allied invasion of Italy prompted Churchill to urge additional operations in the Mediterranean. In a telegram to Roosevelt on October 7, 1943, Churchill wrote, “I believe it will be found that the Italian and Balkan Peninsulas are militarily and politically united and that really it is one theatre with which we have to deal. It may indeed not be possible to conduct a successful Italian campaign ignoring what happens in the Aegean.”<sup>6</sup> Churchill wanted the island of Rhodes, the Dodecanese, and any other eastern Mediterranean islands that the Allies could take and hold. He was even willing to delay OVERLORD to achieve this goal. And while he reiterated in the same telegram that he did not want to send troops to the Balkans, he later changed his mind. Roosevelt’s swift, same-day response was that no diversions should be imposed on Eisenhower in Italy, nor should OVERLORD be “prejudiced.” And on this, Roosevelt would prevail. General Marshall was equally adamant. Regarding American involvement in Rhodes he said, “not one American soldier is going to die on [that] God Damned beach.”<sup>7</sup> On October 8 and 9, Churchill sent numerous telegrams outlining the benefit of increased operations. In November, when Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met in Teheran, the argument continued with Churchill appealing to Stalin. He suggested that German forces would be stretched to the point that Hitler would be forced to withdraw troops then fighting the Soviet army. Stalin was equally adamant

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<sup>5</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 731.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 498.

that the Allies should continue fighting full strength in Italy, and should continue preparing for OVERLORD.<sup>8</sup> This validated Roosevelt and General Marshall's opinion that the Allies not venture any further into the Balkan region. Roosevelt feared that Stalin might see it as an encroachment upon areas where the Soviet Union had spheres of influence. Historian Maurice Matloff has written that Marshall perceived any Balkan operation as "going into reverse and would reduce American potentialities by two thirds."<sup>9</sup>

Churchill was already unhappy at the beginning of the Teheran Conference and probably believed that he was taking a backseat to an American-Soviet meeting. Roosevelt had purposely avoided meeting alone with Churchill prior to Teheran, assuming that Churchill would argue for increased Mediterranean activity. Roosevelt also sensed that Stalin might perceive Roosevelt-Churchill meetings as setting the stage for future confrontations with him. When Roosevelt insisted on meeting Stalin alone on November 28, Churchill wrote in his diary,

The fact that the President was in private contact with Marshal Stalin and dwelling at the Soviet Embassy, and that he had avoided ever seeing me alone since we left Cairo, in spite of our hitherto intimate relations and the way in which our vital affairs were interwoven, led me to seek a direct personal interview with Stalin. I felt that the Russian leader was not deriving a true impression of the British attitude. The false idea was forming in his mind that, to put it shortly, 'Churchill and the British Staffs mean to stop 'Overlord' if they can, because they want to invade the Balkans instead.' It was my duty to remove this double misconception.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Stoler, *Allies in War*, 139.

<sup>8</sup> Matloff, *Strategic Planning 1943-1944*, 361.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 343.

<sup>10</sup> Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, 375.

Ambassador Averell Harriman wrote that Churchill was “grumbling,” yet content to take orders, even suggesting that his role at the conference was unimportant.<sup>11</sup> When Churchill wrote in his diary about a later meeting with Stalin he listed a litany of British acquiescence to American decisions: there were more British troops than U.S. in the Mediterranean, yet the commander would be American and American plans prevailed; the Americans had determined a date for OVERLORD and the British were expected to adhere to that date; the Americans wanted an operation in the Bay of Bengal and the British were expected to conduct it.<sup>12</sup> If the conversation did go much as Churchill described it in his diary, Stalin probably never felt like the odd man out again. Obviously the Anglo-American relationship was strained.

Between the first and second Quebec Conferences, General Charles de Gaulle solidified his power over the French National Committee. His attempts to remove General Henri Giraud from the committee finally succeeded by November of 1943, a move deplored by Roosevelt, and yet considered logical by Churchill’s own Foreign Office.<sup>13</sup> De Gaulle was attempting to take complete control of the committee, the French military outside of France proper, and in the planning and control of the French post-invasion government. While Roosevelt and Churchill were disgruntled with his constant machinations to consolidate power, de Gaulle did ultimately get what he wanted. Roosevelt and his military chiefs, however, did not agree with providing military assistance to the French so that they might restore a French empire. When the

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<sup>11</sup> Harriman and Abel, *Special Envoy*, 265.

<sup>12</sup> Churchill, *Closing the Ring*, 377.

<sup>13</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 593.

president spoke to the American Joint Chiefs of Staff on November 15, 1943, he stated that “the British wished to build France up to a first-class power that would be on the British side. He also did not believe the United States should support French colonialism. Dakar, Indochina, New Caledonia, and the Marquesa Islands should be free of French control and possibly administered by the United Nations.”<sup>14</sup>

Events in the Levant were behind some of Roosevelt’s remarks. French-dominated Syria and Lebanon had demanded their independence when France fell to the Germans in 1940. The British and the Free French, fearing a widespread outbreak of Arab nationalism, promised that elections would be held as soon as possible. They were finally held in 1943 and Arab nationalists won handily in both countries. The French National Committee refused to honor the outcome and Churchill wrote to Roosevelt that “there is no doubt in my mind that this is a foretaste of what de Gaulle’s leadership of France means. It is certainly contrary to the Atlantic Charter and much else what we have declared.”<sup>15</sup> What an ironic statement for Churchill to be making considering the British actions in India.

By May 1944, however, Eisenhower argued for more wholehearted acceptance of a French leader. He wanted a close working relationship with Resistance groups in France prior to the D-Day (the first day of the OVERLORD operation) invasion. Roosevelt continued to resist giving de Gaulle such blatant recognition. Eisenhower was finally able to bypass de Gaulle by working with General Pierre Koenig, commander of most of the units of French Resistance. De Gaulle was able to get some recognition

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<sup>14</sup> Matloff, *Strategic Planning 1943–1944*, 339.

from Roosevelt when he visited the president in July 1944. The meetings were cordial and while Roosevelt did not officially recognize de Gaulle as the de facto leader of France, he was willing to recognize the French National Committee.

The first major meeting of the conference took place on September 12 in the Chateau Frontenac, once again the site of so many major decisions. All of the Combined Chiefs of Staff and their aides were present. Early in their discussion, they received a message that the Germans were withdrawing large numbers of forces from northern Italy. Additional information suggested that the Germans were also trying to withdraw forces from Greece and Yugoslavia. All of this immediately led to several “what-if” discussions. A decision was quickly reached, however, that securing northern Italy would remain the Allies’ primary focus.

The next major discussion concerned the postwar occupation of Germany. Joint Allied plans had already been drawn up dividing Germany into zones of occupation. When he first received the plans, Churchill had demanded British control of the northwestern portion of Germany due to its geographic proximity to England and to the British mentoring of the former Axis-held countries of Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Roosevelt argued for United States control of the northwestern portion, saying that he wanted control over German ports. He also said that this made sense from a strategic standpoint since U.S. troops were on the northern edge of the D-Day invasion force. Roosevelt was also concerned that a southwestern zone would imply being more involved in the restoration of France once the war was over because of that

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<sup>15</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 599.

zone's shared border with France. Roosevelt always feared that there would be chaos in France following the war as various political groups vied for power. The Combined Chiefs were all aware of the two leaders' viewpoints, so the topic was tabled for their final decision.<sup>16</sup>

On September 13, the Combined Chiefs met once again, this time with the two leaders present. Churchill elaborated on the recent successes of the alliance. One of the more interesting statements he made came in regard to DRAGOON, the attack on southern France, which began on August 14, 1944, just weeks before the Octagon Conference. DRAGOON was an immediate success. The Germany Army, in fact, could not get out of southern France quickly enough, fearing that it would be boxed in by northern alliance troops. Churchill congratulated the U.S. Chiefs of Staff on the success of DRAGOON, a statement that probably was difficult for him because he had fought so hard to keep the operation from occurring in the first place. In his diary, Churchill devoted an entire chapter to the argument against DRAGOON. His pleas to Roosevelt early in the summer of 1944 to change his mind were met with a resounding resolve "to carry out what he called 'the grand strategy' of Teheran, namely exploiting OVERLORD to the full, 'victorious advances in Italy,' and an early assault on France."<sup>17</sup> Churchill acceded to DRAGOON but his barbed comments did not stop. In a telegram to Roosevelt on August 10, 1944, Churchill commented on the need for what would become the Octagon Conference. He included the need to discuss "other tangled

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<sup>16</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conference at Quebec, 1944*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972, 309.



questions aris[ing] about the position of Alexander's army in Italy including whether it is to be bled white for DRAGOON and thus stripped of all initiative."<sup>18</sup> Churchill was present for the opening salvos of DRAGOON, watching from the destroyer HMS *Kimberley*. Two subsequent statements in his diary perhaps illustrate his true feelings. When at one point the battleships stopped firing, Churchill wrote that they had stopped because there "seemed to be nobody there." He then picked up a novel and implied that sheer boredom kept him reading for much of the day.<sup>19</sup>

Continuing to talk, Churchill pointed out that the British Empire was contributing its share of the alliance effort and reminded all present that it was an equal partnership. He did acknowledge, however, that the British Empire had reached its limits while the Americans still had potential. Churchill included one of his often-used statistics: the British Empire, with its entire population of 70 million, was maintaining a war effort equal to the American industrial giant with its 138 million people. Churchill then began to discuss one of his peripheral operations. Citing the need to keep troops occupied once Italy was secured (which did not actually happen until May 1945, just one week prior to Germany's surrender), he suggested an operation through the Adriatic with Vienna as the ultimate goal. Churchill feared that if the Soviet Army reached Austria first, it might not leave.

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<sup>17</sup> Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Triumph and Tragedy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953, 64.

<sup>18</sup> Warren F. Kimball, *Alliance Declining: February 1944 – April 1945*, vol. 3, of *Churchill and Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984, 271.

<sup>19</sup> Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy*, 95.

Churchill then addressed the Pacific Theater. Operations had been successful in northern Burma but now the British wanted to commence Operation DRACULA, the retaking of Rangoon, Burma; and Operation CAPITAL, the attack on Myanmar, Burma. Churchill claimed that “certain troublemakers” were suggesting that the British would be reluctant to play a major role in the Pacific Theater once the war in Europe ended. The British, he indicated, wanted to play a major role in operations such as DRACULA and CAPITAL and, furthermore, the British Main Naval Fleet would be transferred to the Pacific as soon as European operations allowed. He also said that the fleet could serve under a U.S. commander.<sup>20</sup> As he finished speaking, Churchill added that all of this activity in the Pacific could include the retaking of Singapore. This little peripheral operation of his would entail regaining possession of one of the British Empire’s jewels in Asia and everyone at that meeting understood what Churchill was asking.

Roosevelt spoke next and reiterated that the war in Europe, while improving, was not yet over. He anticipated difficulty once the Germans retreated to the right bank of the Rhine River and created a “West Wall.” Within weeks this very issue would be addressed by a plan being drawn up by General Bernard Montgomery called Operation MARKET-GARDEN. It was a bold plan to take six major bridges over the main rivers of the Netherlands, then occupied by Germany, by large-scale use of Allied airborne troops. These troops would be complemented by armored units racing up the connecting roads of the bridges. The last bridge taken, at Arnhem, would permit an Allied crossing over the Rhine River and into Germany.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 152.

In the Pacific Theater, Roosevelt readily accepted Churchill's offer of the British Naval Fleet, but then indicated that the plans regarding the Philippines were still being worked out. What he implied, but did not say, was that the retaking of the Philippines and use of those islands as bases from which to attack the Japanese mainland would be the next primary focus. That meant no peripheral operations would be allowed to interfere with those plans. The Philippines would be used as a base from which to take Japanese-held regions of China. Roosevelt remarked that "American experience had been that the 'end run' method paid a handsome dividend."<sup>21</sup> This was his way of saying that peripheral operations were not always successful. Singapore just was not important to American plans at that moment.

The meeting ended on an interesting note. Roosevelt remarked that with the impending end of the war against Germany, some Americans might suggest a more lenient treatment of the Germans. Churchill said the British people would never agree.<sup>22</sup> This was the beginning of what would become one of the most contentious issues of the conference—how to treat Germany as the vanquished. This topic remained a focus of discussions at luncheons and other meetings. On September 13 at a lunch at The Citadel, Roosevelt is alleged to have indicated to Churchill that Britain, if it wanted, could control the European steel business for the twenty to thirty years following the war. This was an indication that Roosevelt anticipated dismembering Germany's steel industry.

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<sup>21</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 316.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 318.

Roosevelt based his statement on a Briefing Book prepared by the Treasury Department and given to him on September 9, 1944, in Washington, D.C. The Treasury Plan (often referred to as the Morgenthau Plan) was entitled, “Program to Prevent Germany from Starting a World War III.” There were fourteen major points: Demilitarization of Germany; New Boundaries of Germany; Partitioning of New Germany; the Ruhr Area; Restitution and Reparation; Education and Propaganda; Political Decentralization; Responsibility of Military for Local German Economy; Controls over Development of German Economy; Agrarian Program; Punishment of War Crimes and Treatment of Special Groups; Uniforms and Parades; Aircraft; and United States Responsibility.<sup>23</sup> One of the major contentions was that Germany should not have to pay reparations. It pointed out the irony of forcing Germany to pay reparations because the Americans recognized that in order to pay reparations, Germany would have to be reindustrialized. This, in turn, would once again create a strong industrial nation, something the rest of Europe would not tolerate. Economic restitution, however, would benefit the “devastated countries” of Europe and silence those wishing for a hard peace:

By removal and distribution among devastated countries, of industrial plants and equipment and transportation facilities including railroads, situated within the remaining German territory and the Ruhr. It is expected that complete factory units, machinery, equipment, stocks of raw materials, railroad and shipping will be transferred to the devastated countries and will constitute a real basis for the reconstruction and industrialization of liberated Europe.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Henry Morgenthau Jr., *Germany Is Our Problem*, New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1945, 1.

<sup>24</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 133.

While Churchill may have been pleased with the prospect of Britain controlling the European steel industry following the war, he evidently was unhappy with the methods necessary to make that happen. At a dinner on September 13, Churchill and Roosevelt were joined by Morgenthau, Admiral William Leahy, Vice Admiral Land, Vice Admiral Ross McIntire (Roosevelt's personal physician), Churchill's advisor Lord Cherwell, British Minister of War Transport Lord Frederick Leathers, and the often-present Lord Moran, Churchill's personal doctor. Moran's diary indicates that the primary topic was postwar Germany. "Morgenthau wanted to close down the Ruhr to help British exports, especially steel. The Prime Minister was against this. He did not seem happy about all this toughness."<sup>25</sup> The prime minister, Moran wrote, believed that English workers, especially once time had passed and passions had eased, would not stand for repressive measures against the average German workers. "Kill the criminals, but don't carry on the business for years," Churchill said. The president, however, responded that "a factory which made steel furniture could be turned overnight to war production." The conversation continued for three hours and created what Moran referred to as an "absolute cleavage between the American point of view and that of the Prime Minister."<sup>26</sup> But the prime minister was not alone in this thinking. The British War Cabinet sent him a message during the conference and indicated it was very much against a "hard" policy.<sup>27</sup> Others present at the meeting believed that Churchill was not

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<sup>25</sup> Charles McMoran (Lord Moran) Wilson, *Churchill at War: 1940–1945*, New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2002, 216.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>27</sup> Warren F. Kimball, *Swords or Ploughshares? The Morgenthau Plan for Defeated Nazi Germany, 1943–1946*, Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1976, 120.

saying, but actually wanted, a strong Germany as a buffer between England and the Communist Soviet Union.

Lend-Lease became a sensitive political issue for Roosevelt during the year between the Quadrant and Octagon Conferences. In the fall of 1943, five U.S. senators created a ruckus by questioning the amount of aid the United States was providing its allies. A bipartisan group of senators, composed of three Democrats and two Republicans, took the position that the United States was becoming a “global sucker” by not making a bigger issue of the enormity of the Lend-Lease Program. Responding to the senators’ remarks, Churchill sent a long message to presidential advisor Harry Hopkins (who had played a major role in Lend-Lease appropriations), writing that “with regard to the supplies going to Russia, the Russians know perfectly well the origin of every weapon or bale of goods. We have not tried to claim any credit beyond what is our due.”<sup>28</sup>

Churchill reacted to criticism that the British were sending American Lend-Lease materials to the Soviet Union and claiming them as British goods. With many members of Congress already unhappy with Roosevelt’s usurpation of foreign affairs, to the exclusion of Congressional input, Lend-Lease became an easy target for criticism. The original Lend-Lease agreement did not extend beyond the war. By February of 1944, Roosevelt’s administration was cutting back on Lend-Lease items that did not directly support the war effort, such as supplies for the civilian population. At the same time, arguments arose within the administration over Great Britain’s U.S. dollar reserve.

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<sup>28</sup> Kimball, *Alliance Forged*, 528.

In a telegram sent to Churchill on February 22, 1944 Roosevelt wrote, “quite apart from these Lend-Lease negotiations, I have been wondering whether it would be feasible for you to consider so ordering your financial affairs as to reduce your gold and dollar holdings available in this country to the neighborhood of about \$1 billion.”<sup>29</sup> There was growing resentment in Congress that the British were accumulating American dollars and yet continuing to receive Lend-Lease materials.

The first official meeting where the continuation of Lend-Lease was discussed was held on September 14 at the Chateau Frontenac. Morgenthau, Lord Cherwell, and their two aides discussed continuation of American Lend-Lease to the British once the European war ended. From this point on, the continuation of Lend-Lease was referred to as Lend-Lease Stage (or Phase) II. No formal agreement was reached at this meeting and Morgenthau and Cherwell made the decision to set up a committee that would establish the guidelines for this stage of Lend-Lease.<sup>30</sup>

The postwar treatment of Germany was discussed and after a quick perusal of the Treasury Book (Morgenthau’s Plan), Cherwell indicated that he thought Churchill could be brought around to an agreement. Evidently Churchill became convinced of the viability of the Treasury Plan when he realized that there was no intent to starve the Germans. As Morgenthau put it to Cherwell, “Do you want a strong Germany and a weak England or a weak Germany and a strong England?”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 744.

<sup>30</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 328.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 330.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff were meeting at the same time to discuss military issues. The first meeting, as had been agreed upon, concerned use of the British Main Naval Fleet in the Pacific Theater. The British reiterated that these forces would become available at the end of the European fighting and Admiral King immediately began to put up roadblocks to what seemed an easy transition. He first stated that this force would have to be self-supporting. He then added that the practicability of using these forces should be reviewed from time to time. The British chiefs stressed that they wanted to play a major role in the fight against Japan and not just be used “in mopping up operations in areas falling into our hands.”<sup>32</sup> General Alan Brooke wrote in his diary, “We had great trouble with King who lost his temper entirely and was opposed by the whole of his own committee! He was determined if he could not to admit British naval forces into Nimitz’s command in the Central Pacific.”<sup>33</sup> King continued that he did not think the British Fleet was needed, particularly if that meant some of the U.S. Fleet would be withdrawn. He implied that if the British Fleet was used, portions of the U.S. Fleet would have to be sent elsewhere because of overcrowding. When the British chiefs reminded King that the two leaders had already agreed that the British Fleet would be used, King retorted that “it was not his recollection that the President had agreed to this.” Yet he had been in the meeting where the president had done just that. The official American notes suggest that King “could not accept that a view expressed

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 333.

<sup>33</sup> Danchev and Todman, eds., *War Diaries*, 592.



by the Prime Minister should be regarded as a directive to the Combined Chiefs of Staff.”<sup>34</sup> King’s biographers were kinder in their assessment of events:

King could not help feeling that the British desire to assist the United States against Japan, when that help was in King’s view not needed, was perhaps not unconnected with a desire for United States help to the British and Dutch in clearing the Japanese out of the Malay States and the Netherlands East Indies. However, he contented himself in the meeting with saying that a paper was being prepared for submission to the Combined Chiefs of Staff regarding the possible employment of the British Fleet in the Pacific, and that the question was being actively studied. When the Prime Minister asked if it would not be better to employ the new British ships in place of the battle-worn vessels of the United States, King replied that speaking for himself he could only say that the matter was under examination.<sup>35</sup>

King also remarked that he had a problem with the British Fleet in the Pacific simply for a British political show. If, as Churchill said, “certain troublemakers” were denouncing Britain’s secondary role in the Pacific Theater, why should portions of the U.S. Navy have to step aside?<sup>36</sup> The use of British air forces in the final stage of the Pacific war met with a kinder reception. General “Hap” Arnold, commanding general of the Army Air Forces said the number of airplanes accepted would equal the amount of facilities. General Arnold did not share King’s Anglophobia.

The issue of postwar German plans came up again when Roosevelt and Churchill met on September 14. Although Churchill does not specifically mention this in his diary, the evidence suggests Cherwell was able to convince him that Morgenthau’s Treasury Plan was acceptable since it did not mean that Germany would

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<sup>34</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 333.

<sup>35</sup> King and Whitehill, *Fleet Admiral King*, 360.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

starve. Cherwell and Churchill even suggested that Germany would be better off under this program since “her standard of life would still undoubtedly be higher than it had been under the Nazis—when so much national effort was put into preparations for war.”<sup>37</sup>

On September 15 the Navy Chiefs of Staff met to discuss military matters related to their respective navies. The British naval chiefs once again brought up the issue of the United States using the British Naval Fleet. They requested forward bases to be used when the fleet became available. Admiral King responded with choices, but few were ideal. When the discussion turned to the availability of landing craft and the release of that craft from the European to the Pacific Theater, Admiral King suggested that British Admiral Ramsay continued to hold the landing craft after its initial use in OVERLORD, and was not allowing its release. Admiral Cunningham, First Sea Lord, denied that and a potential disagreement was averted with an agreement to study the matter. King was obviously willing to get into a scrap over anything that involved British intrusion into the American-dominated Pacific Theater.<sup>38</sup>

A major meeting took place on September 15 when Roosevelt and Churchill met to discuss Lend-Lease Phase II and the Treasury Plan for postwar Germany. Roosevelt signed the agreement that allowed the United States to continue Lend-Lease to Britain following the end of the war in Europe. Roosevelt did bring up one important point in the agreement. It read that the British could not sell Lend-Lease materials or export them. Lord Cherwell, present at the meeting, pointed out that Britain did, in fact,

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<sup>37</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 343.

sell surplus materials that the military could not use. Roosevelt acquiesced but added the codicil that the goods could not be sold for profit.<sup>39</sup>

The discussion next turned to the treatment of Germany following the war. Churchill dictated the agreement to a secretary based on talks that had been held up to that point. This statement disposed of the industry of the Ruhr and the Saar regions of Germany, the two most industrialized regions of Germany. The industries would be dismantled and Germany would become “a country primarily agricultural and pastoral in its character.”<sup>40</sup> Anthony Eden, British secretary for Foreign Affairs, immediately protested. Eden did not like the Morgenthau Plan and saw it as destructive for postwar Great Britain as for Germany. Eden recognized that a revitalized Germany would become a strong market for British industrial goods. In his diary, Eden related that it “was the only occasion I can remember when the Prime Minister showed impatience with my views before foreign representatives. He resented my criticism of something which he and the President had approved, not I am sure on his account, but on the President’s.”<sup>41</sup> Eden implied that Churchill was going along with Roosevelt on this because he needed Lend-Lease Phase II and did not want anything to get in the way of that agreement. Eden was unhappy that all of the work he, Hull, Molotov, the U.S. State Department, the War Department, and the European Advisory Commission had done on plans for postwar Germany appeared to be ignored. The European Advisory Commission had been set up specifically to deal with postwar European issues and yet

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 352.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 361.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 467.

Morgenthau came along with a plan that Secretary of State Cordell Hull saw as one of “blind vengeance.” Hull also disliked the idea that Morgenthau had, according to Eden’s memoirs, gone “prowling on his [Hull’s] preserves.” Hull realized that Churchill, who had so adamantly disliked the Treasury Plan from the beginning, was willing to go along with it when he saw that it included credits for the British that would eventually total over six billion dollars. Hull wrote, “this might suggest to some the *quid pro quo* with which the Secretary of the Treasury was able to get Mr. Churchill’s adherence to his cataclysmic plan for Germany.”<sup>42</sup> Churchill said that accepting Morgenthau’s Plan was the equivalent of tying Great Britain to a dead Germany. Great Britain’s need for continued Lend-Lease, however, was a powerful incentive to acquiesce to American plans for postwar Germany. Churchill wrote that it was the president’s insistence that finally convinced him to accept the Morgenthau Plan. But when all was said and done the needs of the British people prevailed.

Zones of occupation in Germany were finalized and agreed upon that afternoon. Roosevelt and Churchill divided Germany into three zones with the British controlling the northwest region, the Americans the southwest, and the Soviet Union the east. Berlin would also be divided, but no agreement on sectors was discussed at this point. Roosevelt had been reluctant to have an American sector that bordered with France, fearing that the United States would have to play a greater role in postwar French reconstruction. Roosevelt always said that France would be Britain’s problem. Roosevelt also wanted to ensure that the United States would have access to some

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<sup>41</sup> Eden, *Reckoning*, 552.

German ports. Churchill had fought that for a long time suggesting that the British were better equipped to handle the dismantling of the Germany Navy. When the division set at the Octagon Conference gave Britain's sector an almost equal exposure to France as the American, and the Americans were awarded the usage of Bremen and Bremerhaven, Roosevelt acquiesced.

That evening, Morgenthau and Cherwell met regarding the Lend-Lease Phase II agreement. The British wanted the words "for profit" regarding the sales of excess items removed from the agreement.<sup>43</sup> Morgenthau refused to discuss it with the president because, as he later explained, the British were in the nasty habit of taking American Lend-Lease items, adding on service charges (transportation) and reselling the goods to the Americans—for a profit! The words "for profit" remained in the agreement! Roosevelt was interested in keeping a strong Britain at the side of the United States, but not at American expense.<sup>44</sup> It was the beginning of a change in American attitude towards constantly sending aid to the British. By late fall 1944, Roosevelt recognized that Congress was not going to go along with continually giving goods to the British that were not directly related to defeating the Japanese. Bernard Baruch, longtime advisor to Roosevelt, wrote that he feared continuing Lend-Lease would jeopardize the standard of living for the average American. Why should the American population weaken itself for the benefit of the British Empire?<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Hull, *Memoirs*, 1614.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 371.

<sup>44</sup> Christopher Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: The United States, Britain and the War Against Japan, 1941–1945*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, 505.

<sup>45</sup> John Morton Blum, *Roosevelt and Morgenthau: A Condensation from the Morgenthau Diaries*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970, 556.

When the American Joint Chiefs of Staff met on September 16 to discuss various issues of the conference, General Marshall and Admiral King quickly suggested that the United States argue for control of the port of Bremen in what would become the British zone of occupation in postwar Germany. It was not an unreasonable request since the U.S. zone was landlocked, having no ready access to a port for American ships carrying American troops and supplies. When confronted with this request at their next meeting, the British military chiefs agreed to this request and even suggested that the Americans take Bremerhaven as well. Where Bremen can handle most shipping, Bremerhaven can handle the ships that required a deeper draft. The British received the zone of occupation they wanted, therefore it was easy to be magnanimous towards the American requests for ports.

The Combined Chiefs of Staff met soon after and the discussion concentrated on Burma. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was threatening to withdraw Chinese forces from eastern Burma in order to protect the central portion of China. General Stilwell sent a report to General Marshall on September 15, writing that Chiang “imagines that he can get behind the Salween and there wait in safety for the U.S. to finish the war.”<sup>46</sup> Marshall read the telegram to the Combined Chiefs and told them of a message Roosevelt sent to Chiang that morning. Roosevelt made it clear that he was unhappy with Chiang’s lack of aggressiveness. He wrote, “I have urged time and again in recent months that you take drastic action to resist the disaster which has been moving closer

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<sup>46</sup> Romanus and Sunderland, *Stilwell’s Command Problems*, 437.

to China and to you.”<sup>47</sup> Stilwell also wrote that Chiang wanted to take over direct access to all Lend-Lease materials rather than having them go through his office. Stilwell knew that Chiang was determined to outfit his select Kuomintang forces, leaving the rest of the Chinese Army to second-rate materials. It was just as important for Chiang to be armed against the Communists led by Mao Tse-tung, who were also fighting against the Japanese. The continuing undeclared civil war between the Chiang’s Kuomintang and Mao’s Communist forces helped create a blockade line between the two armies, even as they were fighting the Japanese. It was particularly frustrating for Stilwell to see 200,000 Kuomintang forces guarding the blockade line against approximately 50,000 Communist forces. These were valuable troops that could easily have been pulled back to use against the Japanese.<sup>48</sup> Roosevelt continued to support Chiang, however, and in October 1944, Stilwell was relieved of his command because of the friction between himself and Chiang.

The Octagon Conference continued for Roosevelt and Churchill when they traveled to Hyde Park, New York. Several informal meetings took place, yet there were important joint statements made by the two leaders. On September 18, Roosevelt and Churchill signed an aide-mémoire regarding tube alloys (the atomic bomb). The aide-mémoire stated that the creation of the bomb would remain secret and that it might be used against the Japanese. The British got their wish with the second point that stated that the United States and Great Britain would continue to share atomic information,

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<sup>47</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 464.

<sup>48</sup> White, ed., *Stilwell Papers*, 325.

even after the war, until one or the other ended the agreement. That included both military and commercial information.<sup>49</sup>

While at Hyde Park, Roosevelt and Churchill noted that it had been a year since Mussolini was overthrown, and they issued a statement applauding the Italian people.<sup>50</sup> It was an effort on their part to encourage the Italian population to overthrow the last vestiges of fascism. When they included a willingness to revise armistice terms, Anthony Eden, British secretary for Foreign Affairs, objected. He complained that additional concessions might drive the Italian government to ask for the return of its fleet, colonies, and so forth. Even worse, he suggested, the two leaders were making this statement without consulting with the Soviet Union. “To omit such consultation would cause great offence.”<sup>51</sup> Eden was correct in surmising that Stalin would use this as an excuse to treat the allies in the same manner when occupying much of Eastern Europe.

The Octagon Conference ended successfully for the British, or so they thought. They were able to acquire Lend-Lease Phase II and the zone of occupation in Germany that they had requested. While Churchill had acquiesced to the Morgenthau Plan in order to ensure continuing Lend-Lease, his diary entries suggest that he did not agree with it. And the British were able to convince the United States that they were a willing and able ally in the fight against the Japanese. Although most of the American military chiefs present at the conference were not overjoyed at the prospect at having to

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<sup>49</sup> *FRUS: Conference at Quebec 1944*, Washington, DC, 493.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 497

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 496.



accommodate the British navy in what the Americans saw as a desire to gain some of the glory, the British prevailed.

In hindsight, however, the conference could just as easily not have taken place. The strong friendship between Roosevelt and Churchill continued but the major agreements all changed. Roosevelt became increasingly reluctant to continue major elements of Lend-Lease Phase II. The Morgenthau Plan, in fact, was not adopted and a “softer” peace was implemented. And the British military played only a minor role in the final defeat of Japan.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the Second World War and not a moment too soon for the British. Churchill and Roosevelt had already met at Argentia Bay in Canada, in August 1941, and agreed that *if* the United States entered the war it would fight as an ally of the British and the fighting would focus first on defeating the Axis powers in Europe. Churchill's greatest fear was that U.S. public opinion would react primarily to the Pearl Harbor attack and the nation would demand concentration on the Pacific War. Churchill was relieved that Roosevelt was willing to keep to his promise of Europe first, however the issue remained as a dark cloud over the alliance throughout the war. Several of Roosevelt's military advisors such as Admiral Ernest King and, at times, General George C. Marshall argued to focus instead on the Pacific War.

In December 1941, Churchill suggested a conference with Roosevelt to discuss the Allied war effort. Traveling by ship across the Atlantic, he wrote a series of strategic papers outlining how the United States could best support the British war effort. In his war memoirs Churchill wrote, "I produced three papers on the future course of the war, as I conceived it should be steered."<sup>1</sup> The British had been fighting the Fascist nations for over eighteen months and the U.S. military forces were seen as a much-needed

addition to the beleaguered British forces. The American military chiefs had specific plans and they did not include becoming ancillary to British plans.

While the first conference ended with general agreement over war aims and issues, it quickly became clear to the U.S. military chiefs in the following months that the British were determined to fight a war of diversion against the Germans. Attacking the German Army at the periphery would eventually wear it down. The American military chiefs, particularly General Marshall, were intent on striking at the heart of the German-controlled continent across the English Channel. While the cross-channel invasion did not take place for another two and a half years, its timing and even its execution remained a major disagreement in the relationship between the two allies.

The cross-channel invasion was not the only disagreement between the United States and Great Britain during the war and it was not the only issue that strained the relationship. Following the Arcadia Conference in Washington, D.C. from December of 1941 through January of 1942, Churchill and Roosevelt met with their military Chiefs of Staff four more times on the American continent. By the third conference, disagreements over Allied strategy became so vehement that drastic measures became necessary to maintain harmony.

What truly held the alliance together, however, was the relationship between the two leaders. Churchill and Roosevelt formed a friendship at Argentia that lasted until Roosevelt died in April 1945. Robert Sherwood, author of a biography of Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins, described the relationship between the president and Churchill as one

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<sup>1</sup> Churchill, *Grand Alliance*, 645.

devoid of pomposity and cant.<sup>2</sup> Both men were politicians and respected the source of each man's power. Roosevelt was the Head of State and, therefore, superior to Churchill in rank.<sup>3</sup> Churchill, as prime minister, was the Head of the British government. Roosevelt had to answer to both the Congress and the American people every four years and Churchill was aware of the restrictions that placed on him. Roosevelt was also aware when Churchill was faced with the occasional election. Roosevelt respected Churchill for standing up to the German threat in 1940 rather than backing down. They shared a love of the navy and, appropriately, their first official meeting was held at sea. Both men had agreed at Argentia that they would not act as referees between their military chiefs. In truth, however, their relationship acted as a mediating force. Elliott Roosevelt, the president's son, once said that at Argentia the two men sized each other up, sparred a little, and both were very happy with the results.<sup>4</sup> They could both be very stubborn and were not afraid to disagree with one another. The issue of colonialism and self-determination would divide the two leaders throughout the war, for example, yet it did not interfere with the alliance, or with their friendship. Their friendship remained strong and intact through the war, but the character of the alliance changed.

What began for the British as a British-dominated alliance quickly changed to an American-dominated alliance. While the American military chiefs acquiesced to a North African invasion, as desired by the British, they gradually forced the issue of a cross-channel invasion until it became a reality. Washington, D.C. became the

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<sup>2</sup> Sherwood, *White House Papers*, vol. 1, 364.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 352.

headquarters for the Combined Chiefs of Staff. A Pacific Council of War was created, and it, too, was based in Washington. The British quickly learned that in this alliance *they* were going to have to reach across the Atlantic. The British were the ones who traveled to the conferences. They graciously suggested an American commander for Allied forces in the Mediterranean. The British watched as the Americans took the lead in developing atomic weaponry, forcing them to have to argue for access to this highly-classified information. The British had to plead for an extension to Lend-Lease, a second phase that was so critical to their war effort. And the British had to sit and listen to an American admiral scoff at the idea when the British Main Naval Fleet was so willingly offered to help the fight in the Pacific Theater. Regardless of what the British may have envisioned in 1941, by 1944 the alliance had become one of American dominance and there was little they could do about it.

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<sup>4</sup> Jon Meacham, *Franklin and Winston: An Intimate Portrait of an Epic Friendship*, New York: Random House, 2003, 118.

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Diane K. DeWaters pursued her education as a military “brat” attending various colleges and universities both in the United States and abroad. She graduated with a Bachelor’s of Science Degree in History in 1978 from Syracuse University in upstate New York. After spending time in the corporate world, Diane began her quest to obtain a Master’s Degree. Continuing to work as a travel manager, she attended the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, and graduated with a Master’s of Science in History in May of 1993. In 1997 Diane pursued her dream of teaching college history and began as an adjunct instructor at North Lake College in Irving, Texas. She continued to work as a travel manager until she began teaching both at North Lake College and Tarrant County College in Hurst, Texas.

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